



Belfast City Council

Report to:	Strategic Policy and Resources Committee
Subject:	Armed Forces Day
Date:	15 April 2011
Reporting Officer:	Ciaran Quigley, Assistant Chief Executive (Ext 6038)
Contact Officer:	Stephen McCrory, Democratic Services Manager (Ext 6314)

Relevant Background Information

The Committee is reminded that in April 2009 and in April 2010 it considered requests from the Ministry of Defence for the Council to fly the Armed Forces Day flag for a week leading up to the Armed Forces Day itself.

For the last two years the Council has agreed, in accordance with existing Council policy, that the request to fly the Armed Forces flag at the City Hall be acceded to but that the approval be for one day only. It is worth pointing out, however, that there was not a consensus on this matter between the political parties represented on the Council.

Key Issues

A letter has been received from the Chief of the Defence Staff making a similar request for the flying of the Armed Forces flag at the City Hall from 20 June till 25 June this year.

As in previous years, the Ministry of Defence has offered to provide the Council with the flag, a copy of which is shown at appendix 1.

The existing Council policy on the flying of flags allows for flags other than the Union Flag to be flown on specific occasions. For example, the Cross of St. Patrick is flown on 17 March, the European Union Flag is flown on Europe Day on 9 May and the Red Ensign is flown on National Merchant Navy Day on 3 September each year.

The options open to the Committee are:

1. to accede to the request from the Ministry of Defence for the Armed Forces Flag to be flown at the City Hall for the period from 20 till 25 June; or
2. in line with the decision taken in the last two years, to accede to the request but to limit the period during which the flag will be flown to the Armed Forces Day itself, that is, 25 June; or
3. to refuse the request.

The Committee, at its meeting on 23 April 2010, agreed also that it did not wish to establish a policy position on the Armed Forces Day flag but rather that each request received be dealt with annually on an individual basis.

Resource Implications

None.

Equality and Good Relations Implications

The issues in relation to flying of the Armed Forces Day flag are similar to those identified in connection with the Council's general policy in relation to flags.

Recommendations

The Committee is requested to give consideration to the three options set out above and to decide how it wishes to proceed.

Decision Tracking

Stephen McCrory, Democratic Services Manager
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25 May 2011

Documents Attached

Appendix 1 – Armed Forces Day Flag
