

Title of Report:	Partnership Agreement with the Ulster History Circle
Committee Report Submitted To:	The Leisure & Development Committee
Date of Meeting:	21 February 2023
For Decision or For Information	For Decision

Linkage to Council Strategy (2019-23)	
Strategic Theme	Resilient, Healthy and Engaged Communities
Outcome	Council will work to develop and promote stable and cohesive communities across the Borough
Lead Officer	Head of Community & Culture Museum Services Development Manager

Budgetary Considerations	
Cost of Proposal	£1500 per year for three years
Included in Current Year Estimates	No
Capital/Revenue	
Code	
Staffing Costs	

Screening Requirements	Required for new or revised Policies, Plans, Strategies or Service Delivery Proposals.		
Section 75 Screening	Screening Completed:	Yes/No	Date:
	EQIA Required and Completed:	Yes/No	Date:
Rural Needs Assessment (RNA)	Screening Completed	Yes/No	Date:
	RNA Required and Completed:	Yes/No	Date:
Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA)	Screening Completed:	Yes/No	Date:
	DPIA Required and Completed:	Yes/No	Date:

1.0 Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to seek approval for a partnership agreement to be signed between the Ulster History Circle and Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council.

2.0 Background

A Notice of Motion had been brought before the Committee in early 2020 proposing *'that a blue plaque, in recognition of Mr James Sayers, be erected at his former home in Loughguille and that Council make a subsequent application to the Ulster History Circle for this, and Council pay for the erection of the plaque.'*

Council subsequently approved the Motion in June 2020.

The Ulster History Circle (UHC) is a not-for-profit organisation responsible for placing the iconic blue circular plaques in public spaces.

Being a voluntary/volunteer led organisation the UHC has confirmed that the erection of blue plaques is facilitated purely on the basis of partnerships with local government bodies and other local organisations.

The Ulster History Circle had, for a period, suspended its blue plaque programme and were not accepting any nominations for new plaques, citing the Covid-19 pandemic in creating a backlog in terms of planning and delivery of those agreed projects within the scheme.

Council's Museum Services have been engaging with the UHC from 2022 to discuss the process for nominations from within the borough which, if appropriate, would be recognised and awarded UHC blue plaques.

UHC have confirmed that the group cannot accept nominations from Local Government bodies without a partnership arrangement in place. Partnerships can be time-limited or ongoing. The Local Government partner would be required to fund the installation of agreed blue plaques, estimated at a total of £1,500 per plaque including the unveiling reception.

UHC take responsibility for the research, design, production, installation and formal unveiling of the plaques, including the reception and liaising with media and the PSNI where necessary. It is usual for only a single blue plaque to be installed per year, per partnership.

If a partnership was agreed between the Council and UHC, the following processes would apply:

- Formal nominations, based on the criteria in place by the UHC scheme and proposed by Council would be collated and prepared by designated council officers (usually Museums or Heritage staff).
- Nominations would be proposed to UHC at a formal meeting **where UHC would also put forward additional nomination relating to the Causeway Coast and Glens.**
- By mutual agreement, one individual would be identified each year for an UHC blue plaque. All other nominees will be included in the Dictionary of Ulster Biography and may be identified for the receipt of blue plaques in later years of the partnership.

In order to be nominated for UHC blue plaques, individuals must meet the following criteria:

- Deceased at least 20 years, or be deceased but would have met their 100th birthday by the date of unveiling;
- Associated with one of the nine counties of Ulster by reason of birth, education, work, residence of vocation;
- Recognised for their significant contribution to education, industry, commerce, science, arts, literature, international affairs or other (non-political) calling anywhere in the world;

- Associated with a specific building within the nine counties of Ulster (i.e. place of birth, education, residence, work or similar).

3.0 Recommendation

It is recommended that members consider the proposal to engage in a partnership arrangement with the Ulster History Circle at a cost of circa £1,500 per annum and subsequent installation of one blue plaque per year for an initial term of three years, subject to review.