



Report to:	Strategic Policy & Resources Committee
Subject:	Equality considerations regarding City Hall memorabilia and the Council's current flag flying policy
Date:	Friday 17 June 2011
Reporting Officer:	Hazel Francey, Good Relations Manager

1	Relevant Background Information
	<p>Members will recall that at its meeting on 15 April the Committee deferred consideration of the attached report until after the Local Government Elections of May 2011.</p> <p>Since a newly elected Council is now in place it is appropriate that the new Committee should now consider this issue.</p>
2	Key Issues
	<p>As noted in the original report, it is proposed that the existing Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) of the Council's flag flying policy should be refreshed and up-dated. This should be accompanied by a new EQIA on the memorabilia within the City Hall, done in parallel.</p> <p>It is recommended that the up-dating of the factual information on the flag flying policy be done by the same independent consultant who carried out the original EQIA (Denise Wheatley of the Equality Company) and that this information be fed into a separate but linked EQIA on City Hall memorabilia, to be done by another independent consultant (Dr John Kremer of Kremer Consultancy). Both EQIAs would be developed under the theme of "Promoting a Good and Harmonious Working Environment" – the title of the appropriate guidance issued by the Equality Commission for NI.</p> <p>This theme would allow both issues to be considered together in a broader context.</p>
3	Proposed procedure
	<p>It is proposed that Dr John Kremer meet with the Members of the Committee at an early stage, either jointly or in political party groups, to discuss how to best progress this matter. When a process has been agreed, the consultants will begin work with a full report being submitted to Committee in October which will also deal with the issue of what resources are required to implement the recommendations of the process.</p>

4	Equality and Good Relations Considerations
	This work will be carried out to comply with all relevant equality guidance.
5	Resource Implications
	It is anticipated that both EQIAs could be completed for around £12,000; the costs of these can be accommodated within the Strategic Policy & Resources Committee's revenue budget.
6	Decision required
	<p>The Strategic Policy & Resources Committee is therefore requested to grant approval to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the carrying out of a formal Equality Impact Assessment on the City Hall memorabilia by an independent external consultant • the refreshing/up-dating of the Equality Impact Assessment on the Council's policy of Flying the Union flag by an independent external consultant • the up-dating of both legal advice and of advice from the Equality Commission on the matter by the Town Solicitor • the combining of both EQIAs under the theme of "Promoting a Good and Harmonious Working Environment" • meeting the recommended consultant at an early date, either as a Committee or by political party groups. <p>The Town Solicitor will bring a composite report to a future meeting of the Memorabilia Working Group and the Strategic Policy & Resources Committee for consideration in due course.</p>
7	Officers to contact for further information
	Ciaran Quigley, Town Solicitor and Assistant Chief Executive, ext. 6038 Hazel Francey, Good Relations Manager, ext. 6020
8	Abbreviations used
	EQIA = Equality Impact Assessment