

PERTH & KINROSS COUNCIL

Provost's Sub Committee

23 January 2023

PROPOSED FLAGS PROTOCOL – COUNCIL BUILDING, 2 HIGH STREET, PERTH

**Report by Acting Democratic Services Manager
(Report No. 23/15)**

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide the Sub-Committee with a proposal to review and replace the flags and flagpoles outside the Council building at 2 High Street, Perth and propose that a new flag protocol for the building is adopted.

| | |
|---------------------------|--|
| 2. RECOMMENDATIONS | |
| 2.1 | It is recommended that the Sub-Committee: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Agrees to the removal of the majority of the existing flag poles on the 2 High Street building, apart from 3 flags to be refurbished/renewed as set out in option 3 in section 6 of the report.• Agrees that this work to be undertaken in 2023/24 so that the new flags are in place for summer 2024.• Agrees the adoption of a new flags protocol for the Council building at 2 High Street, Perth as set out in Appendix 1 of the report. |

3. STRUCTURE OF REPORT

3.1 This report is structured over the following sections:

- Section 4: Background
- Section 5: Assessment of current flags and poles
- Section 6: Proposal to replace flags and poles
- Section 7: Proposal to adopt a new flag protocol
- Section 8: Conclusions

4. BACKGROUND

- 4.1 Several complaints have been received about the condition of the flags on display outside the Council building at 2 High Street, Perth.
- 4.2 On examination, the external flags/poles are in a poor condition. This is caused by the weather plus the age of the flags/poles.
- 4.3 The flags and poles were originally put in place as part of the Festival of the Arts in the late 1980's, with a variety of flags from around the world.
- 4.4 The flag poles were replaced in 2000 as part of the Millennium celebrations, with the flags of the European Union countries along with twinned cities of Perth. They were then renewed in 2016.
- 4.5 There are 27 flags on display at present excluding the Union Flag and Saltire which fly on the roof flag poles on the building.
- 4.6 The Council building at 2 High Street is a public building in a prominent place in the city seen by tourists/visitors as well as local people.

5. ASSESSMENT OF CURRENT FLAGS AND POLES

- 5.1 The flags are in a state of disrepair and require cleaning or replaced.
- 5.2 The flag poles also require to be refurbished or replaced.
- 5.3 To remove and refit the flags and poles will require specialist equipment and a fitter to work at height. Costs are estimated in the annex of the report.

6. OPTIONS TO REPLACE FLAGS AND POLES

- 6.1 The main options identified are:
 1. Replace all flags and poles based on current arrangements.
 2. Remove all flags and poles except for the two on the roof of 2 High Street, flying the Saltire and Union Flags only.
 3. Remove all flags and poles from 2 High Street building except for the three above the main entrance, which would be refurbished, or renewed, and therefore fly the Union Flag, Saltire, Council or another flag based on different events and activities throughout the year.
 4. Remove all external flags and poles from 2 High Street and replace with four new Flagpoles fixed to the ground outside the main entrance. Therefore, flying the Union Flag, Saltire, Council Flag and another flag based on different events and activities throughout the year.

- 6.2 Laundering of flags has been tried in the past but with no success.
- 6.3 External specialist contractors for height working would be required (the cost for this was £1,600.00 in 2016).
- 6.4 Costs for the above options are set out in the annex of the report.

7. PROPOSAL TO ADOPT A NEW FLAGS PROTOCOL

- 7.1 It is also proposed that a new Perth and Kinross Council flag flying protocol is agreed as set out in Appendix 1. This will maintain consistency in the flying of flags at appropriate times. The draft protocol is consistent with [Union Flag flying guidance for UK government buildings - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk)

8. CONCLUSION

- 8.1 There are potential reputational issues for the Council if it is seen to spending money on flags at a time when many households are struggling financially.
- 8.2 However, it would be appropriate at this time to consider the current approach to the flying of flags in terms of overall sustainability and the need to address the situation of current deterioration.

Authors

| Name | Designation | Contact Details |
|---|---|--------------------------|
| Stewart Grant Michelle Glencorse Scott Hendry | Council Officer PA to Provost and Depute Provost Acting Democratic Services Manager | Civicservices@pkc.gov.uk |

Approved

| Name | Designation | Date |
|-----------------|-------------------------|-----------------|
| Karen Donaldson | Chief Operating Officer | 18 January 2023 |

| |
|--|
| <p>If you or someone you know would like a copy of this document in another language or format, (on occasion, only a summary of the document will be provided in translation), this can be arranged by contacting the Customer Service Centre on 01738 475000.</p> |
| <p>You can also send us a text message on 07824 498145.</p> |
| <p>All Council Services can offer a telephone translation facility.</p> |

1. IMPLICATIONS, ASSESSMENTS, CONSULTATION AND COMMUNICATION

| Strategic Implications | Yes / None |
|---|-------------------|
| Community Plan / Single Outcome Agreement | None |
| Corporate Plan | None |
| Resource Implications | |
| Financial | Yes |
| Workforce | No |
| Asset Management (land, property, IST) | No |
| Assessments | |
| Equality Impact Assessment | Yes |
| Strategic Environmental Assessment | None |
| Sustainability (community, economic, environmental) | None |
| Legal and Governance | None |
| Risk | None |
| Consultation | |
| Internal | Yes |
| External | No |
| Communication | |
| Communications Plan | None |

1. Strategic Implications

Corporate Plan

1.1 The Council's Corporate Plan 2018 – 2023 lays out five outcome focussed strategic objectives which provide clear strategic direction, inform decisions at a corporate and service level and shape resources allocation. They are as follows:

- (i) Giving every child the best start in life.
- (ii) Developing educated, responsible and informed citizens.
- (iii) Promoting a prosperous, inclusive and sustainable economy.
- (iv) Supporting people to lead independent, healthy and active lives; and
- (v) Creating a safe and sustainable place for future generations.

1.2 This report relates to outcome (iii) above.

2. Resource Implications

Financial

2.1 Options costed as follows:

Option 1 - Replace all flags and poles based on current arrangements:

| | |
|-------------------------------|-----------------|
| Flags x 27 @ £95.00 | £2565.00 |
| Replacement poles 27 x £30.00 | £810.00 |
| Estimated Remove and replace | £2000.00 |
| Estimated Total | £5375.00 |

Note these are estimated costs, there will be recurring costs every four/five years.

Option 2 - Remove all flags and poles except for the two on the roof of 2 High Street, Flying the Saltire and Union Flags only.

| | |
|--------------------------|-----------------|
| Estimated Removal | £2000.00 |
|--------------------------|-----------------|

Option 3 - Remove all flags and poles from 2 High Street building except for the three above the main entrance, which would be refurbished, or renewed, and therefore fly the Union Flag, Saltire and Council or another flag based on different events and activities throughout the year.

| | |
|------------------------|-----------------|
| Estimated Removal | £2000.00 |
| Replacement poles x 3 | £120.00 |
| Estimated total | £2120.00 |

Note these are estimated costs, there will be recurring costs every four/five years for 3 replacement poles & flags = **£405.00**. Initial costs for the work will be funded from reserves as a once off cost.

Option 4 - Remove all external flags and poles from 2 High Street and replace with four new Flagpoles fixed to the ground outside the main entrance. Therefore flying the Saltire, Union Flag, Perth & Kinross Council Flag, and another flag based on different events and activities throughout the year.

| | |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------|
| Remove all poles and Flags | £2000.00 |
| Purchase New Flag poles at £800 x 4 | £3200.00 |
| Installation estimated at | £2800.00 |
| Estimated Total | £8000.00 |

Workforce

- 2.2 There are no direct workforce implications arising from this report other than those reported within the body of the main report.

Asset Management (land, property, IT)

- 2.3 There are no direct asset management implications arising from this report other than those reported within the body of the main report.

3. Assessments

Equality Impact Assessment

- 3.1 Under the Equality Act 2010, the Council is required to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations between equality groups. Carrying out Equality Impact Assessments for plans and policies allows the Council to demonstrate that it is meeting these duties.

Strategic Environmental Assessment

- 3.2 The Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005 places a duty on the Council to identify and assess the environmental consequences of its proposals.
- 3.3 The information contained within this report has been considered under the Act. However, no action is required as the Act does not apply to the matters presented in this report.

Sustainability

- 3.4 Under the provisions of the Local Government in Scotland Act 2003 the Council has to discharge its duties in a way which contributes to the achievement of sustainable development. In terms of the Climate Change Act, the Council has a general duty to demonstrate its commitment to sustainability and the community, environmental and economic impacts of its actions.
- 3.5 The information contained within this report has been considered under the Act. However, no action is required as the Act does not apply to the matters presented in this report.

4. Consultation

Internal

- 4.1 The Provost, Depute Provost, Chief Executive and Executive Director (Communities) have been consulted during the preparation of this report.

External

- 4.2 Full consultation will take place with external organisations should the report be agreed.

5. BACKGROUND PAPERS

No background papers, as defined by Section 50D of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 (other than any containing confidential or exempt information) were relied on to any material extent in preparing the above report.

6. APPENDICES

- 6.1 Appendix 1 – Draft flag flying protocol.

**Flag Flying Protocol - Council Building, 2 High Street, Perth
(on the recommendation that option 3 is approved – 3 flag poles)**

Introduction

This protocol outlines the procedures and arrangements for the flying of flags at the Council building at 2 High Street, Perth, PH1 5PH.

The protocol is implemented following approval by Council.

Agreed Default Position

It is agreed that the default position is as follows, looking at the building:-

Central pole = Union Flag

Left hand pole = Saltire

Right hand pole = PKC Flag (Civic Crest Flag) or AN Other Flag based on events throughout the year. (See Schedule of dates to raise other flags).

Protocol consistent with [Union Flag flying guidance for UK government buildings - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk)

- Flags can be flown on every day of the year.
- Government and local authority buildings in England, Scotland and Wales are encouraged to fly national flags every day of the year.
- Flags are normally flown from sunrise to sunset, but they may also be flown at night.
- No permission is needed to fly the national flags and they are excluded from most planning and advertising regulations (but flagpoles may not be).
- National flags should never be flown in a worn or damaged condition, or when soiled. To do so is to show disrespect for the nations they represent.
- Important: The Union Flag has a correct way up - in the half of the flag nearest the flagpole, the wider diagonal white stripe must be above the red diagonal stripe, as Scotland's St Andrew's Cross takes precedence over Ireland's St. Patrick's Cross. **It is most improper to fly the flag upside down.**

Flying of Flags at Half Mast

(refer to the Death of a Dignitary Procedure for full procedure)

'Half-mast' -the flag is flown two-thirds up the flagpole. The occasions on which flags are to be flown at half-mast are:

- Death/Funeral of The Sovereign
- Death/Funeral of Senior Members of The Royal Family
- Death/Funeral of serving Prime Ministers of the United Kingdom
- Death/Funeral of serving First Ministers of Scotland
- Death/Funeral of serving and former Lord-Lieutenant of Perth and Kinross
- Death/Funeral of serving local MP/MSP
- Death/Funeral of serving Perth and Kinross Council Elected Member
- UK or Overseas National Disaster to be considered on an individual basis

The Chief Executive will consider any other instances on an ad hoc basis as advised from the UK/Scottish Government Protocol Office.

Schedule of Dates to Raise AN Other Flags

The Chief Executive will review proposals for flag flying dates on an annual basis and submit to the Provost's Sub-Committee for consideration. The detailed programme for 2023 so far is as follows:-

| | |
|--------------------------------|---|
| Feb | LGBT History Month |
| March | Commonwealth Day / Flag of Peace (Council Political Group Leaders have agreed to flag flying to mark occasion on 13 March with no further activities). |
| 17 May each year | International Day Against Homophobia, Biphobia and Transphobia (IDAHOBIT) |
| June | Pride Month |
| Last week of June | Armed Forces Day Flag Flag is raised on the Monday before Armed Forces Day |
| Usually a date in early August | Perthshire Pride |
| 3 September | Merchant Navy Day Flag |
| 9 September | Emergency Services Day Flag |

The programme of dates will be updated and finalised in conjunction with the Perth and Kinross Lighting Strategy and the lighting of Smeaton's Bridge and St Pauls, and incorporate any special events anticipated for that year.

Special events

Under instruction from the Chief Executive.

Civic Services January 2023