

MEETING OF DIVERSITY WORKING GROUP

Minutes of the Meeting of Tuesday, 3rd March, 2015

Members present: The Deputy Lord Mayor (Councillor Hendron)
(Chairman);
Aldermen Ekin, Robinson and Rodgers;
Councillors Hanna, Hutchinson and
McVeigh.

In attendance: Mrs. S. Wylie, Chief Executive;
Mr. G. Millar, Director of Property and Projects;
Ms. N. Lane, Good Relations Manager;
Mr. S. Lavery, Programme Manager;
Mr. F. Smith, Project Sponsor Officer;
Mr. S. McCrory, Democratic Services Manager; and
Miss. L. Francey, Democratic Services Officer.

Apology

An apology for inability to attend was reported from Councillor Attwood.

Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of 5th December were taken as read and signed as correct.

Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were reported.

Decade of Centenaries

The Good Relations Manager provided the Working Group with an update on the Decade of Centenaries Programme and presented a list of proposed events for the coming year.

A draft specification for the exhibition covering 1916 was presented to Members for approval and the Good Relations Manager emphasised that regular updates and input would be sought from Members as the development of the exhibition proceeds. A Member requested further information on the influence of O'Donovan Rossa and it was agreed that the Good Relations Manager would present a report on this at the next meeting.

The Working Group granted approval to officers to seek authority from the Shadow Strategic Policy and Resources Committee to seek tenders for a suitable organisation which would design, develop and install the exhibition in advance of funding being secured from the Office of the First Minister and the deputy First Minister.

**Meeting of Diversity Working Group,
Tuesday, 3rd March, 2015**

Bicentennial of the Battle of Waterloo

The Good Relations Manager informed the Group that Councillor Craig had requested that consideration be given to the High Sheriff hosting three talks in relation to the Bicentenary of the Battle of Waterloo and that an informal reception be held for the Royal Irish Regiment. The Members were informed that Councillor Craig had spoken to a local historian who would be prepared to give the talks. It was understood that there would be costs relating to the speaker and to provide refreshments.

The Good Relations Manager reminded Members that the Decade of Centenaries programme had already been agreed by Council and that it would focus solely on the period between 1912 -1922. She pointed out that the Linen Hall Library would be marking International Women's Day, taking in the period from 1815-2015 and this would include reference to the Battle of Waterloo. Furthermore, from 10th until 17th April, they would also have coins and medals on display which would include items from this time.

The Working Group agreed to recommend to the Shadow Strategic Policy and Resources Committee the free use of the City Hall for such events, on the condition that funding for the events would be found elsewhere.

**Request for the use of the City Hall –
36th (Ulster) Division Memorial Association**

The Democratic Services Manager outlined details of an application which had been received from the 36th (Ulster) Division Memorial Association Arts and Cultural Society for the use of the City Hall for a dinner on 10th June, 2016 to mark the centenary of the Battle of the Somme. This application had been brought to the Diversity Working Group for a recommendation, as it was thought that the Council's event to mark the Battle of the Somme would be held around the same date. The Council would be hosting two dinners in 2016, as part of the Decade of Centenaries Programme, one to mark the Battle of the Somme and one to mark the Easter Rising but that the dates had not yet been set.

During discussion, some Members pointed out that, while both dinners would mark the centenary of the Battle of the Somme, the audience for the Memorial Association's dinner would be different to the Council's own civic dinner and that both events should be permitted to go ahead.

After discussion, during which Members were in agreement that the dates should be set for the two aforementioned civic dinners in 2016, the Working Group agreed, in principle, to the request and recommended that the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee gives consent for the 36th (Ulster) Division Memorial Association Arts and Cultural Society the use of the City Hall for a dinner on 10th June, 2016 to mark the centenary of the Battle of the Somme.

**Meeting of Diversity Working Group,
Tuesday, 3rd March, 2015**

Request for the use of the City Hall – Orangefest

The Director of Property and Projects reminded Members that, since 2012, an application to hold 'Orangefest' in the grounds of the City Hall had been approved by the Committee and that the event had taken place annually since July 2012.

He outlined the details of a request which had been received from the organisers for the use of the City Hall grounds on Monday 13th July, 2015, between the hours of 11 a.m. and 7 p.m. The proposed event would be similar to previous years and would involve a mini-market, catering demonstrations and a small open-air children's entertainments programme.

This year, however, the organisers had also requested that the City Hall be open and that public tours of the building were available for those attending. He pointed out that Monday, 13th July 2015 was a Public Holiday and that this would depend on necessary staff being willing to work to cover security and to provide tours of the City Hall. He pointed out also that such staffing costs associated with the opening of the building on that day could be passed on to the event organisers.

During discussion, a Member stated that, given that it was an aim of the Council to open the City Hall to members of the public, then this should be accommodated where possible. A further Member suggested that the City Hall was generally open to members of the public on the majority of Bank or Public Holidays and that this should be no different.

The Working Group agreed to recommend that the Shadow Strategic Policy and Resources Committee approves the request as outlined and that it agrees, in principle, to open the City Hall on Monday, 13th July 2015 in order to provide tours of the building, provided that the necessary staffing arrangements could be put in place.

Bonfire Management Programme Review

The Programme Manager provided the Working Group with an update on the Bonfire Management Programme Review. He outlined that there had been continued support from the Members and that consultation had taken place with more than forty stakeholders.

During discussion, a Member outlined a problem whereby companies were taking advantage of the bonfires across Belfast in July, by dumping numerous old tyres at a site nearby, in order to avoid paying for the waste to be disposed of properly. The Member emphasised the need for the Northern Ireland Environment Agency and the Police Service of Northern Ireland to take action in such instances. A number of Members also expressed concern at how breaches within the current programme guidelines were enforced. They described areas where all guidelines had been followed until an individual, who was not associated with the building of the bonfire, placed a flag on it at the last minute and the group was penalised as a result. A Member suggested that the reviewed guidelines should include a timeline for bonfires in the scheme, stating that groups should commence building a bonfire no earlier than one month before the 11th July/8th August.

**Meeting of Diversity Working Group,
Tuesday, 3rd March, 2015**

After discussion, the Programme Manager agreed to take a number of Members' suggestions to the Good Relations Partnership.

City Hall Memorabilia Project – Update

The Chief Executive provided Members with a brief update on the City Hall Memorabilia Project and indicated that Ms. S. Lyons, Ms. A. Murphy and Ms. J. Donaldson from Redhead Consulting, and Professor John Foster, Queen's University Belfast, were in attendance to provide an update on the progress achieved to date in relation to the Memorabilia in the City Hall Project.

The consultants tabled for the information of the Members details of a revised list of artefacts and memorabilia which would be included in each of the Zones. During questions from Members, the Chief Executive clarified that this was a draft document which was intended to provoke party discussions and that nothing had yet been agreed.

Professor Foster reminded the Working Group that both residents of Belfast and tourists should be able to learn something from the exhibition. In response to a Member's question, Professor Foster clarified that there would be qualifying criteria in order to decide which famous sons and daughters of Belfast would be featured in the exhibition. Ms. Lyons also confirmed that the exhibition would be fluid, in that existing items could be updated and new items added where appropriate.

Redhead outlined the format for a walkthrough of the proposed exhibition which would take place on Saturday, 18th April. It was envisaged that Members would be guided through the actual exhibition spaces, with boards in each room detailing the historical narrative and graphical interpretation. Ms. Lyons outlined that this would be a good opportunity for Members to see the proposed designs in context and in their entirety. Professor Foster detailed that he would provide a written narrative to the Director of Property and Projects and that this would be available to Members on the day. In respect of the artefacts in the rotunda, this was still subject to ongoing political discussion.

Noted.

Visit to St. Anne's

It was agreed that the visit to St. Anne's Cathedral would be rescheduled to allow Members to trial the audio guides which were proposed for the City Hall.

Chairman