

GOOD RELATIONS PARTNERSHIP

MEMORABILIA WORKING GROUP

THURSDAY 3 DECEMBER 2009

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| MEMBERS PRESENT: | Councillor Hendron | Chairman |
| | Councillor McCausland | Deputy Chairman |
| | Councillor McCarthy | |
| | Councillor C. Maskey | |
| | Councillor Stoker | |
| IN ATTENDANCE: | Hazel Francey | Good Relations Manager |
| | Anne Deighan | Good Relations Officer |
| | Sam McGivern | Business Support Assistant (minutes) |
| | George Wright | Head of Facilities Management |
| APOLOGIES: | Cllr Kyle | |
| | Maureen Mackin | Consultant |

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| 1.0 | ROUTINE MATTERS (MINUTES OF MEETING OF 05 NOVEMBER 2009) |
| 1.1 | The minutes of the meeting of 05 November were taken as read and signed as correct. |
| 1.2 | Arising from the minutes Hazel advised that the decision on which order the exhibitions would be exhibited in the City Hall had been the subject of a vote at Strategic Policy & Resources Committee on 20 November and the item had been referred back at 1 December Council to the main Committee. |
| 1.3 | Hazel also noted that the plaques erected temporarily in the City Hall East Entrance had now been taken down and a decision would be made regarding these at a later date when more information became available. |
| 2.0 | MEMORABILIA IN THE CITY HALL – NEXT STEPS AND PLANNING FRAMEWORK |
| 2.1 | Hazel apologised on behalf of Maureen Mackin, who was ill. She told the group that Maureen's report with an action plan should be ready at the end of January. Hazel tabled the notes from the Brainstorming session held on Monday 30 November and commented on how amicable the session had been. Members agreed that the session had been very positive, open and honest and the Chairman, Cllr Hendron, thanked all those involved in the organisation of the session. The comments made would be incorporated into the consultant's report. |
| 2.2 | In response to a query regarding funding for a programme of activity within the action plan, Hazel reported that she had had preliminary discussions with a representative from the Heritage Lottery Fund and that these had been very positive. The Working Group granted formal authority for her to seek external funding for the action plan and programme of events. |

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| 3.0 | CRITERIA FOR EXHIBITIONS IN THE CITY HALL |
| 3.1 | Hazel referred to the report, previously circulated, outlining the criteria currently used for exhibitions in the City Hall by outside groups, as agreed by the (then) Policy & Resources Committee in August 2006. She reminded the Working Group that in the past these decisions had been made by the Policy & Resources Committee and that authority had then been delegated to the (then) Director of Corporate Services. |
| 3.2 | The Memorabilia Working Group had agreed to discuss the present criteria, to be adjusted/amended if required. |
| 3.3 | <p>The current criteria in respect of the use of the building by outside groups for exhibitions are that they should:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • be primarily for non-commercial purposes • require no funding or other significant resources from the Council • be non-controversial in political, cultural or religious terms • have the potential to help promote Belfast City Council and/or the city of Belfast • not unduly affect the day-to-day operation of the building, or involve significant risk of damage to the building's infrastructure and/or fabric • broadly be considered to contribute to one or more of the Council's corporate strategic objectives <i>and</i> • provide the Council with appropriate insurance cover and/or indemnities etc. where appropriate. <p>The Good Relations Manager suggested that, to illustrate diversity, the 3rd bullet point above would have to be amended from "non-controversial" to be replaced by "be non-offensive and comply with the Council's equality and good relations obligations".</p> |
| 3.4 | <p>She reminded the Working Group that in general, the Council has also agreed that the City Hall and its displays should be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • welcoming • attractive • interesting • representative of the history and heritage of Belfast • representative of the diversity of the city • of good quality and • in accordance with the status of the City Hall setting. |
| 3.5 | The Good Relations Manager requested the views of the Members on the current criteria. After general discussion the Group agreed that 'non offensive' would be a preferable form of words and the revised criteria can be kept under review. |
| 3.6 | The Working Group also agreed to recommend to the Strategic & Policy Resources Committee that authority regarding the decisions on what will go on display should remain delegated to the Director of Finance and Resources, with a regular report on the schedule of displays being presented to the Memorabilia Working Group for their information. |
| 3.7 | There was some discussion regarding the need for future exhibitions to have more substance and that the level of promotion should be proportionate to the scale of exhibition. The Head of Facilities Management reminded the group that in most cases the Council is not responsible for the |

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| | promotion of the exhibitions, since this is the responsibility of the organisers. |
| 4.0 | SOMME RESOLUTION |
| 4.1 | <p>The Good Relations Manager reminded the Working Group that the wording of the Annual Somme Resolution had been the subject of considerable discussion in early 2009, with the item being referred to Party Groups, but with no agreement reached.</p> <p>At the Working Group's meeting in August 2009, the issue had been raised again and a Member had suggested that one possible solution was to hold a ceremony on another day to recognise the service of Irish people in other battles such as Passchendaele. The Working Group was of the view that this could not be regarded as inclusive.</p> <p>Since the subject was a sensitive issue it had not been placed on the agenda in September and October, to avoid any controversy in the approach to Remembrance Day, but Members had agreed to attempt to resolve the issue again in December.</p> <p>After a short discussion the Working Group agreed that the current text and the three variations of it should be referred direct to the Strategic Policy & Resources Committee as agreement could not be reached at Working Group level and it would have to be determined by a vote at Committee.</p> <p>Accordingly the Strategic Policy & Resources Committee is requested to consider the following variations in text and to agree a revised wording for use from 1 July 2010 onwards.</p> <p>The current resolution is:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">That we, the Lord Mayor and Citizens of the City of Belfast, on the >th Anniversary of the Battle of the Somme, desire again to record our feelings of gratitude to the brave men of the 36th (Ulster) Division who, by their glorious conduct in that battle, made an imperishable name for themselves and their Province, and whose heroism will never be forgotten so long as the British Commonwealth lasts.</p> <p>The variations of text that each party group (as at March 2006) finds acceptable are set out below, with amendments shown in bold and underlined:</p> <p><u>DUP and UUP</u> preferred text:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">That we, the Lord Mayor and Citizens of the City of Belfast, on the >th Anniversary of the Battle of the Somme, desire again to record our feelings of gratitude to the brave men of the 36th (Ulster) Division, <u>the 16th (Irish) Division and the sons of Ulster in other forces¹</u> who, by their glorious conduct in that battle, made an imperishable name for themselves and their Province, and whose heroism will never be forgotten so long as the British Commonwealth lasts.</p> <p><u>PUP</u> preferred text:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">That we, the Lord Mayor and Citizens of the City of Belfast, on the >th Anniversary of the Battle of the Somme, desire again to record our feelings of gratitude to the brave men of the 36th (Ulster) Division, <u>the 16th (Irish) Division and other forces</u> who, by their glorious conduct in that battle, made an imperishable name for themselves and their Province, and whose heroism will never be forgotten so long as the British Commonwealth lasts.</p> |

¹ Wording used in the book *The Great War*, published by the Council in 1991, on the 75th anniversary of the Somme Battle

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| | <p>Alliance /SDLP / Sinn Féin preferred text:</p> <p>That we, the Lord Mayor and Citizens of the City of Belfast, on the >th Anniversary of the Battle of the Somme, desire again to record our feelings of gratitude to the brave men of the 36th (Ulster) Division, <u>the 16th (Irish) Division and other forces</u> who, by their glorious conduct in that battle, made an imperishable name for themselves and their <u>people</u>, and whose heroism will never be forgotten.</p> |
| 5.0 | ASSESSMENT PANEL |
| 5.1 | <p>Hazel informed the Working Group that a Panel would be required to assess the submissions for the artwork reflecting Irish history and heritage and she suggested that the Chairman and Deputy Chairman of the Memorabilia Working Group (Cllrs Hendron and McCausland), along with the Chairman of the Strategic Policy & Resources Committee (Cllr Hartley) should be included. The Group agreed with this suggestion.</p> |
| 5.2 | <p>Hazel also circulated the proposed dates of the Memorabilia Working Group’s meetings in 2010.</p> |