
Agenda Item: Flag Flying Policy Review

Meeting Date: Monday, 17 November 2025

Contact Officer: Deputy Town Clerk

The purpose of this report is to invite Members to consider and recommend approval of a revised Flag Flying Policy for the Town Council.

Background

At the meeting of the Committee on 15 September 2025 under minute no. SC521, it was resolved:

1. That, the anniversary of the Battle of Britain be added to the Council flag flying calendar and,
2. That, Officers draft an updated flag flying policy for consideration at the meeting of the Committee on 17 November and for it to be widely advertised upon adoption.

Current Situation

Officers have reviewed the Town Council's Flag Flying Policy, and the revised version is attached as **Appendix A**. A calendar of flag flying occasions is attached as **Appendix B**.

The updated policy expands on the purpose of flag flying and sets out all currently agreed dates and flags flown by the Town Council. It is designed to reflect current practice while allowing for future flexibility.

There is potential to extend the occasions on which the Union Flag is flown to include events such as Oxfordshire Day, Trafalgar Day, and Europe Day, in line with approaches taken by other councils. Additional recommendations may arise from the National Pride Working Party following its meeting on 13 November 2025.

At the time of writing, the Council's England flag has become significantly discoloured. The Committee may wish to allocate a small budget for its replacement while also considering the purchase of an Oxfordshire flag for local occasions.

Finally, the policy will require review once advertising flags are installed on the side of the Corn Exchange building, in accordance with Resolution H628 (11 November 2024).

Impact Assessments

The Town Council has a duty to consider the effects of its decisions, functions and activities on equality, biodiversity, and crime & disorder. Consideration should also be given to effects on the environment, given the Council's Climate Emergency declaration in 2019.

- a) Equality –By including flags for different cultural and civic occasions, the Council helps all groups feel valued, while clear guidance ensures flags are displayed consistently and respectfully, promoting inclusivity and fairness.
- b) Crime & Disorder – The council flag-flying policy is likely to have a neutral to positive impact on crime and disorder. By clearly defining which flags are flown, when, and how, within a robust policy helps prevent misuse of flags that could provoke tension or conflict.
- c) Environment & Climate Emergency – no direct implications.

Risk

In decision making Councillors should give consideration to any risks to the Council and any action it can take to limit or negate its liability.

- Flags may only be flown in line with planning legislation.
- Potential public criticism depending on the nature of the policy.

Social Value

Social value is the positive change the Council creates in the local community within which it operates.

The council flag-flying policy promotes civic pride, community identity, and a sense of belonging by marking national, royal, and local events. It supports inclusivity and social cohesion by recognising diverse cultural and commemorative occasions, while clear guidance ensures flags are displayed consistently and respectfully.

Financial implications

- Cost of an Oxfordshire Flag – approximately £150-300
- Replacement England Flag - £100-150

Recommendations

Members are invited to note the report and:

1. Consider the revised flag flying policy and recommend to the Policy, Governance & Finance Committee accordingly.
2. Consider the purchase of Oxfordshire and England flags from this year or the next.