

<b>Report To:</b>	<b>STANDARDS COMMITTEE</b>
<b>Date:</b>	7 November 2023
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	Sandra Stewart, Chief Executive
<b>Subject:</b>	<b>FLAG FLYING PROTOCOL</b>
<b>Report Summary:</b>	<p>The report sets out the current arrangements for flag flying on civic occasions and the arrangements for flying flags at half-mast. It is suggested that the current protocol, which has been in place since 2009, be amended to reflect changed circumstances and changing practices. The current Flag Flying Protocol is attached at <b>Appendix 1</b>.</p> <p>The current Flag Flying Protocol includes details of when flags on Council buildings should be flown at half-mast. It is suggested that the requirement to fly flags on Council buildings in the event of the death of a former Chief Officer of the Council should be removed. An assessment of other local authority flag flying protocols show that the inclusion of this requirement is rare and is difficult to apply.</p>
<b>Recommendations:</b>	<p>That the protocol be amended to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. remove the requirement to fly flags on Council buildings at half-mast in the event of the death of a former Chief Officer of the Council; and</li> <li>2. note that the only Town Hall with a working flag pole is Dukinfield Town Hall.</li> </ol>
<b>Links to Community Strategy:</b>	The flying of the flag at civic buildings is intended to encourage civic pride, which underpins a number of elements of the Community Strategy.
<b>Policy Implications:</b>	The Council is responsible for setting the policy for flag flying and agreeing any related protocols.
<b>Financial Implications:</b>	There are no financial implications.
<b>(Authorised by the statutory Section 151 Officer &amp; Chief Finance Officer)</b>	
<b>Legal Implications:</b>	It is appropriate that the Council reviews and considers a revised Flag Protocol on a regular basis to ensure it remains relevant and fit for purpose.
<b>(Authorised by the Borough Solicitor)</b>	
<b>Risk Management:</b>	The approach taken whereby the Union Flag is flown all year round reduces the risk a breach of protocol.
<b>Access to information:</b>	The background papers relating to this report can be inspected by contacting the report writer, Robert Landon, Head of Democratic Services.



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# APPENDIX 1

## PROTOCOL FOR FLAG FLYING ON TAMESIDE MBC BUILDINGS

The protocol follows guidance issued by the Department for Culture, Media and Sports (DCMS) and its predecessor Departments. The Union Flag is flown at full-mast all year round on all civic buildings in the Borough which have a flag pole, these are:

- Denton Town Hall;
- Dukinfield Town Hall;
- Hyde Town Hall;
- Stalybridge Civic Hall

### Protocol for Flag Flying

#### 1. Flags

The Union Flag is to be flown at full mast on civic buildings all year (together with other flags where in accordance with the protocol, for example the Cross of St George being flown on St George's Day).

#### 2. Death and Funeral Commemoration

The Union Flag will be flown at half-mast (from 8am until sunset) on the following occasions across all buildings unless stated otherwise:

1. Death of The Sovereign – from announcement of death to day of the funeral except on Proclamation Day when the flag will be hoisted to full mast from 11:00 hrs until 13:00 hrs the following day on all buildings.
2. Death of a member or near relative of the Royal Family or the funeral of members of the Royal Family – subject to special command from Her Majesty.
3. The funerals of Prime Ministers and former Prime Minister – subject to special command from Her Majesty.
4. The funerals of Foreign Rulers - subject to special command from Her Majesty.
5. Death of a Lord Lieutenant or Deputy Lieutenant of Greater Manchester – day of funeral on all buildings.
6. Death of a serving Mayor, Mayoress, Deputy Mayor or Deputy Mayoress - day of death to day of funeral on all buildings.
7. Death of a serving Member of Tameside Council – day of death to day of funeral on all buildings.
8. Death of a former Member of Tameside Council and former Mayor or Mayoress of Tameside – day of funeral on all buildings.
9. Death of a former Member of a predecessor district or county council (including ex Mayor, Chairman, Mayoress or Chairman's Lady of one of those councils) – day of funeral at the Town Hall or Council Offices of former Council (or in old county electoral division).
10. Death of an Honorary Freeman or Hon Alderman of the Borough of Tameside – from day of death to the day of the funeral.
11. Death of an Honorary Freeman of a predecessor Borough – day of funeral at the civic building in the former Borough.
12. Death of a serving Chief Officer of Tameside Council – day of the funeral at the Town Hall/Council Offices where they had served.
13. Death of a retired Chief Officer of Tameside or a predecessor council – day of the funeral at the Town Hall/Council Offices where they had served.
14. Death of a serving or former Member of Parliament – day of funeral at the Town Halls/Council Offices within their constituency.

15. Death of armed forces personnel who were residents of the Borough killed on active service – day of the announcement of death and on the day of the funeral.
16. Death of a serving Chief Constable of Greater Manchester, County Fire Officer or a serving Tameside Borough Police Commander – day of funeral.

On special flag flying days/civic occasions (e.g. St George's Day) when the flying of flags coincide with days for flying flags at half-mast, the following rules are observed.

Flags are flown at full mast:

- although a member of the royal family, or a near relative of the royal family, may be lying dead, unless special commands are received from the Queen to the contrary.
- although it may be the day of the funeral of a foreign ruler

### **3. Civic Occasions**

1. Twinning exchange visits – Union Flag and National Flag of visiting twin town to be flown (or displayed where suitable vertical poles not available) during the period of the visit at the Town Hall/Council Offices in the Tameside twin town and also at Ashton Town Hall when the visitors visit there
2. St George's Day (23rd April) – the Cross of St George to be flown from 8am until sunset
3. Merchant Navy Day (3 September) - the Merchant Navy Flag to be flown at Ashton Town Hall

### **4. Other Occasions**

The Union Flag may be flown at half-mast on other occasions at the discretion of the Chief Executive.