

## **Ulster Hall – Provision of Cleaning Services**

### **Background Information**

As part of the Ulster Hall's structural and operational review there is a requirement to look at options for the cleaning provision at the venue.

Cleaning at the Ulster Hall has in the past been operated as an in-house function.

The building was opened for concerts and events but was closed to the public at all other times, this allowed cleaning to take place during the day of a concert and on non event days.

The current structure has 2 dedicated part-time cleaners. Other attendants within the structure have a small amount of basic cleaning as part of their JD.

### **Current Situation**

The following environmental and operational changes have been proposed when the building opens in March 2009 and these will need to be taken into consideration to establish a way forward both in terms of the provision of, and budget estimates for cleaning services.

- The Ulster Orchestra will have office spaces at the rear of the building, office cleaning has been included as part of the lease agreement.
- The Ulster Orchestra will have the option to program concerts & rehearsals on Wed/Thurs & Fridays, along with the existing client base and with the introduction of a sales & marketing strategy it is envisaged that occupancy levels will be increased.
- It is the intention that the building will be open to the public from 0800 – 1800hrs Monday – Saturday, plus event nights
- Introduction of Interactive Exhibition areas
- A destination Café will be in operation within the foyer area.
- A bar service will be in operation for all events within the Group space
- A city centre Box Office will operate from the Foyer offering tickets for sale the Ulster Hall, Ulster Orchestra and Waterfront Hall events.
- Changes to the internal building surfaces to include carpets in the public corridor areas & fabric seating.

The new cleaning specification will be split into the following areas:-

- House Keeping
- Event House Keeping
- Turnarounds
- Deep cleans

***Option One – Status Quo***

Due to the increase in the hall's cleaning requirement as detailed above, the 2 part-time cleaning posts would not provide enough cleaning hours to deliver the cleaning service effectively.

***Option Two – Contracted out cleaning services***

This option would be to appoint a contract cleaner who would be responsible for the planning and management of the cleaning provision.

The costs are likely to be in the region of 120k per annum.

***Option Three – Part Ulster Hall in-house & part BCC cleaning services.***

The BCC department that currently provide cleaning services for the City Hall and Cecil Ward building were asked to examine the feasibility of providing the event turnaround and deep cleaning element of the service. It was felt by the section that this would be extremely difficult to manage and would incur high amounts of overtime and flexible payments. In addition, staff currently employed within the BCC Cleaning services would not have the required flexibility within their working terms and conditions to match the Hall's event requirements.

***Option Four – In house - House Keeping Services & a dedicated budget for event turnaround & deep cleans contracted out to a select list.***

This option would utilize the 2 part-time posts within the original structure – Duties would include general daytime housekeeping and Ulster Orchestra Office cleans.

Event cleaning would be brought in when required and can either be offered as additional hours to the part-time posts or to the contract cleaner. In addition, the catering contract provider will have event cleaning of their own designated areas as part of the tender specification.

Planning for event turnaround & deep cleans would be the responsibility of the venue manager, establishing through a procurement process a select list of cleaning contractors.

The costs are likely to be in the region of 90k per annum.

**Recommendation**

It is recommended that **Option Four** should be adopted, to allow for the utilization of existing posts and allowing for greater management control of the operational budget.