



Subject:	Northern Ireland Centenary Programme - Repositioning of Royal Chairs
Date:	19th February, 2021
Reporting Officer:	John Walsh, City Solicitor/Director of Legal and Civic Services
Contact Officer:	Aisling Milliken, Functions, Tours and Exhibition 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"/>
Sometime 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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">To seek approval to relocate the Town Hall Mayoral Chair in the Council chamber to improve the display of this artefact and the newly conserved Royal Chairs.To seek approval to commission a new brass plaque marking the successful conservation of the chairs and marking their use in historic royal visits and the events of June 1921 at the City Hall. Both requests are linked into the council's NI Centenary Programme 2021.
2.0	Recommendations
2.1	The Committee is recommended to; <ul style="list-style-type: none">i. approve the request to relocate the Town Hall Mayoral chair to its own feature area and update the area for the two royal chairs; andii. approve the request to commission a new brass plaque for the royal chairs.

3.0	Main Report
	<p data-bbox="264 228 424 259"><u>Background</u></p> <p data-bbox="169 277 1469 456">3.1 At present within the Council Chamber a wooden platform against the back wall of the chamber showcases the two royal chairs and Town Hall Mayoral chair. The Mayoral Chair is believed to have been commissioned for the opening of the Town Hall on Victoria Street in 1871 and is a rare example of the Irish arts and craft style.</p> <p data-bbox="169 528 1469 757">3.2 The royal chairs were formerly the property of former Lord Mayor Sir Crawford McCullagh and were used at the City Hall by King George V and Queen Mary in 1921 at the official state opening of the new Northern Ireland Parliament and by King George VI and Queen Elizabeth during their coronation tour of 1937. The Council purchased the chairs at auction from the late Sir Crawford's estate in 1950.</p> <p data-bbox="169 828 1469 1008">3.3 As part of the NI Centenary Programme, specialist conservators have been appointed to stabilise and conserve the condition of these two important artefacts. The cost of the conservation of the two Royal chairs is part of the NI Centenary Programme presented to the Committee in November 2020 and within a funding application to the Shared History Fund.</p> <p data-bbox="169 1079 1469 1258">3.4 At present, City Hall Tour Guides have reported that international visitors to the City Hall are often confused by the current layout and display of these three chairs and it is hoped by separating the Mayoral Chair and pair of Royal Chairs, their respective historical significance and context will be better explained and illustrated to visitors.</p>
	<p data-bbox="264 1330 424 1361"><u>Key Issues</u></p> <p data-bbox="169 1379 1469 1715">3.5 The City Hall Collections team, once the conservation of the two royal chairs is completed, request permission to move the Town Hall Mayoral chair from its current location against the back wall of the chamber to the left of its current position, creating a separate small plinth on the north side of the chamber below the window; locating the artefact where Members may remember the Covenant table was on display for many years. All artefacts would continue to be cordoned with rope and staunton as they are now to protect the artefacts from damage. <i>(refer to appendix 1 - photo 1 and 2)</i></p>
	<p data-bbox="264 1778 775 1809"><u>Financial and Resource Implications</u></p> <p data-bbox="169 1827 1469 1962">3.6 A budget for conservation of the two Royal chairs has already been already approved as part of the NI Centenary Programme presented to committee in November 2020 and within a funding application to the Shared History Fund.</p>

3.7	<p>There would be a cost to the Council in approving the request for the procurement of a brass plaque to update the existing plaques. The cost is approximately £1,000 and would be financed from existing operational budgets.</p> <p><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Implications</u></p>
3.8	<p>There are no direct good relations or equality implications arising from this report.</p>
4.0	<p>Documents Attached</p>
	<p>Appendix - Current location of Royal chairs and Town Hall Mayoral chair and options for new placement as part of NI Centenary programme.</p>