

# Public Document Pack

**Democratic Services Section  
Legal and Civic Services Department  
Belfast City Council  
City Hall  
Belfast  
BT1 5GS**

18th March, 2021

## **MEETING OF STRATEGIC POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE**

Dear Alderman/Councillor,

In addition to those matters previously notified to you, the following items will also be considered at the meeting to be held at 9.30 am on Friday, 19th March, 2021.

Yours faithfully,

SUZANNE WYLIE

Chief Executive

### **AGENDA:**

#### **2. Restricted Items**

- (i) Brexit and Port health - Transition Update (Pages 1 - 8)
- (j) Roselawn Cemetery - Action Plan to implement Recommendations in Peter Coll QC Report (Pages 9 - 24)

#### **9. Operational Issues**

- (d) James Connolly Heritage Trail Sign (Pages 25 - 34)

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<b>Subject:</b>	<b>James Connolly Heritage Trail Sign</b>
<b>Date:</b>	19th March 2021
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	John Walsh, City Solicitor/Director of Legal and Civic Services
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	John Walsh, City Solicitor/Director of Legal and Civic Services

<b>Restricted Reports</b>	
<b>Is this report restricted?</b>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<b>If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?</b>	
After Committee Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
After Council Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sometime in the future	<input type="checkbox"/>
Never	<input type="checkbox"/>

<b>Call-in</b>	
<b>Is the decision eligible for Call-in?</b>	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

<b>1.0</b>	<b>Purpose of Report or Summary of Main Issues</b>
1.1	A request has been received from Redhead Exhibition to install an interpretative interactive sign on a bollard facing the north west lawn at the City Hall. This is part of a cultural heritage project funded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund and relates to a James Connolly Heritage Trail in Belfast, for which there are 13 proposed locations. The sign will be 300 mm in diameter, not 400 mm as stated in the letter requesting installation which is appended to this report.
<b>2.0</b>	<b>Recommendation</b>
2.1	The Committee is asked to consider the request and indicate if it consents to this installation.

<b>3.0</b>	<b>Main Report</b>
3.1	<p>The sign is part of a heritage trail throughout the City focusing on James Connolly's Belfast 1911-1916. The sign would be the first of 13 located around the City on buildings and areas of historical significance, from City Hall out to Custom House steps, Sailortown, York Street, back to City Centre and then west to Conway Mill finishing at the Connolly family home opposite the City Cemetery on Falls Road. It will be permanently fixed to one of the black iron chain-linked posts on the west side of the main entrance (see appendix 2, not to-scale). The size of the sign is approx.300mm diameter (see draft design at appendix 3).</p>
3.2	<p>The sign is not a commemorative installation. Its aim is to provide a physical trigger point for delivery of an augmented reality (smartphone) app that will deliver dynamic interpretive content. Once triggered using the QR code on the sign, the lawns at City Hall will become a virtual interpretive space. Four panels will 'pop-up' (virtually) on the West lawn, and four on the East lawn. The panels will set the social, economic, political and cultural context of Belfast in 1911 when Connolly arrived to live and work in the City. The City Hall grounds is the ideal location to deliver this type of interpretive content. It is an ideal location for visitors to start the tour around the City, using the app for navigation and interpretation and also a printed map for guidance. The interpretative use of the grounds in this way can be seen as added value to the indoor Visitor Exhibition and outdoor space. The walking tour has a tourism and cultural focus, dovetailing with other new product development initiatives at the James Connolly Visitor Centre.</p>
3.3	<p>Redhead has indicated that the way in which this particular app works is very site-specific in terms of orientating the visitor with panels appearing on the west and east lawns.</p>
3.4	<p>However, given that there are likely to be a number of cultural heritage type projects, some of which will have City Hall as a focus, it will be necessary to consider how these types of installations can be managed in the future. In future it may be possible to have an interactive panel installed at the entrance to the Visitor Exhibition which would allow this type of app to be accessed.</p>
3.5	<p><b>Financial and Resource Implications</b>  There are no financial implications.</p> <p><b>Equality or Good Relations Implications / Rural Needs Assessment</b>  The proposal will be subject to equality screening subject to your decision.</p>

<b>4.0</b>	<b>Documents Attached</b>
	Appendix 1 – Letter of request from Redhead Exhibition Appendix 2 – Photograph showing proposed location Appendix 3 – Proposed design of sign

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18 January 2020

Ms Suzanne Wylie  
Chief Executive  
Belfast City Council  
Belfast City Hall  
BT1 5 GS

Dear Suzanne

Ref: James Connolly Belfast Heritage Trail

Redhead Exhibition has been commissioned to design and install a James Connolly Heritage trail in Belfast that places a plaque at a number of sites of historical significance throughout the City. The trail will target local and international visitors and is being integrated into the City's tourism capital via Visit Belfast and other City tourism outlets.

The trail is being funded by National Lottery Heritage Fund through Áras Uí Chonghaile the James Connolly Visitor Centre and local tourism body Fáilte Feirste Thiar.

There are 12 proposed locations for the trail such as Custom House Steps (the scene of Connolly's first speech in the city), Corporation Street (where the offices of the Irish Transport and General Workers' Union ITGWU were located), York Street (where Connolly worked with the millworkers) and naturally the family home on Falls Road opposite the City Cemetery.

The trail has been designed as a walking tour and will be supported by an innovative augmented reality app that facilitates the presentation of dynamic interpretive content via smartphone and tablet devices.

The tour will begin in the grounds of City Hall, a natural meeting and focal point. City Hall is also an ideal location to engage visitors with augmented reality content through the app that sets out the social, economic and political context of Belfast at that time.

To that end, the historical context augmented reality presentation at City Hall would focus on Belfast in 1912 as an industrial powerhouse, the development of the middle-class suburbs, the Home Rule debate, the establishment of the Ulster Volunteer Force and the Irish Volunteers and the arrival in the City of James Connolly the trade union pioneer.

The trail will have 12 historical plaques installed at the identified sites of historical significance and in support of the content as outlined above, we are requesting that one be facilitated in the grounds at Belfast City Hall. The plaque would be used by visitors to 'trigger' the app content and begin the navigation features for the walking tour.

The plaques will be circular in shape, 400mm in diameter and retain a consistent design across the various sites as proposed. Please see attached design and location proposal.

All costs for design, manufacture and installation of the plaques is being met by the National Lottery Heritage Fund and no request for funding is being made to the Council. However, we would request permission to install one of the plaques within the grounds at City Hall, being 'stop' 1 of 12 for the trail which is scheduled to be launched at the end of March.

There is also another plaque proposed for Gt. George's Street where Connolly's published articles in the *Shan Van Vocht* were printed. It would be ideal to locate this plaque on the railings of the adjacent BCC York Street carpark.

Please let us know if these requests can be facilitated and if appropriate with whom we should liaise with regard to the relevant permission and installation requirements.

Kind regards

Michael Lyons  
Assistant Director



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JAMES CONNOLLY  
BELFAST HERITAGE TRAIL

*James Connolly*

BELFAST CITY HALL  
HALLA NA CATHRACH BHÉAL FEIRSTE

When opened in 1906 Belfast was an industrial powerhouse. Connolly arrived here in 1911 to organise the City's workers.



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