

City Hall/City Hall Grounds Installations Working Group

Wednesday, 14th December, 2022

THE CITY HALL/CITY HALL GROUNDS INSTALLATIONS WORKING GROUP MINUTES

HELD REMOTELY VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS

Members present: Councillor Beattie (Chairperson);
Alderman Dorrian; and
Councillor O'Hara.

In attendance: Ms. K. Mullen, Project Sponsor;
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 26th October, 2022 were taken as read and signed as correct.

City Hall Statues Update

The Project Sponsor reminded the Members that the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee, at its meeting on 28th March 2022, had agreed that the City Hall Statues – Winifred Carney and Mary Ann McCracken be moved to Stage 3; committed on the Capital Programme; and that the necessary procurement processes be initiated, as required with contracts to be awarded on the basis of the most economically advantageous tenders and full commitment to deliver.

She advised that the first stage of the procurement process had now concluded that is, PQQ (pre-qualification questionnaire), with 5 artists being shortlisted to ITT (invitation to tender) stage. A moderation panel would consider the submitted proposals and would make recommendations to the Installations: City Hall/City Hall Working Group in February 2023 for appointment of a selected artist. Based on previous experience of commissioning public art pieces it was expected that the process could take 6 to 9 months, dependent on the project plan submitted by the appointed artist and subject to obtaining the necessary statutory approvals. It was envisaged that both pieces should be installed in City Hall grounds late autumn 2023. This is caveated by securing all the necessary approvals and that there was no time delay or costs implications of materials selected by the artist for the final pieces. Discussions had been ongoing with subject matter experts. The Mary Ann McCracken Foundation had requested that her statue be placed nearest to Linenhall Library in the grounds. This would be to the righthand side of

front doors of City Hall. Regular updates would be provided to Installations: City Hall/City Hall Grounds Working Group during the process.

The Project Sponsor informed the Working Group that, 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 as the project moved forward, therefore, it was essential that a narrative and context was agreed and developed around the installation of the new pieces. The Members 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.

£300,000 had been ringfenced in Council's Capital Budget for both statues.

The Chairperson requested that the 5 artists' visuals be circulated to the Members when available.

The Members of the Working Group considered the information provided and:-

- i. Noted that the PQQ stage for the installation of the Winifred Carney and Mary Ann McCracken statues had concluded with 5 artists being shortlisted to ITT (invitation to tender) stage;
- ii. Noted that ITT documents would be issued early December with a return date of end of January, with a selected artist to be appointed February 2023;
- iii. Noted the request from the Mary Ann McCracken Foundation that her statue be placed nearest to Linenhall Library given her connections to the Library;
- iv. Noted the expected timeline for design, manufacture and installation of the two new statues (subject to necessary statutory approvals being in place); and
- v. noted the information in relation the to public unveiling arrangements and the development of a narrative around each of the new pieces.

Frederick Douglass Update

The Project Sponsor updated the Working Group on the current status of the design, manufacture and installation of a statue to commemorate Frederick Douglass in Belfast.

The Members were reminded that, following approvals, a 2-stage procurement process with one artist appointed to undertake the design, installation and manufacture of a statue to Frederick Douglass had concluded.

- Location (junction of Rosemary Street/Lombard Street)
- Tender assessed Quality/Cost 80/20

The Project Sponsor provided details of the Stage 2 - ITT (Invitation to Tender) which had involved 3 shortlisted artists who had submitted concept ideas and maquettes which were assessed by the moderation panel.

The artist would be invited to a project initiation meeting in mid-December where discussion would take place on the proposed programme of works to include a confirmed installation date in summer 2023. She explained that this would be caveated by securing all the necessary approvals, that there was no time delay or costs implications of materials selected by the artist for the final piece; and that there were no issues/delays with services given the piece would be located in the City Centre. Regular updates would be provided to the Installations: City Hall/City Hall Grounds Working Group during this process.

The Project Sponsor advised that, as the project moved forward, the Members would be asked to give consideration and make a recommendation to the planned public unveiling in partnership with the Department for Communities and Professor Christine Kinealy Subject Matter Expert on Frederick Douglass. It was expected that there would be significant public interest generated as the project moved forward, therefore, it was essential that a narrative and context was agreed and developed around the installation of the new piece.

The Department for Communities had provided match funding towards the statue. Other avenues of funding were being explored.

It was agreed that the maquette, a small scale model of the successful sculpture's piece, be left in the Chief Executive's office for the Members to view.

The Members of the Working Group considered the information provided and:-

- i. Noted that, following moderation of the ITT (invitation to tender), Endeavour Art Studios had been appointed to undertake the design, manufacture and installation of Frederick Douglass in Rosemary Street; and
- ii. noted the information in relation to the public unveiling arrangements and development of a narrative around the new piece.

Baroness May Blood - Request for Memorial

The Project Sponsor reminded the Members that the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee, at its meeting on 18th November 2022, had agreed to refer to the City Hall/City Hall Grounds Installations Working Group a request from Councillor Murray for the creation of a permanent memorial to the late Baroness May Blood. The Members agreed at this time that this did not have to be within City Hall Grounds and that other locations across the city could be explored.

The Members considered the request for a permanent memorial to the late Baroness May Blood in terms of location and form; and gave consideration to a permanent memorial to the late Baroness May Blood as an emerging project on the capital programme in order that officers could scope potential options to include identification of suitable locations.

A Member commented that significant background work would need undertaken before work commenced, and the family should be contacted in the first instance to ensure that they were content with a permanent memorial. The Project Sponsor advised that she would report back in relation to discussions with the family at the next Working Group in February 2023.

The Members agreed that a permanent memorial, in a form to be agreed in consultation with the family, to the late Baroness May Blood be included as an Emerging Project on Council's Capital Programme for approval by the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee to allow officers to explore options.

Lord Pirrie Memorial Request to Relocate

The Project Sponsor sought the views of the Members on a request from the Pirrie family to have Lord Pirrie's memorial relocated to City Cemetery. The memorial was currently located in east lawn of City Hall near to the Titanic Memorial.

The Working Group were informed that the Pirrie family had asked that the memorial be returned to its original location on the Pirrie/Carlisle grave plot in the City Cemetery or that the Council made arrangements to have a copy installed there. The family were aware of the Council's recent investment in the City Cemetery and were of the opinion that Lord Pirrie, as one of the most historically notable persons buried in the cemetery, there would be merit in having his memorial returned. This would also link in with the recently completed City Cemetery Heritage Centre project. Lord Pirrie died on 7th June 1924 so the 100th anniversary of his death was approaching and the family would be keen to hold events on the centenary, the main one at the grave.

The Project Sponsor provided background about the Pirrie bust in relation to location and ownership. The Members noted that officers were meeting with the family representatives in the New Year for further discussion and would provide further updates to the Members at the next Working Group.

The Project Sponsor remarked that if the Council could facilitate the request given Lord Pirrie's significance in the city it would be a fitting move. The Project Sponsor would provide an update at the next Working Group.

The Members of the Group noted the request received and provided their initial views and that they would be minded to accede to the request to relocate Lord Pirrie to his graveside in City Cemetery.

Carson Tile and Plaque (Verbal Update)

The Project Sponsor confirmed that she was waiting on confirmation from the Facilities Department in relation to a date for Redhead to carry out the installation of the tile, however, it would be towards the end of January.

Noted.

National Day of Reflection – Families Bereaved Through Covid (Verbal Update)

The Project Sponsor reminded the Members that a request had been received from Families Bereaved Through Covid to hold a remembrance service in the City Hall. The request had gone to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee for consideration and a remembrance event was scheduled to take place in City Hall on 23rd March 2023. The Lord Mayor would be in attendance.

In relation to the Lost Lace programme, the Project Sponsor advised that the Council would not be hosting the programme as there was no funding available.

Noted.

Schedule of Meetings

The following dates had been identified for meetings of the City Hall/City Hall Grounds Installations Working Group for the period from January to December, 2023.

- Wednesday 22nd February
- Wednesday 7th June
- Wednesday 9th August
- Wednesday 11th October
- Wednesday 6th December

(All meetings will commence at 12.00 pm)

The Senior Democratic Services Officer advised that if another date was required prior to the May elections this would be facilitated in consultation with the Chairperson.

Noted.

Chairperson