

Appendix 1: Proposed themes from 1917 – 1922

In preparing the programme of events and activities for 1916, Members had requested that any Council activity should focus on the following elements:

- That any activity would have a strong Belfast focus
- That the human stories of lost lives would be explored, as a common thread
- That commemoration activity would be respectful

Thematic approach:

Following consultations with Parties in 2016 and early 2017 the following significant events are being suggested for inclusion within the remainder of the Decade under a number of themes, as follows:

1. Politics and Parliaments.

The Irish Convention of August 1917 – March 1918. The Convention met in City Hall. General Election of 1918. First meeting of Dáil Eireann in the Mansion House in January 1919.

2. The end of World War I.

Post war Belfast, changing roles, injury, trauma and loss. Treaty of Versailles. European Borders redrawn.

3. The politicisation of women

In 1918, women over 30 had the vote for the first time in a General Election. First woman MP elected. Women in the Trade Union movement.

4. Labour must wait.

Both in Ulster and in the rest of Ireland, advances in the labour movement had to take second place to the constitutional issues of the day.

5. Violence, conflict, militarisation and displacement.

Between July 1920 and September 1922, Belfast experienced a series of outbreaks of rioting, violence and killing, resulting in huge loss of life and displacement of people from neighbourhoods across the City. 450 people died violently during this period. In October 1920, the Ulster Special Constabulary was founded and by 1922, the A, B and C specials numbered 32,000. On the 22nd June 1922, the RUC was founded.

6. The Kings Speech

June 1921, opening of the new Northern Ireland Parliament at City Hall by King George V. In his speech, he called on Irishmen 'to forgive and forget and to seek for the land loved a new era of peace, contentment and good will'.

7. Anglo Irish Treaty. Partition of Ulster; Partition of Ireland

In February 1920, the Partition Bill (4th Home Rule Bill) provided for the setting up of two parliaments on the island. The Kings speech of 1921 was seen as paving the way for the truce on the 11th July 1921 in the Anglo-Irish war, leading directly to the Anglo-Irish Treaty negotiations.

These themes incorporate similar popular themes that have been woven through the Council's Decade of Centenaries Programmes over the first two phases: Women, the Labour movement, Politics, conflict, the social life of the City, as well as forthcoming key momentous events such as the opening of the new NI Parliament in City Hall. The themes, with a strong Belfast connection, could be reflected through any style of activity similar to the first two phases, such as talks, lectures, exhibitions and drama.