



Belfast City Council

Report to: Strategic Policy & Resources Committee

Subject: Use of memorabilia in City Hall

Date: 21st August 2009

Reporting Officer: G Wright – Head of Facilities Management, Extensions 5206/6232

Contact Officer: As above

Relevant Background Information

At its meeting of June 2009, the Committee reviewed the minutes of the Commemorations and Memorabilia Working Group, and resolved that “*the Committee noted the minutes of the meeting of the Working Group of 20th May and agreed that the Working Group be advised that no recommendations would be adopted by the Council until such times as a report on all the actions which had been agreed in relation to the location of memorabilia in the City Hall had been submitted to the Committee for consideration, thereby providing the Members with an overall view of the proposals*”.

The purpose of this report is therefore to outline the decisions already taken with regard to this matter and to provide some additional detail as requested by the Committee.

Members will recall that, in October 2008, a report was tabled by the Head of Facilities Management in respect of the revised approach to tours and the associated impact on the proposed uses of art, artefacts and other memorabilia held by the Council. That report recommended the creation of seven principal themes, namely:-

1. the history of the City Hall (located in the marble area);	5. the Titanic & Belfast’s Lord Mayors (located in the Banqueting Hall);
2. our ‘Freedom of the City’ recipients (located in the Rotunda area);	6. the civic regalia (located in the Robing Room); and
3. Belfast in the 2 World Wars (located in the Rotunda area);	7. a display of civic gifts received by the city (located in the East Entrance area).
4. notable Belfast citizens (located in the Reception Hall);	

On foot of these themes a number of items were to be used in different ways. The principal changes recommended in the report were as follows:-

- the Covenant table will remain in the Council Chamber but would be supplemented with archive photographs of the signing of the covenant in 1912, new signage and additional historical material while tours are in progress;
- the civic regalia including maces, chains of office and robes currently stored in the Lord Mayor's Parlour would be moved to public view in the Robing Room;
- the Seaman Maginess portrait would be moved from the Robing Room to the Rotunda;
- a number of items connected with the Freedom of the City including caskets and scrolls currently in the Reception Hall and crystal in the Lord Mayor's Parlour and silver keys currently in storage would be brought together in a display on the Rotunda;
- the "No Mean City" display (suitably updated) which was previously located on the ground floor west corridor would be moved to the Reception Hall to form the central part of a Belfast Citizens exhibit (note: location now changed to be adjacent to the new exhibition area);
- a number of items connected with the history of the City Hall including the black and white photographs in the Robing Room and the charters, silver trowel and gavel in the Reception Hall would be brought together and put on permanent display in dedicated display cases in the marble area;
- the portraits of Sir Edward Harland and Viscount & Viscountess Pirrie currently in the Council Chamber & Reception Hall would be moved to the Banqueting Hall; *and*
- a number of crystal and silver items presented to the city and currently in storage or in the Lord Mayor's Parlour would be brought together in a new display in the East entrance area.

Considerably more detail in respect of each of the themed areas and the proposed uses of current memorabilia can be found in the attached appendix.

The Committee endorsed these proposals on the grounds that (a) they were necessary in the context of enhancing the tour offering within the building and (b) that they provided an opportunity to comply with some outstanding recommendations contained in the of the Advisory Panel on City Hall Memorabilia submitted in February 2003.

While the relevant officers are, of course, prepared to review the current proposals, the Committee will also be aware that the scheduled re-opening date for the City Hall is 5th October 2009 and that the final tour offering must be in place for that date. Planning for this is at an advanced stage, so it is hoped that the information contained herein will be acceptable to the Committee and that the necessary work can proceed as originally planned.

However, should the Committee wish to see any significant changes or additions made to current proposals, these can be discussed with the Commemorations and Memorabilia Working Group and the Good Relations Manager over the coming weeks and – hopefully - incorporated into the final designs in ways which will not necessitate a postponement of the tours commencement date.

Key Issues

The key issue is whether or not the Committee is content with current proposals in respect of memorabilia held by the council or would wish to re-consider this matter at this time.

Resource Implications

There will clearly be some resource implications if a decision is taken to review the current approach in any significant way, but it is difficult to quantify this.

Recommendations

It is recommended that the Committee re-affirm its decision of October 2008 in respect of the revised approach to tours and the associated use of items of art, artefacts and other memorabilia owned or held by the council.

Decision Tracking

The target date for the delivery of the new, themed tour service remains 5th October 2009, however if significant changes are proposed this may alter.

Key to Abbreviations

None.

Documents Attached

Appendix – detailed proposed locations for items of BCC art, artefacts & memorabilia

CITY HALL TOURS

Themed Displays

Theme 1: THE HISTORY OF THE CITY HALL

Location: **MAIN MARBLE AREA – 2 cabinets either side of main entrance**

- a) King James 1 Charter (original Charter by King James1 giving Belfast Corporate Borough Status)
 - b) City Charter (City Charter granted by Queen Victoria in 1888.)
 - c) Original Coat of Arms (Belfast Coat of Arms on the basis of the Grant of Arms which was confirmed by Sir Bernard Burke, Ulster King of Arms.)
 - d) Ceremonial Trowel (actual trowel used in the laying of the Foundation Stone, Belfast City Hall 18th October 1898.)
 - e) Gavel (gavel presented to His Excellency Earl Cadogan KC on the occasion of the Laying of the Foundation Stone 1898.)
 - f) Original Drawing of City Hall (original drawing of City Hall by Architect A. Brumwell Thomas.)
 - g) Montage of building of City Hall to include :
 - Photograph Foundation Stone (print of photograph 'Foundation Stone' 1898)
 - City Hall 1903 (print of a photograph of City Hall looking up Royal Avenue, tram in view, evidence of River Farset.
 - City Hall 1904 (print of photograph of City Hall under Construction)
 - City Hall 1906 (City Hall completed 1906)
 - Brumwell Thomas (photograph of Brumwell Thomas, Architect)
 - Old Town Hall (photograph of Old Town Hall, Victoria Street)
 - White Linen Hall (photograph, White Linen Hall (Front))
 - White Linen Hall (photograph, Linen Hall (Back))
 - Drawing of City Hall (photograph of A. Brumwell Thomas's original plans.)
 - City Hall 1902(Photograph City Hall 1902 under construction)
 - H + J Martin Builders (photograph of Henry John Martin, Director of H&J Martin Building Contractors of City Hall.)
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Theme 2: FREEDOM OF THE CITY

Location: ROTUNDA - immediately below Lady McCullagh's Window

- a) Viscountess Pirrie – Freedom Scroll (Margaret Montgomery Pirrie of Ormiston 1st Burgess of the City, for services in raising funds for the erection equipment and endowment of the Royal Victoria Hospital. Illuminated Certificate incorporating illustrations of hospital ward, Royal Victoria Hospital.)
- b) Viscount William Pirrie – Freedom Scroll (Ald. Rt. Hon William James Pirrie, 1st Burgess, illuminated certificate incorporating illustrations of the coat of arms of City, family and ship in harbour.)
- c) Viscount Pirrie – Freedom Casket (Presented to Ald. Rt. Hon. W.J. Pirrie 1st Burgess. (18ct Gold Freedom Casket)
- d) Viscountess Pirrie – Freedom Casket (Presented to Viscountess Pirrie 1st Burgess, silver gilt in 18ct gold)
- e) Lady McCullagh's – Freedom Casket (Silver lidded casket) presented to Lady McCullagh)
- f) Sir Crawford McCullagh's Freedom Casket (Silver lidded casket, presented to Sir Crawford McCullagh.)
- g) RAF Aldergrove Crystal Bowl (presented by RAF Aldergrove to the City of Belfast 25th Anniversary of the conferment of Freedom of the City. Oct 1982)

Merchant Navy Globe (presented to the City of Belfast by the Merchant Navy on the occasion of the conferment of the Freedom of the City 30th April

- a) Freedom of the City Book (Freedom of the City Certificates from 1898 to present)
- j) Ambulance Service (presentation piece engraved with an ambulance badge)
- k) Fire Service (Presentation piece – glass sculpture of six causeway stones engraved with badge of NI Fire Brigade. Inscribed City of Belfast conferment of the Freedom of the City on NI Fire Brigade 21st Aug.1992)

l) Ceremonial Keys

City of Hollywood, Florida; Orlando, Florida, The City Beautiful, Pride of the southwest, Louisiana, City of Sulphur; Buffalo, NY: City of Canfield, City of Lexington, State of Kentucky, Seal of Kansas City, Missouri verso: Heart of America, The Scout, City of Beaumont Texas, City of Arlington, Texas.

Theme 3: WORLD WARS - THE EFFECT ON THE CITY

Location – ROTUNDA / left under Sir Crawford McCullagh's window & 1st World War window

1st WORLD WAR

- a) Notification of cessation of hostilities.(Letter sent by 107 Brigade 36 (Ulster) Division, notifying the cessation of hostilities 11th November 1918, presented to Lord Mayor of Belfast at the formation of 107 Brigade 2nd November 1988.)
- b) Strip of copper + 1913 penny.(Mounted on wood, presented by the Mayor Potie of Thiepval, 19th January 1989.
- c) Commemoration of the Battle of the Somme.(Union Jack with J.P. Beadle painting in the centre with legend 'In memory of 38th (Ulster) Division, July 1st 1916, 75th Anniversary of the Battle of the Somme')
- d) Sack of soil found at Battle of the Somme
- e) Statuette (china) of footballer of Loos. (boxing day match between German/British forces)

2nd WORLD WAR

- a) Leading Seaman Magennis V.C. – Print (Born Belfast 1919, died 1986, Northern Ireland's only recipient of the Victoria Cross during the second World War.)
- b) Tampion/ship telescope (Telescope from IJN Takao – 27/10/1946, Japanese warship destroyed by Leading Seaman Magennis)
- c) Steel spike found in City Hall courtyard after City Hall bombing in 1941
- d) Leading Seaman Magennis telegram to his mother informing her of his VC.

Theme 4: ITEMS REFLECTING COMMUNITIES WITHIN THE CITY

Location: RECEPTION HALL – cabinet under centre window

- a) Islamic Print (Print presented by the Islamic Community of Belfast to the Lord Mayor 2003)
 - b) Chinese Peacocks (Presented to the Lord Mayor May 2003, by the Chinese Community)
 - c) Indian Tower (Presented to the Lord Mayor 2003 by the Indian Community)
 - d) Empty Promises (Empty Promises Opal Stone Sculpture, tribute to the women of Belfast, presented to the Lord Mayor 2003.)Artist : Arthur Manyengedzo, opal stone from Chiweshe in Zimbabwe 28/5/03
 - e) Hebrew Bible (Hebrew Bible in tin covering, presented to the Lord Mayor of Belfast 6/6/1964)
 - f) Al-Nisa Association N.I.(Framed coloured print with inscription “ Best among mankind is he who brings benefit to others” (Madith))
 - g) Menorah (Silver Menorah (seven branched candlestick) inscribed “ This Menorah is a symbol of light and understanding presented to the Rt. Hon. Lord Mayor of Belfast and Citizens of the City of Belfast by the Belfast Hebrew Congregation 1964)
 - h) Indian Sticks (Presented to the Lord Mayor by the Indian Community, May 2003)
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Theme 5: CIVIC REGALIA

Location : ROBING ROOM – wall mounts & a cabinet

- a) Lord Mayor's Chain (Lord Mayor's Chain of Office, 1874, chain and badge 18ct. gold, weighs 14 lbs.
 - b) Donegall Chain (dates to 1784, chain and oval medallion.
 - c) Deputy Lord Mayor's Chain (double chain with 27 medallions linked)
 - d) High Sheriff's Chain (purchased in 1900, 18ct. gold)
 - e) Lady Mayoress's Chain (the chain dates back to 1897, first worn by Mrs. Pirrie. 18ct. gold, comprising of diamonds, rubies, turquoise, opals and enamel.
 - f) Lady Mayoress's bracelet
 - g) Lady Mayoress's badge
 - h) Silver Mace (Dating back to 1639)
 - i) Silver Mace 1679
 - j) Members of Council 1984
 - k) Past Members of Council (Members of Council 1979)
 - l) Past Members of Council 1976
 - m) Belfast City Council 1945 in City Hall Courtyard
 - n) Belfast Corporation 1948 – print
 - o) Original Members of the Members Club 1937
 - p) Alfred Shields, Mace Bearer 1868-1927 (Framed photograph)
 - q) Lord Mayor's Robe & civic regalia
 - r) High Sheriff's Robe & civic regalia
 - s) Councillors' Robes
 - t) Current City Mace 1937
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Theme 6: TITANIC & BELFAST'S LORD MAYORS

Location: BANQUET HALL under portraits of Sir Edward Harland & Viscount Pirrie

Scaled Model of Titanic (from Events Office)

Porthole (from Titanic – Events office presented to Lord Mayor 2005)

Cabinet – range of artifacts supplied by Ulster Titanic Society (Una O'Reilly)

Theme 7: GIFTS presented to the City

Location: EAST ENTRANCE

(changeable – silver & crystal from City Council collection/Exhibition space for organizations & Community Groups).
