

City Hall/City Hall Grounds Installations Working Group

Thursday, 8th February, 2024

THE CITY HALL/CITY HALL GROUNDS INSTALLATIONS WORKING GROUP MINUTES

HYBRID MEETING IN THE CONOR ROOM

Members present: Councillor Beattie (Chairperson);
Alderman Lawlor; and
Councillors Flynn and Murray.

In attendance: Ms. S. Grimes, Director of Property and Projects;
Ms. K. Mullen, Client Manager;
Mr. M. Doherty, Programme Delivery Manager; and
Ms. E. McGoldrick, Democratic Services Officer.

Apologies

(Councillor Flynn in the Chair)

No apologies were reported.

Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of 11th October, 2023 were taken as read and signed as correct.

Declarations of Interest

No Declarations of Interest were reported.

(Councillor Beattie in the Chair)

City Hall Statues

The Working Group was updated on the proposed events to mark the installations of the two new statues of Winifred Carney and Mary Ann McCracken scheduled to take place on Friday, 8th March 2024 – International Women’s Day.

The Client Manager highlighted that Members of the Working Group had visited the Foundry, in Dublin, on Tuesday, 30th January 2024 to meet with the artist (Ralf Sander) and view the work which had been completed to date. She advised that works were progressing well and pointed out that bases for the plinths had recently been installed in the City Hall grounds.

She reminded the Working Group that the Council, at its meeting on 1st February, had agreed to give delegated authority to agree the text for the statues to officers in consultation with Party Leaders and the Members of the Working Group. She provided an overview of what had been agreed to date.

The Director pointed out that Members should not share information about the events at this stage, in particular, she advised that Members should not post any images of the statues on social media in order that both pieces would be seen for the first time on the day of the unveiling. The Client Manager highlighted that officers were engaging with Corporate Communications in order to put in place a supporting communications plan for both events. Plans included the publication of a booklet which would be given out at both events, a shortened version of which would be published on the Council's website and accessed through a QR code on the statue.

The Client Manager summarised the proposals for the public unveiling ceremony and the ticketed panel event.

During discussion, the Working Group and the Director thanked the team for their hard work and dedication. The Client Manager explained further the speaker list for the unveiling and guest list for the events.

The Director also advised that a request had been received from ICTU to host a special event for trade union activist and leaders to provide an opportunity for union representatives to view both pieces, take some photographs, and meet Elected Members. In addition, ICTU would be keen to engage with Officers around future programming opportunities.

The Programme Delivery Manager also advised that a condition survey and cleaning of the other statues within the City Hall grounds was scheduled to take place before the 8th March.

After discussion, the Working Group:

- Noted the current status of the manufacture and installation of the City Hall statues: Winifred Carney and Mary Ann McCracken;
- Agreed to the arrangements for the unveiling ceremony and associated evening events;
- Noted that further updates and a draft guest list for the unveiling ceremony would be shared with the Working Group; and
- Agreed to host a special event/visit for female trade union activists and leaders.

Belfast Blitz Memorial - City Hall

The Working Group were reminded that, at its meeting on 11th October 2023, it had agreed, which had subsequently been approved by the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee at its meeting on 20th October, 2023, to progress the installation of a permanent memorial to all of the Fire Service efforts during the Belfast Blitz and move it to Stage 2 (uncommitted) on the capital programme.

The Client Manager advised that officers had attended a meeting in Dublin on 30th January, 2024 with a representative of the Fire Brigade Union. In addition, there had been early engagement with a foundry which had provided a very early stage estimate of potential cost for design, manufacture and installation in City Hall.

She described the design and making process of the pieces, together with the potential location. The Client Manager requested authority to seek quotations for the piece in order to provide a pre-tender estimate figure for Members' consideration with a view to moving the project to the next stage on the capital programme – Stage 3 (Committed).

She informed the Working Group that a request had also been received to incorporate the Women's Voluntary Service cap, as the women of the WVS were responsible for caring for those who were evacuated and displaced by bombs during the Blitz.

The Working Group:

- Granted approval for officers to seek quotations for the Belfast Blitz Memorial City Hall in order to determine a pre-tender estimate figure with a view to moving the project to the next stage on the capital programme, namely, Stage 3 (Committed); and
- Agreed to the inclusion of the Women's Voluntary Service cap alongside the Fire Service helmets.

Chairperson