



- IN CONFIDENCE: FOR COMMITTEE USE ONLY -

NOTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 8 JANUARY 2019 AT 9.30AM IN COMMITTEE ROOM 21, PALACE OF WESTMINSTER (INF 10)

Members present: Alison McGovern (Chair)
Nic Dakin
Jonathan Djanogly
Chris Bryant (ex officio)

Apologies: Ann Clwyd, David Lammy and Tom Tugendhat

In attendance: Melanie Unwin, Curator of Works of Art (Acting)
James Ford, Assistant Curator
Sileas Wood, Assistant Curator
Maev Mac Coille, Media Officer

1) Informal Note [INF 09]

The Committee **agreed** the informal notes of the meeting on 13 November 2018.

Matters arising

Bust of Oliver Cromwell

Melanie Unwin, Curator (Acting), and Maev Mac Coille, Media Officer, reported that there had been some media interest over the Christmas Recess following the relocation of the bust of Oliver Cromwell.

Portrait of Paddy Ashdown

James Ford, Assistant Curator, reported that the portrait of Paddy Ashdown by Anthony Palliser was to be redisplayed in Portcullis House following Lord Ashdown's death.

2) Financial Statement [WOA 43]

Melanie Unwin, Curator (Acting), briefed the Committee.

There were no changes to report since the last meeting. Expenditure for the two photographs that the Committee agreed to acquire in November would appear on the next Financial Statement.

Decision

The Committee **noted** the financial statement.



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3) Nancy Astor 100 commemorations

Luke Pollard MP and Melanie Unwin, Curator (Acting), briefed the Committee.

Mr Pollard provided an update on activities in the Plymouth Sutton and Devonport constituency to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the election to Parliament of Nancy Astor.

Ms Unwin then put forward the following proposals as to how the anniversary could be commemorated in Parliament:

- relocating the painting of Astor being introduced as the first woman MP, on loan from Plymouth City Council, to the Members' Dining Room and producing a new booklet with information about the works on display (subject to Plymouth Council's agreement);
- repurposing a short film on Astor made for the Vote100 Project;
- producing new interpretive content for the relief sculpture of Astor displayed on the Committee Corridor and the terracotta bust on the Admission Order Office Corridor.

Members supported the proposals but noted that interpretive content should present a balanced view of the role in the history of Parliament played by those depicted in the artworks on display.

Decision

The Committee **noted** the update.

4) Restoration and Renewal and the Parliamentary Art Collection loans considerations [WOA 44]

Melanie Unwin, Curator (Acting), briefed the Committee.

There were over 500 artworks on inward loan which would need to be returned to lenders prior to the commencement of Restoration and Renewal. As a number of the artworks were accepted many years ago, and the Committee's acquisition priorities had since changed, decisions would need to be taken by the Committee as to which of the artworks should be permanently returned to their owners. The curators would be undertaking a project to contact lenders and investigate and update loan ownership details where required, and the Committee would be presented with a series of proposals and updates over the coming years.

The following points were discussed:

- it was noted that R&R presented an opportunity to review the artworks on inward loan against the current acquisition policy;
- it was noted the Committee and the Curator's Office would retain ownership of this work while working closely with the R&R Programme.



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Decision

The Committee **noted** the report.

5) Elizabeth Tower artist residency

James Ford, Assistant Curator, briefed the Committee.

An update would be provided to the Committee at a future meeting, once a business case had been submitted to the Director of Finance for consideration.

Decision

The Committee **noted** the update.

6) Display proposal: The Royal Humane Society Medal [WOA 45]

James Ford, Assistant Curator, briefed the Committee.

Dr Ford put forward a proposal for a year-long display on the Medals Corridor of a medal awarded to pilot Henry Spencer in 1851 by the Royal Humane Society.

Decision

The Committee **agreed** to the proposed Royal Humane Society Medal display.

7) Updates, acquisitions, loans and moves

a) Potential acquisition of three artworks currently on loan

Melanie Unwin, Curator (Acting), briefed the Committee on the potential acquisition of three artworks currently on loan to the Parliamentary Art Collection:

- Annie Besant by Edward Hodgson Smart
- William Petty-Fitzmaurice by Thomas Gainsborough
- Henry St John, 1st Viscount Bolingbroke, by Charles D'Agar

The Committee requested that the curators undertake further research on the artworks and their valuations and provide an update at a future meeting.

Decision

The Committee **noted** the update.

c) First Waves update

Sileas Wood, Assistant Curator, briefed the Committee.



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The work produced during the residency workshops, led by the artist, Scarlett Crawford, would be displayed together in Westminster Hall for the first time from 7 January until 13 February, with the exhibition launch due to take place on 15 January. Members were encouraged to attend.

Decision

The Committee **noted** the update.

d) Incident in St Stephen's Hall

Melanie Unwin, Curator (Acting), briefed the Committee.

Inclement weather on the evening of 10 November and a blocked gutter had led to an ingress of water in St Stephen's Hall. The curators were quickly onsite to protect the artworks at risk, though some of the paintings and statues on display had suffered some damage. The paintings had since been conserved but the statues had yet to be cleaned as the curators were considering applying for funding to clean all of the statues in the Hall to ensure the appearance of the works was acceptable.

Decision

The Committee **noted** the update.

e) Request for permission to sell a copy of a bust of John Major [WOA 46]

James Ford, Assistant Curator, briefed the Committee.

The sculptor Anne Curry had requested to sell a copy of her bust of John Major that was in the Parliamentary Art Collection.

The Chair noted that, while supportive of the request, she was concerned about producing copies of artworks in the Collection as this could detract from their unique artist value, for which they were in part commissioned.

Several Members and the Chair agreed that it was unreasonable to ask for a percentage of the sale price to be donated to the Speaker's Art Fund as the artist should be allowed to keep any proceeds from the sale of the copy of her work.

Decision

The Committee:

- **agreed** the request from the sculptor Anne Curry to sell her 'Artist's copy' cast of the bronze bust of Sir John Major in the Parliamentary Art Collection; and
- **agreed** that it would not ask for a percentage of the sale price to be donated to the Speaker's Art Fund.



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8) Any other business

LGBT representation in the Collection

The Committee discussed ways to increase the representation of LGBT people in the Collection and to recognise their contributions to the history of Parliament. The Chair said that it could be considered in more detail at a future meeting.

9) Date and time of next meeting

The Committee will next meet on **Tuesday 12 February at 3.00pm.**