



Subject:	American Troops - request to mark 75 th anniversary of arrival in Belfast
Date:	21 st October 2016
Reporting Officer:	Nicola Lane, Good Relations Manager
Contact Officers:	Nicola Lane, Good Relations Manager

Is this report restricted?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Is the decision eligible for Call-in?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>

1.0	Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues
1.1	The purpose of this report is to seek guidance from Members in relation to a request from Councillor Craig to mark the 75 th Anniversary of American troops arriving in Belfast.
2.0	Recommendations
2.1	The Committee is asked to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Consider the request to mark the 75th Anniversary of American troops arriving in Belfast in January 2017.
3.0	Main report
3.1	<u>Key Issues</u> Following correspondence from Cllr Craig asking Council to consider marking the above event in January 2017, Officers were asked to bring forward options on how the above event could be commemorated. A copy of the original correspondence is included at Appendix 1.

3.2	<p>Information was presented at the Diversity Working Group meeting in August and members had then agreed to look at the above anniversary as part of the wider discussions around future commemorations. However, in the interim, given the timeframe involved, Members had asked for the item to be placed on the next meeting of the Working Group for consideration. As the Working Group did not meet in October, the paper is being brought to the SP&R Committee for consideration.</p>
3.3	<p>Members are reminded that Officers had been in discussion with a senior official from the US Consulate in Belfast regarding the above anniversary who indicated that the Consulate does not have any plans to initiate specific events marking this anniversary.</p>
3.4	<p>Members may wish to note that the presence of American troops is already commemorated by a memorial in the grounds of City Hall which was originally erected on 26 January 1943 and placed at the gateway of City Hall. It was rededicated at its present location by President Clinton in 1995. A memorial garden at Lisnabreeny was also acquired through Local Government Reform.</p>
3.5	<p>It is also worth noting that the NI War Memorial has been in contact with the US Consulate regarding ways in which anniversaries might be marked in terms of US/NI relations.</p>
3.6	<p>Notwithstanding the positions above and bearing in mind that this is a 75th anniversary and not a centenary, the date could potentially be marked in a modest way and Members are being presented with the following options for consideration:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a small-scale event at the Dockside which would need to take place in consultation with the Harbour Commission; • a letter sent from the Lord Mayor to the family of Milburn Henke, the first US soldier to set foot off the boat in Belfast; • a small dance programme in the Ulster Hall (if available); • a small lunch held by the Lord Mayor.
3.7	<p><u>Financial & Resource Implications</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If agreed, the “Swing Dance” in the Ulster Hall would be funded from the Council’s events budget and is estimated to be £5-7K. • The dinner in the Lord Mayor’s Parlour would be funded through the Lord Mayor’s entertainments allowance.

3.8	<u>Equality or Good Relations Implications</u> A strategic approach to marking events as part of a wider programme has been shown to be effective within the promotion of equality and good relations.
4.0	Appendices - Documents attached
4.1	Appendix 1 - Correspondence from Cllr Craig