



Title of Report:	Ulster History Circle Partnership
Committee Report Submitted To:	Leisure & Development Committee
Date of Meeting:	21 November 2023
For Decision or For Information	For Decision
To be discussed In Committee	No

Linkage to Council Strategy (2021-25)	
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 Manager

Budgetary Considerations	
Cost of Proposal	Approx. £1500 per annum
Included in Current Year Estimates	YES/NO
Capital/Revenue	Revenue
Code	
Staffing Costs	n/a

Legal Considerations	
Input of Legal Services Required	YES/NO
Legal Opinion Obtained	YES/NO

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

To update members on the partnership agreement between the Ulster History Circle and Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council.

2.0 Background

In February 2023 a report was taken to Council for a decision on entering a partnership with the Ulster History Circle.

The Ulster History Circle (UHC) is a not-for-profit organisation responsible for placing the blue circular plaques in public spaces across Ulster in honour of men and women who have contributed to the province's history. UHC is an entirely voluntary organisation that has no earning capacity or trust funds of any kind. Its erection of blue plaques is facilitated purely on the basis of partnerships with local government bodies and other local organisations.

UHC will not accept nominations from Local Government bodies without a partnership arrangement in place. Partnerships can be time-limited or ongoing. They oblige the Local Government partner to fund the installation of agreed blue plaques, estimated at a total of £1,500 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.

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 or 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).

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

- Formal nominations on behalf of Council would be determined by designated council officers within the Communities and Culture team.
- 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.
- Nominations would be narrowed down to three – five names. These would then be taken to the Leisure and Development Committee and Council for approval.
- 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.

On 7th March 2023 Council approved the decision 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, with the caveat that the first blue plaque is for Mr Sayers.

3.0 Current Situation

Museum Services were informed by the UHC at the end of August 2023 that they did not agree to enter the partnership with the attached caveat.

They reiterated the normal process (as outlined above) which has worked in successful partnerships with other Councils, and which they hope can be adopted by Causeway Coast and Glens.

4.0 Options

Option 1: Council do not engage in a partnership arrangement with UHC. Council would be unable to install any blue plaques across the Causeway Coast and Glens Borough commemorating the men and women who have contributed to the province's history.

Option 2: Council engages 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. Officers from the Community & Culture team will nominate James Sayers as one of their three to five nominees. This will not guarantee he will receive a blue plaque, but he will be included in the Dictionary of Ulster Biography and may be identified for the receipt of a blue plaque in later years of the partnership.

4.0 Recommendation

It is recommended that the Leisure & Development Committee recommends to Council that they 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 as outline in option 2 of the report.