

To: City Executive Board
Date: 9 July 2015
Report of: Head of Law & Governance
Title of Report: Flag Flying on Civic Buildings

Summary and Recommendations

Purpose of report: To agree a protocol for flag flying on civic buildings

Key decision No

Executive lead member: Cllr Bob Price, Executive Board Member Corporate Strategy and Economic Development

Policy Framework: None

Recommendation(s): That the City Executive Board:

1. approve the Flag Flying Protocol at appendix 1 and its annex at appendix 2;
2. agree to delegate to the Head of Law and Governance the operation of the protocol including the arrangements for considering one off requests as outlined.

Appendices to report –
Appendix 1 Flag Flying Protocol
Appendix 2 Annex to Flag Flying Protocol

Background

1. The current arrangements for Flag Flying operate under a convention which is largely reflected in the Protocol.
2. There are three masts from which the City Council flies flags:
 - i) Above main entrance of the Town Hall – exclusively used to fly the City flag

- ii) Carfax Tower – Union flag on set occasions (see appendix2) and Cross of St George on St George’s Day
 - iii) Above 1930’s extension – for other occasions
3. The current arrangements are necessarily precise in terms of the occasions when flags will be flown, but do not provide for a methodology to allow officers to consider additional requests received to fly flags on other occasions and for other reasons. This has presented some difficulties.
 4. As a result the Cross Party Working Group considered Flag Flying on Civic Buildings at their meeting of 26 March 2015 and the recommendations here reflect those discussions.

The Flag Flying Protocol - Changes

5. Appendix 1 and 2 sets out a Flag Flying Protocol including when and where flags will be flown routinely. They include the following changes:
 - A process (set out at point 11 in the Protocol) for considering one-off requests to fly flags (including flying the West Papua flag as has been requested regularly in recent years).
 - Formalises the current practice of flying the City flag at half-mast on the day of the funeral of a councillor or former councillor as appropriate.
 - Makes it clear that any requests for continued or regular flag flying must be made by the City Executive Board.
 - Updates the status of the 1930’s extension as a Council owned building but not occupied as a Council office.
 - Secures the current practice of the City flag being flown at all times.

Legal Issues

6. The responsibility for this function lies with the City Executive Board and to deliver on the arrangements the City Executive Board is asked to delegate to the Head of Law and Governance the operation of the protocol including the arrangements for considering one-off requests as outlined.

Financial Issues

7. Costs of purchasing new flags can be met from existing facilities management budgets assuming they remain very occasional.

Environmental Impact

8. There are no environmental issues.

Level of Risk

9. There are no risks associated with this protocol.

Name and contact details of author:

Name: Pat Jones
Committee and Member Services Manager
Law and Governance
Tel: 01865 252191 e-mail: phjones@oxford.gov.uk

This page is intentionally left blank