



Belfast City Council

Report to:	Strategic Policy and Resources Committee
Subject:	Armed Forces Day
Date:	24 April 2009
Reporting Officer:	Liam Steele, Head of Committee and Members' Services

Relevant Background Information

The first Armed Forces Day is being held on Saturday, 27th June, 2009. The aim of the Day is to raise public awareness of the contribution made to society by the Armed Forces, including veterans and cadets, and it is understood that the intention is that the event should be held on an annual basis.

A letter has been received from the Deputy Chief of the Defence Staff on behalf of the Ministry of Defence seeking the co-operation of Local Authorities to organise events to mark the day, with a National Event being hosted in a chosen location. In Northern Ireland the focal point for the celebrations will be Carrickfergus Borough Council and steps are being taken to identify the most appropriate and inclusive approach to the event which will be organised by Carrickfergus Borough Council and the Army in Northern Ireland.

Key Issues

One of the official activities which the Ministry of Defence is requesting Local Authorities to organise is the raising of a unique Armed Forces Day flag. They have requested that the flag be raised at 10.30 a.m. on Monday, 22nd June and flown during the following week. The flag, a picture of which is attached at appendix 1, will be provided free of charge by the Ministry of Defence.

The 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's is flown on 17th March, the European Union Flag is flown on Europe Day on 9th May and the Red Ensign is flown on National Merchant Navy Day on 3rd September each year.

Resource Implications

There may be some minor expense involved in the organisation of a small flag-raising ceremony but this can be met from within existing budgets.

Recommendation

To give consideration to the information contained in the report and to decide whether or not to grant approval for the Armed Forces Day flag to be flown at the City Hall for the period from 22nd till 29th June, 2009.

Decision Tracking

If the Committee is minded to grant authority, a ceremony will be arranged for 22nd June.

Officer responsible – Mr Liam Steele, Head of Committee and Members' Services.

Documents Attached

Appendix 1 – Picture of Armed Forces Day Flag.