



Subject:	Reflection Room
Date:	21st September 2018
Reporting Officer:	Gerry Millar, Director of Property & Projects
Contact Officer:	Peter McKay, Facilities Manager

Restricted Reports	
Is this report restricted?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?	
After Committee Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
After Council Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
Some time in the future	<input type="checkbox"/>
Never	<input type="checkbox"/>

Call-in	
Is the decision eligible for Call-in?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

1.0	Purpose of Report
1.1	To update Committee on a proposal to consider a Reflection Room in City Hall for visitors and staff.
2.0	Recommendations
2.1	Having considered the limited demand for such a space together with the lack of a suitable space in City Hall and the amount of the various activities taking place in the building it is recommended that the Committee agrees not to pursue this proposal any further
	Main Report
	<u>Key Issues</u>

3.1	Committee earlier this year asked that a report be brought back on the inclusion of a quiet room/room of reflection within the City Hall which could be used by persons of all faiths and none to facilitate the citizens of Belfast and further afield who wish to have private time out of the hustle and bustle of city life.
3.2	Visitor footfall in the City Hall has dramatically increased over the years and, with the opening of the new exhibition area, the City Hall is now one of the most visited tourist attraction in Belfast. The City Hall is one of the busiest buildings in the city and the many activities which take place from weddings, to events, to demonstrations, to tourist visitors, to council business epitomises the hustle and bustle of the city. Given this the City Hall may not be the optimum location for a proposed reflection room.
3.3	Consideration has also been given to the demand for such a facility and no demand has been evidenced. Although visitors arrive from all parts of the world, discussions with the front line staff including the receptionists and telephonists, indicate there has been very few requests to provide a Reflection Room in the City Hall. On the very few occasions when a request has been made staff have directed the individual to another location in the city or given them the option of going to the Reflection Space which is already located in Room 14 in the new Exhibition area.
3.4	Committee is asked to note that there also have been no requests from staff to provide such a facility in any of the BCC city centre office buildings as there are ample other type of provision including meeting rooms spaces. The City Hall grounds also offer quieter areas at times on both East and West wings.
3.5	In addition to the general business of City Hall itself and the lack of demand for a reflection room there is also very limited space in the building. Space in the City Hall is at an absolute premium with the additional facilities that have already been or which are currently being provided e.g. new exhibition area on the ground floor, the new Changing Places facility which will be installed shortly, the new family room facility etc. In addition, there have been further demands placed on the remaining space left in the City Hall by the need to find accommodation for the increased number of independent members and new directors. From time to time there are also temporary arrangements for exhibitions, conferences etc. which require a degree of flexibility in terms of the use of space.
3.6	Given all the above it is recommended that that the Committee agrees not to pursue this proposal any further and that if requests are made for quiet space that these continue to be directed to other suitable locations within the building or externally.
3.7	Financial/Resource Implications

	There would be costs involved with relocating staff, finding new and/or additional accommodation and of course fitting out an appropriate Reflective Room which have not so far been estimated.
3.8	<p>Equality and Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment</p> <p>There are no legal requirements on Belfast City Council to provide such a facility in any of its public buildings. However providing one may be welcomed by a number of the faith bodies or alternatively could create demand for particular faith based facilities raising further issues regarding the council's powers.</p>
4.0	Appendices – Documents Attached
	None