



## Belfast City Council

<b>Report to:</b>	Strategic Policy & Resources
<b>Subject:</b>	Council Meetings in City Hall - Temporary Arrangements
<b>Date:</b>	24 October 2008
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	Gerry Millar, Director of Improvement, Ext: 6217
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### Relevant Background Information

Council agreed that the refurbishment work to City Hall would take place in two phases. Phase 1 would be the availability of the main civic rooms ie the Council Chamber, Reception Room, Banqueting Hall, Great Hall, Rotunda and associated access and amenity in the form of stairway lift and restrooms. That target has now been achieved although access to the building will only be available from the front.

### Key Information

Phase 1 will be complete by 19 November 2008 meaning the Council Chamber will be available for the Council meeting from December 2008, although the Committee rooms and Party rooms will not be available until phase 2 in the Summer.

As phase 2 of the construction programme will be ongoing until Summer 2009 a number of temporary arrangements will need to be put in place for Members to hold Council meetings in City Hall from December onwards. Restrictions that will necessarily apply are outlined below:

**The Civic Rooms** – as stated the main rooms and access to them will be available from 19 November 2008. There will be heating and lighting, toilets available in the East entrance and lift and stair access.

What will **not** be available are any phone or data links and there will be no arts or artefacts displayed in the rooms.

**Catering** – Facilities Management can provide a cold buffet service as they do presently with the Reception Room made available for dining or if required hot food can be made available. Alternatively, if Members wish, catering could be provided in CWB although that would mean Members having to walk around to the front of City Hall to

access the building.

**Pre Council Party Meetings** – space can be made available for Party Groups to hold Pre Council meetings in the main civic rooms by partitioning some space eg in the Banqueting Room or Great Hall. Please note, however, any Party Groups who wish to meet in City Hall rooms will have fairly basic furniture such as round dining tables and stacking chairs.

The alternative to this ad hoc arrangement is to meet first in Adelaide Exchange and then transfer to City Hall for the Council meeting.

**Car Parking** – Car parking at City Hall will be very limited with at most 10-14 spaces available at the East and Front entrances. Again the main alternative is to park in Adelaide Exchange and walk to City Hall although there is free on street parking in Linenhall Street etc from 6.00pm.

Members views are sought on allocation of any available City Hall spaces. Please note the courtyard is the contractors compound and will be the last part of the contract to be completed.

**December Issues** – In addition to the above arrangements the December meeting has an added difficulty in that the Continental Market which will be occupying the front lawn. Members will have to access the building via the market, although Facilities Management will maintain sufficient security to manage any issues from the public seeking to also access the building.

### **Recommendations**

Members are asked to consider:

1. Whether monthly Council meetings should be held in City Hall from December onwards
2. If so, Members preference in terms of catering, ie City Hall or CWB or Adelaide Exchange
3. The preferred location for pre meetings
4. The question of the limited car parking availability
5. The question of the restricted access because of the impact of the Continental Market in December

### **Documents Attached**

None