



## NOTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 23 MAY 2018 AT 9.30AM IN ROOM O, PORTCULLIS HOUSE (PI 05)

Members present: Alison McGovern (Chair)  
Nic Dakin  
Mr David Lammy  
Tom Tugendhat

Apologies: Hannah Bardell, Jonathan Djanogly, Edward Vaizey and Hywel Williams

In attendance: Emma Gormley, Deputy Curator  
James Ford, Assistant Curator  
Sileas Wood, Assistant Curator  
Melanie Unwin, Project Manager, Vote100 project  
Camilla Aitken, Media Officer

### 1) Informal Note [INF 04]

The Committee **agreed** the informal notes of the meeting on 24 April 2018.

### 2) Financial statement

Melanie Unwin, Curator, briefed the Committee.

Ms Unwin said that there were no changes to report since the last update on the financial statement in April

### 3) Acquisition policy [WOA 22]

Sileas Wood, Assistant Curator, briefed the Committee.

Ms Wood provided a summary of the acquisition policy in relation to the acquisition of portraits of non-parliamentarians, following a request made by the Committee at its meeting in April. The basis of the policy had been shaped by the Hinchingsbrooke List that was created in 1956. The List identified gaps of images of notable parliamentarians in the Collection and had been updated at the request of the Committee in 2011. The Committee had also asked for the creation of a separate list of activists, campaigners and influencers who had been influential outside Parliament. The portrait of Lady Asquith was an example where a representation of a figure influential outside Parliament had been purchased for the Collection.

The Chair said that she was confident that the paper represented the established position on acquisitions and asked if the secretariat could circulate it to Members of the Committee to remind them of the policy.



A Member commented that the phrase 'great orator' that was written in the acquisitions policy reference document seemed outdated and that the words 'communicator' or 'influencer' seemed more appropriate.

### **Decision**

The Committee **noted** the House of Commons acquisition policy in regard to portraits of non-parliamentarians.

## **4) Updates, acquisitions and loans**

### **A. Inward loan of a portrait of Elizabeth Fry, after Charles Robert Leslie [WOA 20]**

Sileas Wood, Assistant Curator, briefed the Committee.

Ms Wood spoke about Elizabeth Fry's role as a philanthropist and social campaigner, and of her work on prison reform. The sitter had also been one of the first women invited to speak before a parliamentary select committee and to have watched debates from the ventilator above the House of Commons Chamber. There were very few painted portraits of her and this example was made during her lifetime, the original of which was said to have been an excellent likeness.

The Chair asked for more information on the statement that the sitter was one of the first women to use the ventilator space. Melanie Unwin, Curator, said that the sitter had been granted access to the ventilator gallery because she had given evidence before a select committee. It is likely that she was one of the first two women to have been allowed into the space to watch a debate. Women had been banned from watching debates from the Commons Gallery and the ventilator would become the only space available to them for viewing debates in the first half of the nineteenth century.

The Chair suggested holding an event if the loan was approved to celebrate the display of the portrait in Parliament. Ms Unwin said that it would be possible to hold an event such as a talk and to temporarily display the portrait at the event.

### **Decision**

The Committee **agreed** to request a loan of the portrait of Elizabeth Fry (NPG 898) from the National Portrait Gallery.

### **B. Outward loan of the portrait of Joan Ruddock by Anastasia Pollard**

James Ford, Assistant Curator, briefed the Committee.

Dr Ford said that the exhibition for which the artist had requested the loan of the portrait was a prestigious one.

The Chair said that the request was not controversial and recommended that the Committee approve it.



## Decision

The Committee **agreed** to give retrospective approval for the outward loan of the portrait of Joan Ruddock by Anastasia Pollard to the Annual Portrait Exhibition of the Royal Society of Portrait Painters (10-25 May 2018)

### 5) First Waves Art Sessions: Update on outcomes of the Glasgow workshop

Sileas Wood, Assistant Curator, briefed the Committee.

Ms Wood provided an update on the outcomes of the workshop held at Glasgow Women's Library, one of the partner institutions of the project. The workshop has been led by Scarlett Crawford, the Artist in Residence, who had spoken to participants about the Race Relations Acts and her arts background. Participants, who were extremely enthusiastic, were asked about their experiences of race relations in Britain and responded to the brief positively, telling their stories through the images taken. The photos would be exhibited in Glasgow. The next of the workshops would be held in Wales in June. Ms Crawford would provide an update on her progress to the Committee at its next meeting.

The Chair asked where future workshops would be held. Ms Wood said that there would be workshops in Thamesmead in July, Nottingham and Liverpool in August, and Leeds in October. The partner institutions would then exhibit a selection of the works created during the workshops and these would eventually be shown in Parliament.

Camilla Aitken, Media Officer, said that a press release with the key messages had been issued to the regional Scottish press. The intention was to demonstrate Parliament's commitment to representing the diversity of the UK. A piece in the Sunday Times about the Glasgow workshop had reached over 700,000 readers and two other top newspapers in Scotland had also covered the story. There had also been interest from the arts press. Ms Crawford had also promoted the workshop, posting the work that was produced on Instagram. It was also hoped that an internal communication would be sent to Members and staff across the House. The artworks produced during the workshops would eventually be returned to the communities that had made them after they had been displayed in Parliament.

## Decision

The Committee **noted** the update on First Waves: Exploring the impact of race relations legislation in the UK.

### 6) Vote 100 activities and events

Melanie Unwin, Curator, briefed the Committee.

Ms Unwin provided an update on upcoming activities and events to commemorate Vote 100. *Voice and Vote: Women's Place in Parliament*, a major public exhibition would open on Wednesday 27 June, and there would be a special late viewing for Members that evening from 6-8pm. On 5-7 September a conference *A Century of Women MPs* would be held in Portcullis House and the University of Westminster.



## **Decision**

The Committee **noted** the update on Vote 100 activities and events.

### **7) Any other business**

Emma Gormley, Deputy Curator, reminded the Committee of the dates of upcoming outward loans of artworks from the Collection. The first was the portrait of Tony Benn by Andrew Tift that would be displayed at The New Gallery, Walsall, from 25 May to 2 September. The second was the portrait of Diane Abbot by Stuart Pearson Wright that would be displayed at the People's History Museum, Manchester, from 2 June 2018 to 3 February 2019. Diane Abbot had been informed about the loan of the portrait.

### **8) Date and time of the next meeting**

The Committee will next meet on Tuesday 26 June at 2.00pm.