

City Hall/City Hall Grounds Installations Working Group

Wednesday, 26th October, 2022

THE CITY HALL/CITY HALL GROUNDS INSTALLATIONS WORKING GROUP MINUTES

HELD REMOTELY VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS

Members present: Councillor Beattie (Chairperson);
Councillors Dorrian, Lyons, Murray and O'Hara.

In attendance: Ms. S. Grimes, Director of Physical Programmes;
Ms. K. Mullen, Project Sponsor;
Ms. D. Colville, City Innovation Manager;
Mr. M. McCann, City Innovation Programme Lead;
Ms. C. McCann, City Innovation Programme Officer;
Mr. J. Hanna, Senior Democratic Services Officer; and
Ms. V. Smyth, Democratic Services Officer;

Apologies

There were no apologies received.

Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of 31st August, 2022 were taken as read and signed as correct.

Permanent Acknowledgment of All the Fire Services Efforts During the Belfast Blitz

Councillor Lyons raised the matter of a permanent acknowledgment of all the fire services efforts during the Belfast Blitz further to the 75th anniversary in 2016. The Project Sponsor advised that she expected that there had been a Notice of Motion in relation to this in the past. She informed the Members that a Belfast Blitz memorial was planned for Cathedral Gardens, however, the memorial would acknowledge all those who were affected by the Belfast Blitz and not just the fire services. The Project Sponsor confirmed that she would take the matter forward by way of a discussion.

Augment the City – Proposals for City Hall Exhibition Space (Verbal Update)

The Director of Physical Programmes referred to a report which had been brought to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee in relation to the proposals for 'Augment the City' and handed over to the City Innovation Manager who provided a verbal update on the project. The City Innovation Manager informed the Members that 'Augment the City' was a 12-month project aimed to help Belfast City Region partners to better

understand, and plan for, new digital technologies that were likely to shape the content and presentation of major visitor and cultural investments over the next 5 years, including Belfast Stories, the City Hall exhibition and other visitor locations across the city region.

The City Innovation Manager presented the following key objectives for the programme and explained how the project would be delivered in terms of funding, installation and connectivity in 3 rooms in the City Hall.

- To support the teams behind the city's major visitor experiences to learn more about the potential of immersive technologies;
- To provide over £700,000 to the city's creative digital SME's to support their R&D in immersive technology;
- To create a major immersive visitor experience in the City Hall to complement the existing exhibition; and
- To showcase the ideas and prototypes developed by local SME's.

The City Innovation Manager advised that the development of a £1 million business case was underway and would be submitted to the Department for Economy (DfE) to draw down City Deal funding, and a response was expected around mid-November. She further advised that the development of a collaborative agreement with BT and other key industry partners to create a timebound world-class visitor immersive showcase in the City Hall was also underway.

There was discussion around the benefits of the project and the opportunity to link to different parts of the city which would encourage neighbourhood tourism.

It was agreed that the City Innovation Manager would provide the Members with a project update at December's Working Group.

Carson Tile Update

The Director of Physical Programmes reminded the Members that the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee, at its meeting on 23rd September 2022, had agreed to proceed with the option set out in the report in respect of the Carson Tile. It was further agreed that, in line with early discussions with HED, the material be specified as black granite.

The Working Group recommended to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee that the Carson Tile be moved to Stage 3 as committed on the Capital Programme; and agreed the concept design for the associated plaque which contextualised the rationale behind the Carson Tile.

The Project Sponsor advised that logistics and timing around installation were yet to be confirmed and the timescale would be brought to the next Working Group meeting.

Frederick Douglass - Update on Procurement

The Director of Physical Programmes reminded the Members that, following approvals, a two-stage procurement process with one artist appointed to undertake the design, installation and manufacture of a statue to Frederick Douglass had commenced.

The Members noted the current status of the design, manufacture and installation of the statue to Frederick Douglass in Belfast and:

- i. Noted that, following moderation of the PQQ (Pre-Qualification Questionnaire) stage, 3 artists had been invited to the ITT next stage (Invitation to Tender);
- ii. Noted that ITT documents would be issued week commencing 24th October, with a return date of early December with a view to appointing an artist prior to Christmas 2022; and
- iii. Gave consideration to the public unveiling arrangements and developing a narrative around the new piece.

City Hall Statues - Update on Procurement

The Members recalled that the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee, at its meeting on 28th March 2022, had agreed that the City Hall statues namely, Winifred Carney and Mary Ann McCracken, be moved to Stage 3 as committed on the Capital Programme, and that the necessary procurement processes be initiated. The Project Sponsor advised that the process had now commenced and, as the project moved forward, the Members would be asked to give consideration to the planned public unveiling of both pieces. It was expected that there would be significant public interest generated, therefore, it was essential that a narrative and context was agreed and developed around the installation of the new pieces. The Members were advised that they would be asked to make a recommendation on the type of unveiling ceremony working in partnership with the Mary Ann McCracken Foundation and Winifred Carney subject matter expert.

Regular updates would be provided to Installations - City Hall/City Hall Grounds Working Group during the process.

Chairperson