

REPORT TO: Cabinet Member for Corporate Services
Cabinet Member for Communities

DATE: 8 September 2010

SUBJECT: Regularising of Flag Flying across the Borough

WARDS AFFECTED: LINACRE, DUKES, CHURCH

REPORT OF: Samantha Tunney, Assistant Chief Executive

CONTACT OFFICER: Jason Carroll. Head of Civic & Mayoral Services

**EXEMPT/
CONFIDENTIAL:** No

PURPOSE/SUMMARY:

To inform the Cabinet Member of the current arrangements for flying of flags on Town Halls in the Borough, and to propose arrangements for regularising the arrangements in order to provide consistency.

REASON WHY DECISION REQUIRED:

To allow for consistency in flag flying when there is a notable death, and give a consistent process for organisations requesting a flag to be flown.

RECOMMENDATION(S):

That the Cabinet Member for Corporate Services:

1. Approves the proposed arrangements for flying flags at Southport and Bootle Town Halls.
2. Approves the proposal that the Union Flag be not flown at Crosby Town Hall as it has ceased to be used as a base for political groups, which is in accordance with current practice.
3. Approves the proposal that the process, outlined on Appendix A be introduced for applications from organisations to fly flags: it being, noted that in this regard, that at Southport Town Hall, the St Georges Flag would need to be taken down, and at Bootle Town Hall, the Sefton Metropolitan Borough Council Flag would be taken down, to accommodate any requests that were approved.
4. Approves the suggested approach for flying flags in recognition of notable deaths, as outlined in table 2.4.
5. Refers to the Cabinet Member for Communities, the decision whether to fly the IDAHO flag.

That Cabinet Member for Communities be requested to consider whether the Rainbow Flag be flown on the 17th May in recognition of International Day Against Homophobia (IDAHO) Day.

KEY DECISION: No

FORWARD PLAN: No

IMPLEMENTATION DATE: Following the expiry of the “call-in” period for the minutes of this meeting.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS:

Continue as at present without a consistent policy, and wait for a request to fly a flag

IMPLICATIONS:

Budget/Policy Framework:

Financial:

<u>CAPITAL EXPENDITURE</u>	2006/ 2007 £	2007/ 2008 £	2008/ 2009 £	2009/ 2010 £
Gross Increase in Capital Expenditure				
Funded by:				
Sefton Capital Resources				
Specific Capital Resources				
<u>REVENUE IMPLICATIONS</u>				
Gross Increase in Revenue Expenditure				
Funded by:				
Sefton funded Resources				
Funded from External Resources				
Does the External Funding have an expiry date? Y/N	When?			
How will the service be funded post expiry?				

Legal:

Risk Assessment:

Asset Management:

CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN/VIEWS

None

CORPORATE OBJECTIVE MONITORING:

Corporate		Positive	Neutral	Negative
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Objective		Impact	Impact	Impact
1	Creating a Learning Community		✓	
2	Creating Safe Communities		✓	
3	Jobs and Prosperity		✓	
4	Improving Health and Well-Being		✓	
5	Environmental Sustainability		✓	
6	Creating Inclusive Communities		✓	
7	Improving the Quality of Council Services and Strengthening local Democracy		✓	
8	Children and Young People		✓	

<p>LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS RELIED UPON IN THE PREPARATION OF THIS REPORT Current legalisation on Flying Flags (issued by the Department for Culture Media and Sport) on Government Buildings 2007</p>

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Southport Town Hall and Bootle Town Hall currently fly flags. None of these flags are floodlit, and all flags are flown 24 hours a day.
- 1.2 Crosby Town Hall previously flew a flag, but it was stolen and the flagpole was vandalised in 2008. Crosby Town Hall has ceased to act as a political building. However, a request has been made to technical services that the flag pole be maintained, as this would enable the Cabinet Member to determine whether to agree that flags should be not flown on this building, given the aforementioned comments, about the flag being stolen. Photographs of the flagpole will be available at the meeting.
- 1.3 Southport Town Hall flies four flags, namely:
 - Union Flag
 - Sefton Metropolitan Borough Council Flag
 - European Union Flag
 - St George's Flag
- 1.4 Bootle Town Hall flies two flags, namely:
 - Union Flag
 - Sefton Metropolitan Borough Council Flag
- 1.5 There have been maintenance issues with the flagpoles at Bootle Town Hall which flies the Sefton Metropolitan Borough Council Flag and more recently the Union Flag which have only recently been rectified in the last financial year.
- 1.6 There are 18 days in the year 'government' buildings are expected to fly the Union Flag. As Southport and Bootle Town Hall both fly the Union Flag constantly throughout the year these requirements are met.
- 1.7 The Council, from time to time receives requests to fly flags on behalf of organisations and there is no formal mechanism in place to allow this to happen. In addition, there have been maintenance issues with the flag poles which have only recently been rectified which has meant that these requests could not be accepted. An example of this is a request, received from the Equalities Partnership, that the Council fly the IDAHO flag, which was then subsequently followed up by a member of the public who felt strongly that the Council should fly this flag. At the time, the maintenance problems with the flag poles meant the request could not be acceded to, but further there was no mechanism in place for dealing with this request.
- 1.8 In order to provide a consistent approach, it is suggested a process of approval be adopted, as outlined in the appendix to the report, and that the Head of Civic and Mayoral Services, and the Chief Executive, or other authorised person to deal with requests from organisations. It would be expected that where an

organisation makes a request to fly a flag, that they would provide the flag(s) to facilitate flag flying.

2. CURRENT AND RECOMMENDED PROCEDURES FOR DEATHS

- 2.1 The current and recommended procedures for the deaths of notable people are outlined in the following two tables.
- 2.2 Where the table refers to a flag, the practice is to lower the flag on notification of the death and raise it at the end of the day of the funeral.

(In respect of a Member of the Royal Family or specifically the death of the Monarch, direction would be taken from the Palace, but ordinarily a death would be dealt with as 2.2)

Table 2.3 Current Practice for notable deaths

Death	Current Policy	Display a “Notification of Death” notice on the public notice board	Sefton Metropolitan Borough Council flag (Bootle and Southport)	Union Flag
Death of current Mayor/ Mayoress, Deputy Mayor/Mayoress	Current practice (no written policy), Mayoral Protocol	yes	yes	
Death of Ex Mayor/Mayoress	Current practice (no written policy) Mayoral Protocol	yes	yes	
Death of a serving Member of the Council	Current practice (no written policy), Protocol	yes	yes	
Death of an ex Member of the Council	Current practice (no written policy), Protocol	no	no	
Death of current Senior Officer	Current practice (no written policy), Protocol	no	no	
Death of Ex-Senior Officer	Current practice (no written policy), Protocol	no	no	
Death of the Sovereign	No current procedures in place			
Death of Members of the Royal Family	No current procedures in place			
Lord Lieutenant of Merseyside	No current procedures in place			
Freeman of the Borough	No current procedures in place			
Serving MP of the Borough	No current procedures in place			
Serving Chief Constable of Merseyside	No current procedures in place			

Table 2.4 Recommended Policy for notable deaths

Death	Display a “Notification of Death” notice on the public notice board	The Sefton Metropolitan Borough Council Flag on notification of a death is then lowered is raised at the end of the day on the day of the funeral.	The Union Flag is lowered is raised at the end of the day on the day of the funeral.
Death of current Mayor/Mayoress, Deputy Mayor/Mayoress	Yes	Yes	No
Death of Ex Mayor/Mayoress	Yes	Yes	No
Death of a serving Member of the Council	Yes	Yes	No
Death of an ex Member of the Council	No	No	No
Death of current Senior Officer	Yes	Yes	No
Death of Ex-Senior Officer	No	No	No
Death of the Sovereign	Yes	No	Yes
Death of Members of the Royal Family	Yes	No	Yes
Lord Lieutenant of Merseyside	Yes	No	Yes
Freeman of the Borough	Yes	Yes	No
Serving MP of the Borough	Yes	Yes	No
Serving Chief Constable of Merseyside	Yes	No	Yes

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Cabinet Member for Corporate Services:

1. Approves the proposed arrangements for flying flags at Southport and Bootle Town Halls.
2. Approves the proposal that the Union Flag be not flown at Crosby Town Hall as it has ceased to be used as a base for political groups, which is in accordance with current practice.
3. Approves the proposal that the process, outlined on Appendix A be introduced for applications from organisations to fly flags: it being noted that in this regard, that at Southport Town Hall, the St Georges Flag would need to be taken down, and at Bootle Town Hall, the Sefton Metropolitan Borough Council Flag would be taken down, to accommodate any requests that were approved.
4. Approves the suggested approach for flying flags in recognition of notable deaths, as outlined in table 2.4.
5. Refers to the Cabinet Member for Communities, the decision whether to fly the IDAHO flag.



**SEFTON METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL
CIVIC & MAYORAL SERVICES**

**APPLICATION TO FLY A FLAG AT
BOOTLE AND / OR SOUTHPORT TOWN HALL**

Name of organisation:	
Address of organisation:	
Telephone Number:	
Email Address:	
Contact Name of person making application:	
Position in organisation:	
Organisations website address (if applicable)	
Flag requested to fly:	
Reason for the request to fly the flag:	
Date required for the Flag to be flown:	
If you require the flag to be flown prior to your event, indicate: (no guarantee can be made in relation to this request)	3 days 5 days 7 days
Signature of applicant:	
Date of application:	

See terms and conditions attached

For office use only

Date application received:	
Town Hall Location:	
1 st Stage Approval or declined by Head of Civic & Mayoral Services:	APPROVED/DECLINED
Head of Civic & Mayoral Services Signature	
Date:	
(If declined give reason)	
Final authorisation by Chief Executive:	APPROVED/DECLINED
Chief Executives signature	
Date:	
Written response to Organisation sent (Date):	