

**GOOD RELATIONS PARTNERSHIP
MEMORABILIA WORKING GROUP
FRIDAY 16 OCTOBER 2009**

MEMBERS PRESENT:	Councillor Hendron	Chairman
	Councillor McCausland	Deputy Chairman
	Councillor McCarthy	
	Councillor C. Maskey	
	Councillor Stoker	
IN ATTENDANCE:	Hazel Francey	Good Relations Manager
	Anne Deighan	Good Relations Officer
	Marie Craig	Good Relations Assistant (minutes)
	Robert Corbett	Records Manager, Chief Executive's Dept
	Robert Heslip	Heritage Officer, Culture & Arts Unit
	Maureen Mackin	Consultant
APOLOGIES:	Councillor Kyle	

1.0	ROUTINE MATTERS (MINUTES OF SPECIAL MEETING OF 15 SEPTEMBER 2009)
1.1	The minutes of the special meeting of 15 September were taken as read and signed as correct.
1.2	Arising from the minutes Hazel reported that the minutes of that meeting had initially been referred back by the Strategic Policy & Resources Committee at its meeting on 18 September, with the exception of the establishment of an Advisory Panel, which the Committee had said was unnecessary, since the Council already had specialist officers in post that could assist. She added that the Council had subsequently approved and adopted the recommendations of the Memorabilia Working Group after a recorded vote at its monthly meeting on 1 October.
2.0	MEMORABILIA IN THE CITY HALL – UP-DATE AND FUTURE ACTION PLAN
2.1	Cllr. Hendron welcomed Maureen Mackin to the meeting to inform members on possible future displays and exhibitions in the City Hall. Maureen began by briefing the group on the number of ways that this could be approached.
2.2	There are currently a number of exhibitions already available in other organisations e.g. the Linen Hall Library, some historical and some political. Reproductions of Ulster Museum owned paintings can also be made – similar to those in the Conor and Lavery Rooms on the City Hall. Robert Heslip advised that it would be easier to borrow paintings from the Ulster Museum etc if the Council had an exhibitions management policy in place, governing insurance, administration, responsibilities etc. The Group agreed that this should be investigated to see what it would entail.
2.3	New exhibitions could also be created from resources already available. Examples include: <i>Creating the Way</i> – a celebration of Belfast's artists; this would concentrate on the wealth of artistic culture and personalities in Belfast. Material could be used from the BBC, Linen Hall Library and other archives. <i>Caring and Sharing</i> – this would concentrate on the tradition of charitable and voluntary work on the part of philanthropic individuals, churches and voluntary organisations, hospitals etc. Materials would be available from hospitals and charities and photographs from the Jonathan Bardon books on Belfast. <i>Places of Belfast</i> – some material from the Ulster Museum showing 19 th century Belfast could be reproduced beside contemporary pictures of Belfast to show the development of the city.

	Work could be done involving community and voluntary groups to produce a 'people's history' of the city.
2.4	With reference to the proposed boxing exhibition, Maureen has researched material and images which are evocative of Belfast's boxing scene in the 1950's and 1960's. Suggestions were made for a painting depicting the energy of boxing, including a collage of action scenes. Tapes of old boxing contests have been uncovered and it was suggested that they could be screened, followed by a series of reminiscence workshops.
2.5	Robert Corbett reminded the Group that there was already material on boxing displayed in the Ulster Hall. There was a wider discussion on how information regarding exhibitions etc is shared.
2.6	A Member raised the possibility of a sports 'Hall of Fame' type exhibition with supporting talks and seminars which could tie in with the Olympics in 2012. Hazel advised that one of the first exhibitions in the East Entrance of the City Hall would be on the subject of NI Sporting Legends, organised by Brian Morrison and she confirmed that information on Belfast Celtic was included in that exhibition.
2.7	It was agreed that the above list was not exhaustive. A Member suggested that religion would be a good subject as it was a very important topic in Belfast. Contemporary works could also be considered.
2.8	There was agreement that all the suggestions were good; however a rationale needed to be developed for each exhibition. It was suggested that a long-term, 5 year plan be developed giving a rationale for each proposed exhibition.
2.9	There was agreement that all Councillors should be made aware of the work of the Memorabilia Working Group and the Group agreed that a brain-storming session be arranged for all Councillors in a few months in order to ensure full participation in and support for future exhibitions and displays.
2.10	It was agreed that all exhibitions where text was included should be located at eye level for ease of viewing and that this would require proper display fittings to be provided. The exhibition programme should be diverse and inclusive and should also take balance into consideration. Balance should not just reflect unionist/nationalist issues but also class and ethnic minority issues.
2.11	Maureen advised the working group of the following exhibition materials from the Linen Hall Library that would be available immediately – she has already viewed these with Hazel Francey and Anne Deighan: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • United Irishmen and the Governance of Ireland • The Unkindest Cut – a cartoon history of Ulster in the 20th Century • The Famine Decade in Ireland • Theatre in Ulster 1917 - present • Images & Reflections – photography allied with poetry and prose • Celebration of the Ulster Literary Theatre • State of Play: Theatre and cultural identity in 20th century theatre in Ulster • Troubled images – posters and images of the NI conflict It was noted that that most exhibitions would be on display for 1 – 3 months.
2.12	There was discussion around the removal of portraits of former Town Clerks in the Reception Hall and replacing them with other art works. It was suggested that these portraits in the Reception Hall should only be finally removed when suitable replacements have been agreed, although work should start immediately on finding alternative locations for these large art works.
2.13	Suggestions for replacements included portraits of famous women of Belfast, landscape paintings and the commissioning of new work, as had been done with the Mary Ann McCracken bust, although this will have cost implications. There was also a suggestion that a stained glass window

	depicting Irish myths and legends could be installed in the first floor on the Lord Mayor's corridor.
2.14	It was agreed that proper signage, providing a short history of each art piece, should be displayed beside all portraits and paintings on public view within the City Hall. The Group noted that this had been agreed previously but no action had been taken.
2.15	<p>After discussion, the group agreed the following actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The possibility of the Council developing a exhibitions management policy is to be investigated • The logistics and legalities of loans from the Ulster Museum is to be investigated • Further options around the boxing exhibition to be brought to the next meeting • All Councillors will be invited to attend a meeting to collect their ideas and suggestions for exhibitions – this will take place in the New Year • Wall space in the Reception Room is to be prepared for clearance and replacement material for this area to be considered • Professional display fittings should be provided for the new display space in the Reception Hall and other appropriate areas, in keeping with the style of the building • Visits will be arranged to the Linen Hall Library to view suggested exhibitions/archives. Archives in the Central Library and PRONI will also be checked • A list of what is currently available will be brought to next month's meeting for consideration; what is available in the medium term will also be collated • Artwork to reflect the Ulster - Scots heritage and tradition can be considered at a future date • The production of proper interpretive signage for portraits and paintings in the City Hall should be progressed as a matter of urgency
3.0	PLAQUES IN THE CITY HALL
3.1	Hazel reported that there had been a query regarding the replacement of various plaques in the east wing of the City Hall, mostly military plaques. She reminded the Group that the Council had previously agreed to remove a large number of plaques presented over the years by various organisations and bodies. The Group agreed that any decision with regard to the relocation of plaques should be considered within the wider context of City Hall memorabilia and the fact that the East Entrance area had now been designated to be used for community exhibitions. The Group agreed therefore that the plaques should not be replaced in the interim.
4.0	DAY AND TIME FOR FUTURE MEETINGS
4.1	In order that as many members as possible might attend, the Working Group agreed that the day and time of future meetings should be changed to Thursday at 4.30 pm, or at 5.30 pm if there is a Town Planning Committee meeting on the same date.
5.0	DATE OF NEXT MEETING
5.1	Thursday 12 November at 4.30 pm.

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