

INFORMATION NOTE

Arts Service Review – Progress Update

Cabinet at its meeting on 24th September 2014 considered a report on the review of the arts service (and in particular the future of the Lytham St Annes art collection. The report identified 20 issues in relation to the service/collection. Cabinet agreed two main recommendations:

- To investigate the feasibility of establishing an appropriate mechanism/ legal framework to enable a management policy for the art collection to be developed.
- To explore the feasibility/options available to appoint a part time dedicated Arts Development Officer who would be responsible for management of the art collection as part of a wider arts development role and to secure external funding for projects at a level which exceeds the cost of the post.

A number of the 20 issues identified by the task and finish group will be dealt with through the above two main actions. However there were some other issues outside of these which included; concern over storage conditions and risk identification, limited opportunity to exhibit collection, not all items on the inventory and small budget for management, no restoration budget.

The following provides an update:

- Instructions have been prepared and sent to Counsel to advise on an appropriate mechanism/legal framework to manage the collection. A response is expected around mid-June.
- A part time Arts Development Officer role has been scoped, evaluated and costed which is estimated at £15,000 per annum for 18.5 hours per week. Work continues to investigate the possible sources of external funding that could be used to finance this role.
- Proposals for improvements to the art store (which stores those paintings not currently on display) have been identified and costed at £39,000. This would provide a clean dry space with a constant relative humidity, improved security with the replacement of the existing wooden racking with bespoke pull out steel mesh painting frames for improved access and efficient use of space. A capital bid was considered as part of the 2015/16 budget deliberations.
- Work continues in developing the inventory of the collection in conjunction with Lancashire County Council Museums Service. Meanwhile Fylde DFAS¹ has made good progress with the 'Tagging the Treasures' initiative.
- A risk assessment is being undertaken to identify high risk items and to change storage/display/security measures if necessary.

A further report will be brought to the Committee once a response from Counsel has been received and considered.

FURTHER INFORMATION

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¹ Decorative and Fine Arts Society