



<b>Report to:</b>	Strategic Policy & Resources Committee
<b>Subject:</b>	Memorabilia Working Group
<b>Date:</b>	Friday 17 June 2011
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	Hazel Francey, Good Relations Manager

<b>1</b>	<b>Relevant Background Information</b>
	<p>Members will be aware that at its last meeting the Committee discussed the re-establishment of a number of Working Groups within the Council and deferred a decision regarding the Memorabilia Working Group.</p> <p>This report sets out for information the background to the establishment of this Working Group, its achievements to date, likely future workload, difficulties encountered and possible options for the Committee to oversee future work in this area.</p>

<b>2</b>	<b>Key Issues</b>
	<p><b>Background to the establishment of the Memorabilia Working Group</b></p> <p>The Memorabilia Working Group was re-established following a decision of the Committee on 14 November 2008, around the time of the re-opening of the City Hall after refurbishment, and was composed of the six elected Members who also serve on the Council's Good Relations Partnership.</p> <p><b>Achievements to date</b></p> <p>The main changes made in the City Hall since that time as a result of recommendations from the Group are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the theming of the Bobbin coffee shop and exhibition space to reflect Belfast's industrial past and in particular the contribution of the working class</li> <li>• <i>No Mean City</i> photographic exhibition</li> <li>• display of gifts from minority and ethnic groups</li> <li>• display of a 18<sup>th</sup> century Irish manuscript in the East Entrance</li> <li>• improved interpretative signage</li> <li>• installation of a multi-lingual Welcome sign at Reception</li> <li>• donation of a flag to the Girl Guide Association</li> <li>• donation of the <i>Accounts of 1690</i> to the Grand Orange Lodge</li> <li>• inclusion of Irish and Ulster-Scots events in the City Hall re-opening programme</li> <li>• display of the restored Trade Union banner</li> <li>• donation of regimental and naval plaques to the 38<sup>th</sup> Irish Brigade HQ (Thiepval) and the Royal Naval Association respectively</li> <li>• commissioning of artwork to reflect Irish history and heritage in the city</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• extension of the Somme Resolution to include 16<sup>th</sup> Irish Division and other forces</li> <li>• staging of a range of community exhibitions in the East Entrance area</li> <li>• commissioning of a Blitz exhibition and lecture in April 2011</li> </ul> <p><b>Likely future workload</b></p> <p>A Working Group would also manage and oversee any programme of work for City Hall memorabilia which is approved (see separate report on this agenda, deferred from April meeting), reporting back to the principal Strategic Policy &amp; Resources Committee.</p> <p><b>Difficulties encountered</b></p> <p>A Working Group can be judged effective only if it contributes to the efficient decision-making of the wider Council. On the whole, the debate within the Memorabilia Working Group has been very cordial with consensus being reached on a wide range of subjects and votes rarely taken. The Working Group status has permitted Members to spend more time on discussing and debating contentious issues in more amicable surroundings that would be possible in the more openly political environment of full Committee. In an already lengthy Committee agenda it would be difficult to justify lengthy debates on individual items and could prove very frustrating for Members.</p> <p>On the other hand, there have been occasions where, following prolonged debate at Working Group level, decisions taken and recommendations made by the Working Group have been subject to further rigorous discussion when reported to the main Committee – e.g. the discussion on plaques in the East Entrance area and the text of the Annual Somme Resolution. On some occasions these items have been debated again at full Council. Given the very political and contentious nature of some of the items under discussion, this appears inevitable.</p> <p><b>Possible options</b></p> <p>The Committee is requested to consider whether it wishes the Memorabilia Working Group to be re-established or whether all such business in this regard should be submitted straight to the full Strategic Policy &amp; Resources Committee directly.</p>
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<b>6</b>	<b>Decision required</b>
	<p>The Strategic Policy &amp; Resources Committee is therefore requested to grant consider one of the following options:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• whether it wishes the Memorabilia Working Group to be re-established or</li> <li>• whether all such business in this regard should be submitted straight to the full Strategic Policy &amp; Resources Committee.</li> </ul>

<b>7</b>	<b>Officers to contact for further information</b>
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