

**MEETING OF MEMORABILIA WORKING GROUP  
MONDAY 4 APRIL 2011**

<b>MEMBERS PRESENT:</b>	Councillor Hendron	Chairman
	Councillor Kyle	
	Ciaran Quigley	Town Solicitor/ Assistant Chief Executive
	Hazel Francey	Good Relations Manager
	Anne Deighan	Good Relations Officer
	Mark McCloskey	Good Relations Assistant (minutes)

<b>1.0</b>	<b>ROUTINE MATTERS</b>
1.1	The minutes of the meeting of 17 January 2011 were taken as read and signed as correct.
<b>2.0</b>	<b>PUBLIC ART - to CELEBRATE the CONTRIBUTION and ACHIEVEMENTS of WOMEN in BELFAST</b>
2.1	<p>The Good Relations Manager reminded the Group that the Council, at its meeting on 1st March had passed unanimously the following Notice of Motion:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">"Belfast City Council notes that the Centenary of International Women's Day will be celebrated on 8th March, 2011. International Women's Day is a global celebration of the economic, political and social achievements of women past, present and future.</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">The Council, while recognising the progress made towards equality between men and women, acknowledges that this journey is not complete, particularly in relation to women's economic independence, equal representation in decision-making roles and ending violence against women. The Council joins with women from across Belfast in celebrating the achievements thus far and pledges its support to work towards a more equal future for women.</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">The Council agrees that consideration be given to the erection of a piece of public art, within the environs of the City Hall or its grounds, to celebrate the contribution and achievements of women in the City."</p> <p>The Council had agreed that consideration of the public art be referred to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee.</p>
2.2	The Good Relations Manager reported that at its meeting on 18 March, the Strategic Policy & Resources Committee had in turn referred this issue to the Memorabilia Working Group, since this Group had a direct remit to discuss memorabilia and to acquire materials to ensure that the items on display in the City Hall were representative of all communities in the City.
2.3	She requested that the Working Group give some consideration as to what form this piece of public art should take – for example, a portrait(s); a painting(s); a sculpture; a textile wall hanging etc. - and to its location, i.e. in the City Hall or in its grounds.
2.4	The Group agreed that, in view of recent comments by the Historic Buildings Branch in relation to the use of the City Hall grounds for a possible sculpture, it would be preferable if the artwork were located inside the building.
2.5	After consideration, the Working Group agreed that the Reception Hall should be the preferred location and that two large wall paintings of previous Town Clerks currently hanging there should be re-located elsewhere within the building.

2.6	The Working Group also agreed that the Good Relations Manager should proceed to draw up for consideration at its next meeting a specification inviting submissions for this work. Artists applying would undoubtedly submit ideas in a range of media, including those listed above. As in the previously commissioned Irish artwork, the submissions would be short-listed and assessed by a panel including elected Members.
2.7	The Good Relations Manager pointed out that no budget had yet been allocated towards this proposal and the Working Group agreed that the Strategic Policy & Resources Committee should be requested at its next meeting to agree a budget in the region of £20,000 for this purpose.
<b>3.0</b>	<b>STAINED GLASS WINDOW – IRISH MYTHS AND LEGENDS</b>
3.1	The Good Relations Manager reminded Members that a proposal to install a new window in the City Hall based on the theme of Irish myths and legends had been approved some months ago but on two occasions had been unsuccessful in attracting external funding – initially from the Arts Council and more recently from the SEUPB under the Peace III Programme.
3.2	She stated that the Office of the First/Deputy First Minister (OFMDFM) had now indicated that it would contribute 75% of the cost of this proposal i.e. £16,500 out of a total estimated cost of £22,000, as part of the Council's wider memorabilia/shared history work in the City Hall.
3.3	It was planned that the new window would be located on the ground floor near Reception, on the corridor leading towards the Lord Mayor's lift. This would mean that it would be located alongside the current regimental and police commemoration windows, to provide some diversity in displays and so that the newer "history windows" were not all located together.
3.4	The small original design motif at the top of the window to be replaced would be preserved and displayed in another part of the City Hall – probably near the Bobbin café area.
3.5	The Good Relations Manager reminded the Group that a specification, including an artist's brief, and assessment panel comprising elected Members had already been agreed for this project (in October 2010). She suggested that the advertising of the invitation of quotations should be promoted through local arts organisations and journals and in other electronic formats.
3.6	The Group welcomed the substantial funding contribution from the OFM/DFM and agreed that the Strategic Policy & Resources Committee be requested at its next meeting to approve the outstanding balance of funding required of £5,500.
<b>4.0</b>	<b>DEVELOPMENT OF WORK PROGRAMME FOR CITY HALL MEMORABILIA AND RELATED EQUALITY CONSIDERATIONS REGARDING MEMORABILIA AND THE COUNCIL'S CURRENT FLAG FLYING POLICY</b>
4.1	The Good Relations Manager referred to the following report:  <b>Relevant Background Information</b>  "Members will be aware that the Memorabilia Working Group was re-established around the time of the re-opening of the City Hall after refurbishment.  Since that time it has met on a number of occasions and has completed several actions but, given that a number of applications for external funding have been unsuccessful, the Council will now have to consider whether it wishes to establish its own internal budget to facilitate any major changes that might be agreed. It is also important to note the progress that has been made in terms of changes and adaptations to the City Hall over the past 5-6 years (bearing in mind that the building was closed for almost 2 years in that time). A list of major changes made is attached for information at Appendix 1.
4.2	<b>Key Issues</b>  Some time has now elapsed since the adoption of the consultant's report "Reflecting the People – a City Hall for the 21 <sup>st</sup> Century" in February 2010, with considerable time and

	<p>energy expended on unsuccessful attempts made to attract external funding. Members will recall that certain additional items – plaques, the Somme resolution etc – also involved lengthy discussions and debate.</p> <p>An inter-Departmental Working Group of officers, chaired by the Assistant Chief Executive, has met recently and has been tasked with generating ideas and specific proposals to reflect a more contemporary and representative view of Belfast within the building, which would meet the Council’s stated aim of addressing the current imbalance in the City Hall memorabilia. These proposals will be used to develop a firm programme of work which will be submitted to the Memorabilia Working Group as soon as possible after the elections for consideration by the newly elected Councillors.</p>
4.3	<p><b>Equality and Good Relations Considerations</b></p> <p><b><u>Memorabilia</u></b>  This programme of work would assist in achieving the Council’s stated aim of addressing the current imbalance within City Hall memorabilia.</p> <p>In view of the fact that over a year has elapsed since consideration of the consultant’s report noted above, and since a current review is being undertaken of the overall management of the City Hall, it is an opportune time to refresh our approach to memorabilia in general.</p> <p>In addition, the Chief Executive has recently received correspondence from the Sinn Féin party group which requests that a formal EQIA of memorabilia displayed within the building be conducted.</p> <p>It should be noted that although an EQIA on the Council’s flag flying policy was conducted in 2004, a formal EQIA of memorabilia was not pursued at that time, following a Council decision that attempts should be made to change the current policy through discussions of the (then) Good Relations Steering Panel.</p> <p>Accordingly the Council will now have to carry out a formal EQIA on memorabilia and we recommend that this be conducted by an independent consultant.</p> <p><b><u>Flag Flying policy</u></b>  The Sinn Féin correspondence also refers to the Council’s current policy of flying the Union Flag and states their concerns in relation to this. Members will be aware that a very comprehensive EQIA on this was completed and reported to the (then) Policy &amp; Resources Committee in March 2004, when the Committee determined not to make any change to the policy.</p> <p>In this regard, the Town Solicitor/Assistant Chief Executive recommends that this EQIA be refreshed and up-dated, in order to ascertain whether the situation has changed and if any intervening adverse impact has been identified. This EQIA will also be carried out by an independent external consultant, which will include updating the advice from the Equality Commission. The Town Solicitor will also update the legal advice which accompanied the original report to Committee in 2004 and bring a composite report to a future meeting of the Working Group and the Strategic Policy &amp; Resources Committee for consideration.</p>
4.4	<p><b>Resource Implications</b></p> <p><b><u>Memorabilia work programme</u></b>  At present, no budget has been allocated for work relating to memorabilia. Following the</p>

	<p>development of a firm programme of work and the costing of this work, the Working Group is requested to recommend to the Strategic Policy &amp; Resources Committee that an appropriate budget stream be identified to support the programme of work agreed which will enable its effective implementation.</p> <p><b><u>EQIAs – memorabilia and flag flying policy</u></b> It is anticipated that both could be completed for around £12,000; the costs of these can be accommodated within the Strategic Policy &amp; Resources Committee’s revenue budget.</p>
4.5	<p><b>Recommendations</b></p> <p>The Working Group is requested to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• note this information</li> <li>• approve of the content</li> <li>• recommend to the Strategic Policy &amp; Resources Committee that EQIAs be completed as outlined above and that updated legal advice and advice from the Equality Commission be obtained”.</li> </ul>
4.6	<p>The Good Relations Manager added that a brainstorming session of officers had been held the previous week to generate ideas to make the City Hall more inclusive. Initial feedback suggested a need to update current exhibits to make the building more contemporary in feel and appearance and to be more attractive and accessible to a younger audience.</p>
4.7	<p>The Working Group considered the report and after discussion agreed to recommend to the Strategic Policy &amp; Resources Committee that EQIAs as outlined be completed by independent external sources and that the Town Solicitor update all relevant legal advice including appropriate advice from the Equality Commission. The Group also agreed that this item be submitted as a separate report to the next meeting of the Strategic Policy &amp; Resources Committee.</p>
<b>5.0</b>	<p><b>REQUEST FOR EXHIBITION FROM THE INTERNATIONAL BRIGADE COMMEMORATION COMMITTEE</b></p>
5.1	<p>The Good Relations Manager reported that the Council had received a request from the Belfast Secretary of the International Brigade Commemoration Committee for permission to hold an exhibition in the East Entrance of the City Hall from 4 November – 18 November 2011. The exhibition, entitled <i>Antifascistas</i> would tell the story of the 2,500 volunteers from the British Isles who joined the legendary International Brigades to defend democracy during the Spanish Civil War of 1936-39.</p>
5.2	<p>It used contemporary photographs and images and was produced by the International Brigade Memorial Trust. It set out the reasons why the volunteers took the decision to risk their lives in a foreign war in which more than 500 of them died. The role of the British Battalion in many of the key battles in Spain was described, along with brief biographies of outstanding individuals who took part. <i>Antifascistas</i> also detailed the work of the medical volunteers in makeshift hospitals near the front line. It considered the cultural and artistic impact of the International Brigades and their historical legacy, underlining the importance today of remembering their example of international solidarity in the fight against fascism.</p>
5.3	<p>The Group agreed to recommend to the Strategic Policy &amp; Resources Committee that the exhibition should be approved and noted that any costs could be met within existing budgets.</p>

**Changes made in City Hall as a result of recommendations from Memorabilia Working Group:**

- re-naming of the Committee Rooms and installation of works by Conor and Lavery
- commissioning of the Mary Ann McCracken bust
- displaying of all the Lord Mayors' portraits, reflecting Belfast's political changes
- theming of the Bobbin coffee shop and exhibition space to reflect Belfast's industrial past and in particular the contribution of the working class
- *No Mean City* photographic exhibition
- display of gifts from minority and ethnic groups
- display of a 18<sup>th</sup> century Irish manuscript in the East Entrance
- improved interpretative signage
- installation of the Dockers' Strike stained glass window
- dedication of the courtyard fountain to staff killed or injured in Troubles
- installation of a multi-lingual Welcome sign at Reception
- display of current Lord Mayor's photograph at Reception
- donation of a flag to the Girl Guide Association
- donation of the *Accounts of 1690* to the Grand Orange Lodge
- inclusion of Irish and Ulster-Scots events in the City Hall re-opening programme
- display of the restored Trade Union banner
- donation of regimental and naval plaques to the 38<sup>th</sup> Irish Brigade HQ (Thiepval) and the Royal Naval Association respectively
- commissioning of artwork to reflect Irish history and heritage in the city
- extension of the Somme Resolution to include 16<sup>th</sup> Irish Division and other forces
- staging of a range of community exhibitions in the East Entrance area
- commissioning of a Blitz exhibition and lecture in April 2011