

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT – COMMEMORATIONS & CELEBRATIONS POLICY

SECTION ONE: INFORMATION ABOUT THE PROPOSAL

Author(s): The person completing the EIA template.	Caroline Marr, Senior Policy Advisor	Department and service:	Policy & Intelligence Team	Date of assessment:	25 Nov. 2025
Lead Officer: Head of Service, Service Director, or Strategic Director.	Tracey Lee, Chief Executive	Signature:		Approval date:	1 December 2025
Overview:	The Council commemorates or celebrates a significant number of special days every year. Some are associated with well-established events in the Civic calendar. Others are days, weeks or even months designated by organisations and are aimed at stimulating public awareness. The Council marks some of these days by holding events, lighting buildings, with moments of silence or by flying flags. There is set protocol for the flying of the Union Flag, the St George's Flag, the Devon flag and the City of Plymouth flag. However, the Council also receives several requests throughout the year in response to local, national and international events for flag flying or lighting up public buildings. As a welcoming city, flying flags is one way in which we commemorate significant events or celebrate the diversity of our city. The Council may choose to commemorate or celebrate significant days or occasions by holding a community event or through communication such social media or a press release. This policy sets out our protocol in accordance with the Government's guidance regarding the use of flags and other symbolic gestures in recognition, celebration or sympathy. The policy aims to ensure the consistent, respectful, and meaningful use of flags and lighting in line with our civic values.				
Decision required:	For Cabinet to approve the policy and the monitoring and governance arrangements set out within.				

SECTION TWO: EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT SCREENING TOOL

Potential external impacts: Does the proposal have the potential to negatively impact service users, communities or residents with protected characteristics?	Yes	x	No	
Potential internal impacts: Does the proposal have the potential to negatively impact Plymouth City Council employees?	Yes		No	x
Is a full Equality Impact Assessment required? (if you have answered yes to either of the questions above then a full impact assessment is required and you must complete section three)	Yes	x	No	
If you do not agree that a full equality impact assessment is required, please set out your justification for why not.				

SECTION THREE: FULL EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Protected characteristics (Equality Act, 2010)	Evidence and information (e.g. data and consultation feedback)	Adverse impact	Mitigation activities	Timescale and responsible department
Age	Plymouth • 16.4 per cent of people in Plymouth are children aged under 15. • 65.1 per cent are adults aged 15 to 64. • 18.5 percent are adults aged 65 and over. • 2.4 percent of the resident population are 85 and over. South West • 15.9 per cent of people are aged 0 to 14, 61.8 per cent are aged 15 to 64. • 22.3 per cent are aged 65 and over. England • 17.4 per cent of people are aged 0 to 14. • 64.2 per cent of people are aged 15 to 64. • 18.4 per cent of people are aged 65 and over. (2021 Census)	Communities sharing the same protected characteristic, identity or cultural background may be negatively impacted by a decision to decline a request made by that community to commemorate or celebrate an event, day or special occasion. This impact may include the community not feeling celebrated, listened to or acknowledged, but the Council or wider community. It may also include feelings of disregard in respect of the significance or meaning this occasion has to a particular community and beyond.	The content, principles and criteria for assessing requests set out in the Policy are to ensure that there is a process in place to apply the consistent, respectful, and meaningful use of flags and lighting in line with our civic values.	The Policy will be used at the point at which a request is made. The timescale set out in the Policy is 2 months. This includes: • Request is submitted • Request is assessed by Advisory Group against the Policy • Recommendation is made to the CEX • Decision is made in consultation with the Leader of the Council • Decision is communicated

Care experienced individuals (Note that as per the Independent Review of Children's Social Care recommendations, Plymouth City Council is treating care experience as though it is a protected characteristic).	It is estimated that 26 per cent of the homeless population in the UK have care experience. In Plymouth there are currently 7 per cent of care leavers open to the service (6 per cent aged 18-20 and 12 per cent of those aged 21+) who are in unsuitable accommodation. The Care Review reported that 41 per cent of 19-21 year old care leavers are not in education, employment or training (NEET) compared to 12 per cent of all other young people in the same age group. In Plymouth there are currently 50 per cent of care leavers aged 18-21 Not in Education Training or Employment (54 per cent of all those care leavers aged 18-24 who are open to the service). There are currently 195 care leavers aged 18 to 20 (statutory service) and 58 aged 21 to 24 (extended offer). There are more care leavers aged 21 to 24 who could return for support from services if they wished to.	Communities sharing the same protected characteristic, identity or cultural background may be negatively impacted by a decision to decline a request made by that community to commemorate or celebrate an event, day or special occasion. This impact may include the community not feeling celebrated, listened to or acknowledged, but the Council or wider community. It may also include feelings of disregard in respect of the significance or meaning this occasion has to a particular community and beyond.	The content, principles and criteria for assessing requests set out in the Policy are to ensure that there is a process in place to apply the consistent, respectful, and meaningful use of flags and lighting in line with our civic values. National Care Leavers' Month is included on the pre-approved building lighting list.	The Policy will be used at the point at which a request is made. The timescale set out in the Policy is 2 months. This includes: • Request is submitted • Request is assessed by Advisory Group against the Policy • Recommendation is made to the CEX • Decision is made in consultation with the Leader of the Council • Decision is communicated
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Disability	9.4 per cent of residents in Plymouth have their activities limited 'a lot' because of a physical or mental health problem. 12.2 per cent of residents in Plymouth have their activities limited 'a little' because of a physical or mental health problem (2021 Census)	Communities sharing the same protected characteristic, identity or cultural background may be negatively impacted by a decision to decline a request made by that community to commemorate or celebrate an event, day or special occasion. This impact may include the community not feeling celebrated, listened to or acknowledged, but the Council or wider community. It may also include feelings of disregard in respect of the significance or meaning this occasion has to a particular community and beyond.	The content, principles and criteria for assessing requests set out in the Policy are to ensure that there is a process in place to apply the consistent, respectful, and meaningful use of flags and lighting in line with our civic values.	The Policy will be used at the point at which a request is made. The timescale set out in the Policy is 2 months. This includes: • Request is submitted • Request is assessed by the Advisory Group against the Policy • Recommendation is made to the CEX • Decision is made in consultation with the Leader of the Council • Decision is communicated
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Gender reassignment	0.5 per cent of residents in Plymouth have a gender identity that is different from their sex registered at birth. 0.1 per cent of residents identify as a trans man, 0.1 per cent identify as non-binary and, 0.1 per cent identify as a trans women (2021 Census).	Communities sharing the same protected characteristic, identity or cultural background may be negatively impacted by a decision to decline a request made by that community to commemorate or celebrate an event, day or special occasion. This impact may include the community not feeling celebrated, listened to or acknowledged, but the Council or wider community. It may also include feelings of disregard in respect of the significance or meaning this occasion has to a particular community and beyond.	The content, principles and criteria for assessing requests set out in the Policy are to ensure that there is a process in place to apply the consistent, respectful, and meaningful use of flags and lighting in line with our civic values. The Trans Flag is included on the pre-approved list to be flown during Trans Awareness Week and on Trans Day of Remembrance.	The Policy will be used at the point at which a request is made. The timescale set out in the Policy is 2 months. This includes: • Request is submitted • Request is assessed by Advisory Group against the Policy • Recommendation is made to the CEX • Decision is made in consultation with the Leader of the Council • Decision is communicated
Marriage and civil partnership	40.1 per cent of residents have never married and never registered a civil partnership. 10 per cent are divorced, 6 percent are widowed, with 2.5 per cent are separated but still married. 0.49 per cent of residents are, or were, married or in a civil partnerships of the same sex. 0.06 per cent of residents are in a civil partnerships with the opposite sex (2021 Census).	No significant impact anticipated	N/A	N/A

Pregnancy and maternity	The total fertility rate (TFR) for England was 1.62 children per woman in 2021. The total fertility rate (TFR) for Plymouth in 2021 was 1.5.	No significant impact anticipated	N/A	N/A
Race	In 2021, 94.9 per cent of Plymouth's population identified their ethnicity as White, 2.3 per cent as Asian and 1.1 per cent as Black (2021 Census) People with a mixed ethnic background comprised 1.8 per cent of the population. 1 per cent of the population use a different term to describe their ethnicity (2021 Census) 92.7 per cent of residents speak English as their main language. 2021 Census data shows that after English, Polish, Romanian, Chinese, Portuguese, and Arabic are the most spoken languages in Plymouth (2021 Census).	Communities sharing the same protected characteristic, identity or cultural background may be negatively impacted by a decision to decline a request made by that community to commemorate or celebrate an event, day or special occasion. This impact may include the community not feeling celebrated, listened to or acknowledged, but the Council or wider community. It may also include feelings of disregard in respect of the significance or meaning this occasion has to a particular community and beyond.	The content, principles and criteria for assessing requests set out in the Policy are to ensure that there is a process in place to apply the consistent, respectful, and meaningful use of flags and lighting in line with our civic values.	The Policy will be used at the point at which a request is made. The timescale set out in the Policy is 2 months. This includes: • Request is submitted • Request is assessed by Advisory Group against the Policy • Recommendation is made to the CEX • Decision is made in consultation with the Leader of the Council • Decision is communicated

Religion or belief	48.9 per cent of the Plymouth population stated they had no religion. 42.5 per cent of the population identified as Christian (2021 Census). Those who identified as Muslim account for 1.3 per cent of Plymouth's population while Hindu, Buddhist, Jewish or Sikh combined totalled less than 1 per cent (2021 Census).	Communities sharing the same protected characteristic, identity or cultural background may be negatively impacted by a decision to decline a request made by that community to commemorate or celebrate an event, day or special occasion. This impact may include the community not feeling celebrated, listened to or acknowledged, but the Council or wider community. It may also include feelings of disregard in respect of the significance or meaning this occasion has to a particular community and beyond.	The content, principles and criteria for assessing requests set out in the Policy are to ensure that there is a process in place to apply the consistent, respectful, and meaningful use of flags and lighting in line with our civic values.	The Policy will be used at the point at which a request is made. The timescale set out in the Policy is 2 months. This includes: • Request is submitted • Request is assessed by Advisory Group against the Policy • Recommendation is made to the CEX • Decision is made in consultation with the Leader of the Council • Decision is communicated
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Sex	51 per cent of our population are women and 49 per cent are men (2021 Census).	Communities sharing the same protected characteristic, identity or cultural background may be negatively impacted by a decision to decline a request made by that community to commemorate or celebrate an event, day or special occasion. This impact may include the community not feeling celebrated, listened to or acknowledged, but the Council or wider community. It may also include feelings of disregard in respect of the significance or meaning this occasion has to a particular community and beyond.	The content, principles and criteria for assessing requests set out in the Policy are to ensure that there is a process in place to apply the consistent, respectful, and meaningful use of flags and lighting in line with our civic values. 16 Days of Activism is included on the pre-approved building lighting list.	The Policy will be used at the point at which a request is made. The timescale set out in the Policy is 2 months. This includes: • Request is submitted • Request is assessed by Advisory Group against the Policy • Recommendation is made to the CEX • Decision is made in consultation with the Leader of the Council • Decision is communicated
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Sexual orientation	88.95 per cent of residents aged 16 years and over in Plymouth describe their sexual orientation as straight or heterosexual. 2.06 per cent describe their sexuality as bisexual, 1.97 per cent of people describe their sexual orientation as gay or lesbian. 0.42 per cent of residents describe their sexual orientation using a different term (2021 Census).	Communities sharing the same protected characteristic, identity or cultural background may be negatively impacted by a decision to decline a request made by that community to commemorate or celebrate an event, day or special occasion. This impact may include the community not feeling celebrated, listened to or acknowledged, but the Council or wider community. It may also include feelings of disregard in respect of the significance or meaning this occasion has to a particular community and beyond.	The content, principles and criteria for assessing requests set out in the Policy are to ensure that there is a process in place to apply the consistent, respectful, and meaningful use of flags and lighting in line with our civic values. The Pride and Progress Pride Flag are included on the pre-approved list to be flown during LGBT+ History Month and Pride month.	The Policy will be used at the point at which a request is made. The timescale set out in the Policy is 2 months. This includes: • Request is submitted • Request is assessed by Advisory Group against the Policy • Recommendation is made to the CEX • Decision is made in consultation with the Leader of the Council • Decision is communicated
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SECTION FOUR: HUMAN RIGHTS IMPLICATIONS

Human Rights	Implications	Mitigation Actions	Timescale and responsible department
Article 10 – Freedom of Expression	Article 10 may be engaged when requests to fly flags are refused. The Policy provides clear proportionate and justifiable reasoning for how matters relating the flying of flags will be managed. The policy in itself does not prevent freedom of expression by flag flying on personal	N/A	N/A

	property. The Council respects everyone's individual liberty to fly their flags on their own property. If a flag is flown that does not have express consent for either the flag itself or from the land or asset owner, it may be subject to enforcement action in line with relevant Planning legislation.		
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SECTION FIVE: OUR EQUALITY OBJECTIVES

Equality objectives	Implications	Mitigation Actions	Timescale and responsible department
Work together in partnership to: - promote equality, diversity and inclusion - facilitate community cohesion - support people with different backgrounds and lived experiences to get on well together	No implications – decisions associated with public requests to commemorate or celebrate an event or special day will be made in accordance with our equality duty and support the delivery of all three of the listed partnership aims.	N/A	N/A
Give specific consideration to care experienced people to improve their life outcomes, including access to training, employment and housing.	N/A	N/A	N/A
Build and develop a diverse workforce that represents the community and citizens it serves.	N/A	N/A	N/A
Support diverse communities to feel confident to report crime and anti-social behaviour, including hate crime and hate incidents, and work with partners to ensure Plymouth is a city where everybody feels safe and welcome.	Decisions to fly certain flags could potentially have an impact on hate crime, and/or community safety and it is important they are inclusive and consistent with the Equality Act and Human Rights legislation.	The impact on public safety, including hate crime would be a legitimate consideration in the decision-making process.	The timescale set out in the Policy is 2 months. This includes: Request is submitted

			• Request is assessed by Advisory Group against the Policy • Recommendation is made to the CEX • Decision is made in consultation with the Leader of the Council • Decision is communicated
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