

Board of Trustees

Minutes

Date: 19 November 2015 (226th meeting)
 Time: 14.00-16.00
 Venue: The Boardroom, V&A South Kensington
 Present: Nicholas Coleridge (Chair) Andrew Hochhauser
 João Baptista Nick Hoffman
 Elaine Bedell Steve McGuckin
 Nicholas Coleridge Dame Theresa Sackler
 Mark Damazer Mark Sebba
 Professor Margot Finn Caroline Silver
 Robert Glick Sir John Sorrell
 Professor Evelyn Welch
 In attendance: Martin Roth, Director, V&A
 Emma Jane Avery, Director of Learning and Visitor Experience, V&A
 David Bickle, Director of Design, Exhibitions & FuturePlan, V&A
 Heather Francis, Director of Finance & Resources, V&A
 Jane Lawson, Director of Development
 Beth McKillop, Deputy Director & Director of Collections V&A
 Tim Reeve, Deputy Director & Chief Operating Officer V&A
 Alex Stitt, Director of Commercial & Digital Development, V&A
 Julia Downer, Governance Officer, V&A (minutes)
 Graham Lee, Interim Head of Customer Relationship Management, item 6
 Rhian Harris, Director of Museum of Childhood, item 7
 Apologies: Dr Paul Thompson, Edmund de Waal

1 Declaration of Interests

1.1 There were no declarations of interests.

2 Minutes of the previous meeting

2.1 The Board recorded its thanks to Sir Paul Ruddock, who has stepped down as Chair, for his unstinting and far reaching contributions to the V&A and to the Board.
 The minutes of the previous meeting were approved by the Board.

3 Matters arising

3.1 The Chair welcomed three new Trustees to the Board: Elaine Bedell, Robert Glick and Nick Hoffman.
 3.2 Joao Baptista is stepping down as a Trustee of the V&A, the Board recorded its thanks for his support of the V&A. Joao will become a co-opted member of the Board of the Museum of Childhood, which will benefit from his experience and advice.

4 Performance Report

Copies of The V&A: A Souvenir were made available to Trustees.

- 4.1 The Deputy Director gave an overview of V&A activities since the previous meeting. The V&A India Festival is underway, which includes *The Fabric of India* exhibition, the Gupta Sculpture, *Bejewelled Treasures: The Al Thani Collection*, and a range of lectures and events.
- 4.2 TR highlighted that the Museum is performing strongly overall in terms of visitor figures, which are likely to meet plan. The financial position is also robust following the success of *Alexander McQueen: Savage Beauty* which has allowed the V&A to progress some capital projects.
- 4.2 The Exhibition Road Project is moving ahead and is on target.
- 4.3 The re-opening of the Europe Galleries 1600-1800 on 7 December, will be marked by a number of prestigious events.
- 4.4 The V&A was involved with the recent visit of President Xi, in particular the event at Lancaster House which showcased British cultural endeavours. This was attended by Peng Liyuan, the Chinese First Lady, and TRH The Duke and Duchess of Cambridge; TR represented the V&A. Other events include the Museums Association Conference (Martin Roth and Beth McKillop); World of Wedgwood, hosted by the Art Fund, and an Olympic Anniversary event hosted by the Mayor of London.
- 4.5 A short film, showing how *Alexander McQueen: Savage Beauty* had inspired a young fashion student with autism, and produced by CBBC, was shown to the Board.

5 Forward Exhibitions Programme

- 5.1 The draft Exhibitions Programme Planning Schedule from Autumn 2015 to Spring 2020 was shared with the Board.
- 5.2 MER explained how this tool is used by the V&A and gave an overview of the forthcoming exhibitions. Some aspects of exhibition planning, including financial information, are tracked through other means.
- 5.3 The long lead times for exhibitions, given the complex nature of loan agreements, the design and installation process, limit the Museum's capability to react quickly to political and social changes. However it is hoped that V&A East will allow for a more flexible approach. Some exhibitions will be shared with V&A Dundee, Shekou and the Museum of Childhood.

Action: The Board asked for a presentation of a forthcoming exhibition.

6 Customer Relationship Management

- 6.1 Graham Lee, Interim Head of CRM, joined the meeting.
- 6.2 AS explained that the V&A's CRM has been steered by the Technology Strategy Committee, with particular support from Mark Damazer. Although the TSC has come to a close, its work will continue through CRM, and through sub-committees.
- 6.3 The V&A was alerted to the need to upgrade its ticketing process through the experience of the *David Bowie Is* exhibition as an outside agency had to be brought in.

- 6.4 The V&A is working with Gateway Ticketing Systems to implement a completely upgraded platform for ticketing. The work already carried out has brought considerable benefits, including a 75% increase in online sales. The benefit of the new system during the run of *Alexander McQueen: Savage Beauty* was invaluable.
- The data captured will allow targeted and consistent marketing, bringing significant opportunities for cross-selling, an example of which is the sharing information on the V&A adult educational programme with V&A Members.
- 6.5 The next stage of the system will be launched in Spring 2016, which will allow for enhanced tracking of V&A consumers, and the introduction of suggested add-on purchases. Improved customer satisfaction will drive the commercial success of the project.
- 6.6 Security of information is of paramount importance, and the V&A is actively taking steps to ensure that security of data is as strong as possible.
- Action: Evelyn Welch suggested that there may be potential for collaboration with students from King's College London. AS to contact EW.**

7 Museum of Childhood

- 7.1 Rhian Harris, Director of the Museum of Childhood, joined the meeting.
- 7.2 RH presented a vision for a refurbished and enhanced Museum of Childhood. The area of Bethnal Green is undergoing a time of transformation, in terms of population growth and demographic changes. The goal is to capitalise on these changes and to revitalise the experience offered by the Museum of Childhood, which will inspire and educate young audiences both now and in the future. Plans presented included new spaces for both permanent displays and exhibitions, and enhanced commercial activity through retail, catering and event hire. Full use of digital technology and interactive displays would be key to the success of the plan.
- 7.3 The Board agreed to consider the proposals over the next three months, in conjunction with other possible projects.
- Action: Sir John Sorrell to thank RH for her presentation and explain that it will be considered.**

8 Director's Report

- 8.1 The Director updated the Board on Museum priorities including the progress of V&A East. A series of positive meetings has been held with the E2o partners, including The Smithsonian.
- 8.2 The V&A has been invited to create a pavilion at the respected Venice Architectural Biennale.
- 8.3 *Alexander McQueen: Savage Beauty* has been awarded a number of prestigious accolades, including the London Evening Standard: Beyond Theatre Award.
- 8.4 The Director was pleased to share news of recent photographic acquisitions funded in partnership with Mastercard.

9 Chairman's Report

- 9.1 The Chairman looked ahead to future challenges. The outcome of the Government's Spending Review should be known soon. It is likely that there will be a significant reduction to Grant in Aid which will impact on the V&A's future plans.
- 9.2 The Exhibition Road Project is an important development for the V&A. However, looking ahead to future projects, of which a range are under consideration, there may be a case for phasing of plans and for ensuring a good fit with the guiding principles of the V&A.

Mark Damazer, Dame Theresa Sackler, Elaine Bedell and Evelyn Welch left the meeting

10 Reports from Committees

10.1 Commercial Strategy Group

The minutes of the meeting held on 29 September had been circulated previously.

10.2 Trustees' Finance Committee

The minutes of the meeting held on 27 October had been circulated previously.

10.3 Trustees' Investment Committee

The minutes of the meeting held on 27 October had been circulated previously

10.4 Museum of Childhood Committee

The minutes of the meeting held on 28 October had been circulated previously

10.5 Trustees' Technology Strategy Committee

The minutes of the meeting held on 6 November had been circulated previously. This is the last meeting of this Committee.

10.6 Trustees' Audit Committee

The minutes of the meeting held on 9 November had been circulated previously.

10.7 Trustees' Research Advisory Committee

Margot Finn gave a verbal report of this Committee meeting. The Masters Programme has been reaccredited by the Royal College of Art. The Research Department is waiting to hear the outcome of the grant application to The Andrew Mellon Foundation.

10.8 Trustees' Building Strategy Committee

The minutes of the meeting held on 29 September were circulated at the Board Meeting. Steve McGuckin provided an overview of the Exhibition Road site.

The Board recorded its thanks to SM for his considerable input regarding the Europe 1600-1800 Galleries.

Action: David Bickle to arrange for Trustees to be offered a site visit to Exhibition Road.

10.9 Development Report

The report had been circulated previously.

11 AOB

11.1 There was no AOB.

Julia Downer 20 November 2015

Signed _____
(Nicholas Coleridge, Chairman)