

Board of Trustees

Minutes

Date: 5 February 2015 (221st meeting)

Time: 14.00-16.30

Venue: V&A Board Room

Present:	Sir Paul Ruddock (Chair)	Dame Theresa Sackler
	João Baptista	Mark Sebba
	Nicholas Coleridge	Caroline Silver
	Mark Damazer	Sir John Sorrell
	Professor Margot Finn	Robert Stefanowski
	Andrew Hochhauser	Dr. Paul Thompson
	Steve McGuckin	Edmund de Waal
	Michelle Ogundehin	Professor Evelyn Welch

In attendance: Martin Roth, Director, V&A
 EmmaJane Avery, Director of Learning and Visitor Experience, V&A
 Kate Bellamy, Head of Strategy and Advocacy and Secretary to the Board of Trustees, V&A (minutes)
 Heather Francis, Director of Finance & Resources, V&A
 Steve Hyde, Acting Director of Design, Exhibitions & FuturePlan, V&A
 Jane Lawson, Director of Development, V&A
 Beth McKillop, Deputy Director, V&A
 Tim Reeve, Chief Operating Officer, V&A
 Alex Stitt, Director of Commercial & Digital Development, V&A
 Claire Wilcox, Senior Curator, Fashion (for item 6)

The Chairman introduced Steve Hyde, Acting Director of Design, Exhibitions & FuturePlan.

1 Declaration of Interests

1.1 There were no declarations of interest.

2 Minutes of the previous meeting

2.1 The minutes of the previous meeting were approved by the Board.

3 Matters arising

- 3.1 The Chairman asked Alex Stitt (AS) to update the Board on his plans for the reorganisation of publishing at the V&A. AS explained that a consultation process was currently underway, and that the value of research and academic publishing is well understood and appreciated.
- 3.2 Sir John Sorrell (JS), Chair of the Museum of Childhood (MoC) Committee, updated on the Museum of Childhood strategy. He explained that the Museum would do further work on audiences and return to the Board with recommendations later in the year.
- 3.3 With regards to the curatorial structure, the Chairman asked that appropriate trustees engage with Museum Management before the plans are implemented.

- 3.4 **ACTION: Evelyn Welch (EW) and Margot Finn (MF) to liaise with Beth McKillop (BMck), Deputy Director, regarding curatorial expertise at the Museum**

4 **Performance Report**

- 4.1 Heather Francis (HF), Director of Finance and Resources, presented the Performance Report covering visitor numbers, which are above target at South Kensington and the Museum of Childhood; fundraising campaigns, including the acquisition by the Museum of the Wolsey Angels; commercial performance, and recent achievements, including a record year for grants income for the Research department. She highlighted recent press coverage, including for *Alexander McQueen: Savage Beauty*, with advance ticket sales now in excess of 40,000. The Chairman asked that the Museum retain a focus on improving donation box income.

5 **2015-2020 Strategic Plan Update**

- 5.1 Ahead of a full presentation on the new V&A 5-year plan at the March Away Day, Tim Reeve (TR) presented an update on the development of the new Plan, reminding trustees of the process for developing the Plan and outlining its structure and headline content.
- 5.2 The Chairman reminded trustees that the 2015-20 Plan would be presented and discussed in more detail at the Board Away Day on 19 March.
- 5.3 **ACTION: TR to circulate 2015-20 Strategic Plan headlines to the Board for their consideration and feedback ahead of the Away Day.**

6 **Alexander McQueen – Savage Beauty**

- 6.1 The V&A *Alexander McQueen: Savage Beauty* exhibition curator, Claire Wilcox (CW), presented on plans for the upcoming exhibition, including the history of the V&A's relationship with Alexander McQueen, the V&A's McQueen collections and an exhibition overview. She explained that the exhibition would differ in some ways to the show presented at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, with additional space, objects and themes and that the exhibition Creative Director is Sam Gainsbury and Music Director is John Gosling, both close associates of Alexander McQueen.
- 6.2 Trustees welcomed CW's presentation and hard work on the exhibition. The Chairman asked Management about measures to maximise opportunities for exhibition visits and the number of day tickets available. Management explained that the Exhibition run had been extended by two weeks, with additional late night and early morning viewings made available and confirmed that there would be a minimum of 200 tickets on sale at the Museum each day. Special arrangements will be made to ensure that staff are able to see the exhibition, and V&A Friends will also be offered additional access before opening on Saturdays and Sundays.

7 **E2o and Blythe House: Status report and next steps**

- 7.1 Martin Roth (MR) updated the Board on plans to develop a V&A in the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park, including the Smithsonian's announcement that it would join the 'Olympicopolis' development. TR explained that DCMS remains committed to plans to review the use of Blythe House and that the V&A is therefore looking at alternative options for collections' storage.

8 Collecting Policy

- 8.1 BMcK spoke about the Museum's new Collecting Policy which presents a practical and comprehensive review of what the V&A collects and why. She explained that it is a resource for staff and curators in making choices about acquisitions and that is also used by scholars, students and other museums for reference. She reminded trustees that it was last reviewed by them in 2010 and has been significantly rewritten since then. She drew trustees' attention to the Museum's commitment to contemporary collecting and to the reading lists within the document for their own reference. In addition to a departmental focus, the document closes with expanded international collecting ambitions.
- 8.2 Trustees thanked BMcK and her colleagues for their hard work on the comprehensive plan and they formally approved the Collecting Policy.

9 Website Refresh: Project overview

- 9.1 AS outlined the rationale and approach for the Museum's website refresh project, with reference to the websites of other leading museums. He explained that the V&A is about to appoint a leading digital agency to determine design of refreshed V&A web presence, as the first of a number of phases.
- 9.2 One trustee suggested that the website should be a visitor experience in itself, since many web visitors might not be able to visit the Museum. AS explained that the research underpinning the refresh would allow the Museum to focus on improving 'visitor journeys' on the website. Trustees agreed that the Museum of Childhood should be included in the main V&A site and that consideration should be given to the fit with the V&A Museum of Design, Dundee web offer. One trustee welcomed the approach to basing the refresh on research and audience data and suggested that the Museum should aim to refresh the website every 2-3 years.

10 Director's Report

- 10.1 MR presented his Report, covering the launch of the V&A India Festival, V&A representation at the World Economic Forum, and the latest news on the E20 design competition. He updated trustees on the Shekou Design Museum project, including the V&A Gallery concept and the appointment of Ole Bouman as Director. The Director also mentioned safety and security and the V&A's commitment to ensuring that it is preventative, pro-active and embedded in daily practice.

11 Chairman's Report

- 11.1 The Chairman outlined his Museum-related activities, including meetings with the Mayor of London, the Department for Culture Media and Sport and the 1851 Commission. He reminded trustees that the next meeting would be the Away Day on 19 March and drew their attention to the Board Effectiveness Questionnaire to be completed in advance of the Away Day.
- 11.2 **ACTION: KB to circulate outline agenda for Board Away Day.**

12 Reports from Committees

- 12.1 **Commercial and Digital Strategy Committee**
The minutes of the meetings held on 27 November had been circulated previously.
- 12.2 **Collections Committee**
The minutes of the meeting held on 1 December had been circulated previously.
- 12.3 **Finance Committee**
The minutes of the meeting held on 3 December had been circulated previously.

12.4 **Investment Committee**

The minutes of the meeting held on 3 December had been circulated previously.

12.5 **Technology Strategy Committee**

The minutes of the meeting held on 9 December and 22 January had been circulated previously.

12.6 **Research Advisory Committee**

The minutes of the meeting held on 12 December had been circulated previously.

12.7 **Audit Committee**

The minutes of the meeting held on 20 January had been circulated previously.

12.8 **Development Report**

The report had been circulated previously.

13 AOB

13.1 There was no AOB.

Kate Bellamy, 9 January 2015

Signed _____
(Sir Paul Ruddock, Chairman)