

ANGUS COUNCIL

MINUTE of MEETING of the **WILLIAM LAMB STUDIO ADVISORY COMMITTEE** held in the William Lamb Studio, Market Street, Montrose on Thursday 29 March 201 at 3.30 pm.

Present: Councillors BILL DUFF, TOMMY STEWART and RON STURROCK; NORMAN ATKINSON OBE (Chairman, Friends of the William Lamb Studio); and HILARY WHITE (Secretary, Friends of the William Lamb Studio).

Also Present: RORY TOSH (Senior Accountant, Finance Services, Place Directorate, Angus Council); FIONA DAKERS (Senior Manager – Libraries, Customer and Culture, ANGUSalive); and ANDREW WILSON, (Committee Officer, Place Directorate, Angus Council).

Councillor BILL DUFF, in the Chair.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Councillor Mark Salmond, Iain Lamb and Kirsty Hunter, Chief Executive, ANGUSalive.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Duff declared a non-financial interest in the business of the meeting in that he was a serving Director of ANGUSalive. He indicated that he would participate in all discussion and any voting.

3. MINUTE OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The minute of meeting of this Committee of 17 November 2017 was submitted and approved as a correct record.

4. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE PREVIOUS MINUTE

(i) Commemorative Plaque (Article 4(i) refers)

Norman Atkinson advised that he had received three communications from Historic Environment Scotland, confirming receipt of his application for the installation of a blue plaque at the Studio to commemorate William Lamb. He was hopeful that this would be progressed positively.

(ii) Donations Box

Fiona Dakers confirmed that ANGUSalive had no objection to the Friends placing a collections box within the Studio for the purpose of receiving donations to the Friends to support their activities in promoting the Studio to the public and general related fundraising. Any funds so realised would be solely for the use of the Friends in that connection.

5. 2017 SEASON UPDATE

(1) Report from ANGUSalive

With reference to Paragraph 5 of the minute of previous meeting, Fiona Dakers presented a report reviewing the period between September 2017 and the end of February 2018. The number of visitors between April 2017 and the end of February 2018 totalled 807, compared with 590 from the same period the previous year. Four open days, on 1 and 9 December and 20 and 27 February, had been attended by 50 visitors in total; these had been hosted by the Friends of William Lamb Studio (FOWLS). The Group had also opened the Studio for a party of students from Gray's School of Art, Aberdeen (RGU) in December.

A Lamb bust of Hugh MacDiarmid was temporarily on display in Montrose Museum as part of the *Landmarks, Poets, Portraits and Landscapes of Modern Scotland* exhibition.

ANGUSalve had been invited to take part in a follow-up to the original "Your Paintings" project after having successfully participated in the original project which had created a national database of oil paintings held in public collections. The follow up was intended to create a comprehensive information audit of UK public sculptures, enabling collections to provide online access to their works and people to engage with them. ANGUSalve believed that the William Lamb collection was likely to be a specific interest and would work with the Art UK team to provide access and information, along with other specific art works within Angus Council's collection for inclusion in the project.

(2) First Annual Report of Studio Activities by the Friends of William Lamb Studio - 2017

There was submitted a report by Hilary White, Secretary of the Friends, being the first annual report by the Friends of their activities over the past year. While it was acknowledged that, since ANGUSalve had assumed responsibility for the Council's museum collections, there had been no reductions in staff numbers, although there were other constraints which affected the opening times of the Studio. Until now, the Friends had either opened the Studio themselves or as support to the Seasonal Assistant, funded from the common good fund. The Studio could only be open for a maximum of 250 days per year, as the keys to the Studio were held by the museum and therefore only available when the museum itself was open on 5 days a week (Tuesday to Saturday, 10.00am – 5.00pm).

Over the 2017/18 season, the Friends had supported 33 events during the summer season and 37 sole openings out of season, including supporting a special Lamb exhibition at Montrose Museum, the royal visit by Prince Edward, as well as special openings for MoFest, Doors Open Days, a Christmas event and the Montrose Extravaganza. Education visits were also facilitated including a Primary School and a double session for Gray's College of Arts students (as mentioned above). The Friends had also been involved in facilitating the filming of a Montrose promotional video, pre-booked group visits to the Studio and talks at Montrose Museum and dealt with specialist visits from book researchers.

6. FUTURE ARRANGEMENTS

The Committee gave some consideration to the future of the Studio and the decision of Montrose Common Good to pay £5,000 towards the administrative and maintenance costs of the William Lamb Studios for 2017/2018, but not to meet any of the revised 2017/2018 shortfall of £3,700, nor offer funding in any future year.

This, in effect, removed all funding from the Studio from 1 April 2018 and threw into severe doubt the prospect of the Studio being opened to the public in the coming seasons. There was no funding available for the appointment of the summer assistant in the light of that decision and the Friends believed that they would be unable to open the Studio on their own as they would be uninsured. There was however a Friends public liability insurance policy in place and Fiona Dakers undertook to check the cover provided by this and any Angus Council / ANGUSalve insurance. The Friends stated their understanding that if they opened the Studio, they would be liable during that time.

From the ANGUSalve perspective, it was now not funded to operate the William Lamb Studio. It had no budget for the seasonal assistant nor for any of the running costs, and the practicalities remained to be discussed fully between Angus Council and ANGUSalve. ANGUSalve itself was required to save £300,000 in financial year 2018/19. In the meantime, the property remained on ANGUSalve's books and the Council remained responsible for its maintenance and any repairs necessary to keep it wind and watertight. The collection also remained the responsibility of the Council, although currently cared for by ANGUSalve. An Options Appraisal Report would be compiled, led by the Strategic Director – Place to be submitted to the first available meeting of the Policy and Resources Committee of the Council which it was hoped would shed some light on the way ahead. The Friends would be consulted as part of the preparation of this Report.

The Committee noted the position.

7. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The Committee had previously agreed to meet on Friday 16 November 2018; however, it was likely that a further meeting would require to be held before that date, depending on the outcome of the Options Appraisal Report.