NOTE OF THE SCOTTISH PARLIAMENT ART GROUP MEETING ON TUESDAY 6 SEPTEMBER 2005

Present: Jamie Stone MSP (Chair)
         Linda Fabiani MSP
         Ken MacIntosh MSP
         Jamie McGrigor MSP
         Fiona McDougall, Art Curator

In attendance: Stuart Todd, PA to the Director of Access and Information

The chair welcomed Jamie McGrigor MSP and Linda Fabiani MSP to their first meeting of the Art Group.

1. Legal status of the art collection

1.1. The group noted the current situation of the art collection. It was the legal property of the SPCB and decision making was done by SPCB, Clerk/Chief Executive and Director, Presiding Officer, Art Group and Art Curator.

1.2. Some previous work on setting up a charity/company limited by guarantee had been carried out and a proposal went to the SPCB but this was put on hold until the Art Curator was in post.

1.3. Options for the art collection included the setting up of a trust, company limited by guarantee, or private collection with a donation receiving arm.

1.4. The group favoured the charitable status of a trust and discussed a number of the benefits this would bring which included; the acceptance of donations and their associated tax benefits, the use of external funding bodies instead of limited SPCB resources, ensuring the collection’s long-term future, and enhanced credibility and reputation.

1.5. It was agreed in principal to the setting up of a charitable trust. The group would seek advice from Legal and work something up for SPCB approval.

   Action: Art Curator

2. Acquisitions Budget

2.1 The group considered what would be an appropriate annual budget for the Scottish Parliament to commission one or two works each year which would not necessarily be permanent, or to save the budget and commission less frequently. The group would look at delivering one significant commission for the two year
anniversary of the opening the Holyrood building. If charity status was implemented the budget could be supplemented with external funding.

2.2 The plan would be at the start to commission, for example, specific non-represented major Scottish artists considering the approach to the history of Parliament and Scotland and contemporary Scotland. Commissioning tended to be more successful than purchasing art. The group acknowledged the need to establish a collection first then look at emerging artists and other ideas such as student workshops etc.

2.3. The group agreed:

- that between £50k - £90k would be an appropriate commissioning budget to seek SPCB approval for and
- to seek £120k SPCB approval for art in the landscape as a one-off budget commitment and to consider as part of the annual programme.

Action: Art Curator

3. Temporary exhibitions

3.1. The group acknowledged that temporary exhibitions could be high profile and provide an opportunity for engaging with the public and supporting the public interest.

3.2. The Parliament received many enquiries to display temporary exhibitions and there was a need to develop a strategy in order to support new younger artists as well as established ones. The group supported the proposals and the development of a programme of events for all types of art.

3.3. A separate budget for loans of temporary displays would be required and the group agreed to submit a budget bid of £5k for 2005-06. This would include the costs for special display equipment where necessary.

Action: Art Curator and PA to Director of Access and Information

4. External members for the Art Group

4.1. The SPCB had approved the addition of three external members for the Art Group. A short list would be provided to SPCB in October.

4.2 The external members should bring relevant knowledge and experience of the arts in Scotland to the group.
4.3. The categories for the external membership would be representation from the national collections, practicing contemporary artist and representative of non-visual arts.

4.4. The group agreed that external members would be appointed for the lifetime of the Parliament i.e. four years. The curator would approach the individuals initially before submitting a list to SPCB. There was also the option of co-opting additional expertise for advice where necessary.

Action: Art Curator

5. Exhibition proposals/donation offers

5.1. The group considered a number of exhibition proposals/offers and approved the following:

- The Lighthouse
- Japanese Consulate

5.2. The group did not approve the following proposals/offers:

- David Bellingham
- Ronald Rae Lion
- Memorials

Action: Art Curator

5.3. It was agreed that the development of art in the landscape would provide good opportunities for new commissioned work.

6. Events/education/interpretation

6.1. The group agreed that lectures, artist’s talks and publications were all important and acceptable elements of the art strategy.

7. General art update

7.1. The group noted the following updates:

- Doors Open Day would take place on Saturday 24 September.
- Applications would be sought again for the Scottish Executive’s commission for the suffrage sculpture.

Access and Information Directorate
September 2005