

SPEAKER'S ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON WORKS OF ART

Note of the meeting held on Wednesday 12 July 2023 at 4.30pm in Committee Room 19 [INF11]

Members present: Dean Russell (Chair)
Simon Baynes
Sarah Champion
Patrick Grady
Sally-Ann Hart
Kim Johnson

Apologies: Gagan Mohindra and Caroline Nokes

In attendance: Zoë Backhouse, Committee Secretariat
Dr Katy Barrett, Deputy Chief Curator
Stacey Clapperton, Assistant Curator
Lord Faulkner of Worcester, Chair of the Lord Speaker's Panel on
Works of Art
Melissa Hamnett, Chief Curator of Works of Art and Director of
Heritage Collections
Sean Harris, Committee Secretariat
Emma Gormley, Curator
Lorcan O'Donoghue, Media Officer
Edward Potton, Secretary
Cicely Robinson, Deputy Chief Curator
Grace Saull, Curator
Sileas Wood, Curator

1) Informal Note

The Committee **agreed** the informal notes of the meeting on 28 June.

Matters arising

Staff changes

The Committee welcomed Dr Cicely Robinson to the role of Deputy Chief Curator and expressed its very best wishes to Dr Katy Barrett during her maternity leave.

2) Financial Statement

Melissa Hamnett, Director of Heritage Collections and Chief Curator, briefed the Committee.

Decision

The Committee **noted** the Financial Statement.

3) Future commissions

The Committee **agreed** commissions and acquisitions related to the Lying in State in September 2022.

4) Palace portrait moves over the Summer Recess

Sileas Wood, Curator: Works of Art, briefed the Committee on a proposed update to two principal hangs of portraits in the Palace and the first floor of Portcullis House. It was proposed that seven portraits of former prime ministers, some of which were not currently on display, should be displayed on the Committee Corridor, while four portraits should be added to the contemporary portrait display on the first floor of Portcullis House. This presented an opportunity for a portrait of Margaret Thatcher as the first female prime minister to be displayed on the Committee Corridor.

The Lord Speaker's Panel would be consulted at their July meeting on the proposed changes to the southern end of the Committee Corridor and asked to approve the display of two of the artworks which were from the House of Lords Collection.

A Member noted that it was difficult to view the paintings along the Committee Corridor due to the lighting. Ms Wood noted the lighting challenges in this space and that it could be looked at in the longer term.

Decision

The Committee **approved** the updates to the principal hangs of portraits on the first floor of Portcullis House and the Committee Corridor.

5) Catering Services Glass Wall display proposal

Dr Katy Barrett, Deputy Chief Curator, briefed the Committee on a proposed Glass Wall display in Portcullis House to commemorate 250 years of catering provision in the House.

Decision

The Committee **approved** the display.

6) Collections Development Policy

Melissa Hamnett, Director of Heritage Collections and Chief Curator, briefed the Committee on the Collections Development Policy, aimed at ensuring a standard approach to accessioning, deaccessioning and disposals for the Heritage Collections. This was part of wider work to bring all policies and procedures across the collections into alignment.

Decision

The Committee:

- **noted** the Collections Development Policy for the Heritage Collections; and

- **approve** the adoption of an additional clause within the Committee Disposals Policy.

7) Verbal updates

a) Margaret Bondfield

Emma Gormley, Curator: Works of Art, briefed the Committee on a proposal from Alison McGovern MP to commemorate the centenary of the election of Margaret Bonfield, the first female Labour MP elected to Parliament.

Decision

The Committee **expressed** its support for finding a suitable way to mark the anniversary in Parliament and asked the curators to look at options for consideration in the autumn.

b) Winnie Ewing portrait proposal

Dr Katy Barrett, Deputy Chief Curator, provided an update on work to arrange an inward loan to commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of the election of Winnie Ewing to Parliament. A Member offered to engage directly with the curators to further explore the possibilities.

Decision

The Committee **noted** the update.

c) Olaudah Equiano bust

Sileas Wood, Curator: Works of Art, provided an update on work to relocate the bust of Olaudah Equiano (WOA S758) after the Committee had expressed its preference for the bust to be displayed in the Lower Waiting Hall. The current plinth was unsuitable for display in the LWH, so a new one was in the process of being commissioned. The Committee would receive an update in the autumn.

Decision

The Committee **noted** the update.

8) Date and time of the next meeting

The Committee will next meet on **Wednesday 13 September at 4.30pm.**