



BELFAST CITY COUNCIL

Report to:	Strategic Policy & Resources Committee
Subject:	Use of ILLUMINATE facilities for ME Awareness Day and Community Relations Week
Date:	21 st March 2014
Reporting Officer:	Gerry Millar, Director of Property & Projects
Contact Officer:	George Wright (Ext. 5206/6232)

1	Relevant Background Information
1.1	Members will be aware that the governance arrangements approved by the Committee in February 2013 limit access to the new ILLUMINATE LED lighting facilities to (a) the charities nominated by our civic office-bearers, (b) events organized or supported by the council and (c) an agreed schedule of additional days. Any request not falling into these categories currently requires the approval of the Committee.
1.2	Two requests have recently been received to have the City Hall illuminated in a special colour. The first is from the Chairperson of Myalgic Encephalomyelitis (ME) Support Group NI asking for the City Hall to be illuminated in blue on the 12 th May 2014 to mark International ME Awareness Day.
1.3	ME is a neurological disease characterised by a range of symptoms including intense muscular pains which can result in intense physical and mental exhaustion. ME Support NI is a support group for people with ME and is based in Belfast. There are approximately 7,000 sufferers of ME in Northern Ireland.
1.4	The second request is from the Chairperson of the Community Relations Council . He has requested Belfast City Council's help in supporting this year's Community Relations Week by having the City Hall illuminated in rainbow colours either at the beginning of the week on the 16 th June or throughout the week period itself.
1.5	The rainbow colours reflect the wide diversity of Belfast and will help raise awareness of the week's activities.

2	Key Issues
2.1	Firstly, it should be noted that these requests are for single occurrences only; they are not requests that these dates be added to the existing annual schedule of additional days.

2.2	Secondly there is of course always the potential, when considering requests of this type, that a precedent is set which could initiate a significant volume of similar requests in the future which may be equally worthy and therefore difficult to refuse.
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3	Resource Implications
3.1	There are no direct resource implications in terms of staff time or additional costs associated with this request.

4	Equality and Good Relations Implications
4.1	There are no direct equality implications arising from this report.

5	Recommendations
5.1	<p>The Committee is asked to consider whether it wishes to approve the use of the LED lighting system at City Hall for the purposes of marking International ME Awareness Day on the 12th May 2014 and the beginning of Community Relations Week on the 16th June 2014.</p> <p>Members will recall that the original governance arrangements for the system restrict the use of the system to a single day for all supported events, groups or charities etc, and the Committee may therefore wish to approve the Community Relations request for a single day only as opposed to the full week.</p>

6	Decision Tracking
If the request is approved the lighting scenes will be added to the existing file and will appear automatically on the specified date only.	

7	Key to Abbreviations
None.	

8	Documents Attached
None.	