



Subject:	Request for Funding – Polish Heritage Flight Visit
Date:	21st May, 2021
Reporting Officer:	Ryan Black, Director of City and Neighbourhood Services
Contact Officer:	Nicola Lane, Good Relations Manager

Restricted Reports	
Is this report restricted?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?	
After Committee Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
After Council Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sometime in the future	<input type="checkbox"/>
Never	<input type="checkbox"/>

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

1.0	Purpose of Report/Summary of Main Issues
1.1	The purpose of this report is to advise Members of a request for funding towards a Polish Heritage Flight Visit due to take place in August, 2021.
2.0	Recommendations
2.1	<p>The Members of the Committee are asked to recommend that, in accordance with the Council decision of 4th May, the Chief Executive exercise her delegated authority to:</p> <p>i. approve an amount of £3,000 towards the Polish Heritage Trail as part of the partnership approach with Our Freedom and Yours, the Consulate of the Republic of Poland in Belfast, Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough, Ards and North Down Borough and Lisburn and Castlereagh City Councils;</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ii. approve an additional £800 towards the educational element, subject to liaison with the relevant Good Relations Officer to ensure that the sessions are targeted at wide audience and the content fits with good relations objectives; and iii. note that the above funding support is subject to confirmation being received from The Executive Office on their allocation towards the District Council Good Relations Programme budget.
3.0	Main Report
	<p><u>Key Issues</u></p> <p>3.1 In 2019, the Your Freedom and Ours project started working on the Polish Wings Heritage Trail, bringing the forgotten history of the Polish Airmen in Northern Ireland to life in the form of an educational trail available online and physically to the wider public (map of the PWHT attached at Appendix 1).</p> <p>3.2 This year, to mark the centenary of Northern Ireland, as well as, to celebrate the relationship between the Polish and the Northern Irish communities, they propose to organise a 2 day visit in August by the Polish Heritage Flight to Northern Ireland with a ground event at the Newtownards airfield (subject to restrictions) and a flypast over several locations related to the history of the Polish Airmen in Northern Ireland. The Polish Heritage Flight is a historical aircraft collection based in Duxford, flying the Hurricane and the Spitfire in the Second World War Polish Air Force markings. During the visit, the PHF will provide an aerial display over Belfast including the City Airport, Milltown Cemetery also flying over South, East and North Belfast. This display will be visible to thousands of spectators around Belfast.</p> <p>3.3 Prior to the visit, they also propose delivering a series of talks explaining the history of the Polish Air Force in the Second World War and Northern Ireland. This series will be available to local communities either face-to-face or online. Such an approach would allow the project to explain the historical connection between NI and Poland and foster relationships with the Polish community living in Belfast today.</p> <p>3.4 To make the whole project successful, a partnership was formed between the For Your Freedom and Ours project, the Consulate of the Republic of Poland in Belfast, Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough, Ards and North Down Borough and Lisburn and Castlereagh City Councils. All the mentioned above parties have agreed to support the programme and to contribute to the budget.</p>

3.5	<p>They are asking the Council to become partners in the programme and to support the idea of bringing shared history to life by supporting the Polish Heritage Flight. They advised that the total budget required for the two days programme is £15,000, and are asking partners to contribute £3,000 for the aerial display. An additional £800 is being requested for an educational element including talks on the history of the Polish Air Force.</p>
3.6	<p>Members may wish to note that the last time the Polish Air Force was visible over Northern Ireland was in 1945, so bringing the Hurricane and the Spitfire in Polish markings to Northern Ireland will be a significant way to celebrate the past and the present connections.</p>
3.7	<p>The group advises that such a project will have an impact on the Good Relations in the city; from their experience with delivering shared history programmes across Northern Ireland; such an educational approach plays a massive role in changing people's perspectives on the presence of the Polish community in Northern Ireland.</p>
3.8	<p>A project outline and draft Programme to take place on 21st and 22nd August is attached in the proposal at Appendix 2.</p>
3.9	<p>By way of background, there are currently approximately 25,000 Polish people living in Northern Ireland. The majority of them are settled in the Greater Belfast area, including a large population living in East Belfast.</p>
3.10	<p>In recent years, a number of murals dedicated to the shared history between Poland and Northern Ireland were erected in Belfast and the For Your Freedom and Ours shared history project delivered a number of OCN accredited Good Relations programmes to over 1000 participants representing local communities. This programme was designed to help tackle issues related to integration and reduce levels of prejudice towards members of the largest ethnic minority group in Northern Ireland. Several groups that participated in the programme come from the Greater Belfast area, including Ballynafeigh Orange Hall, Ballynafeigh Historical and Cultural Society, Ballymac Friendship Club, ACT Initiative South Belfast, Belfast South Community Resources and Fortwilliam Youth Centre.</p>
3.11	<p>Members are asked to consider the request and to note that funding requested could be provided from the Good Relations budget, subject to confirmation of funding through a Letter of Offer from The Executive Office which is expected shortly.</p>

3.12	Officers would advise that the educational element of £800 could also be supported subject to liaison with the relevant Good Relations Officer to ensure the sessions are targeted at wide audience and the content fits with good relations objectives.
3.13	The project would make an important contribution in building relationships between the Polish and wider communities, emphasising connectedness and promoting understanding.
3.14	<p><u>Financial and Resource Implications</u></p> <p>The above request of £3,800 could be covered from existing budgets once confirmation has been received from The Executive Office on their allocation towards the District Council Good Relations Programme budget.</p>
3.15	<p><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment</u></p> <p>The above event would be supported through the Good Relations Programme which has the aim of promoting good relations within the City.</p>
4.0	Documents Attached
	<p>Appendix 1: Polish Heritage Trail</p> <p>Appendix 2: Outline of Polish Heritage Trail Project and Programme</p>