



---

**To: Finance & Resources Policy Board**

**On: 26 August, 2015**

---

**Report by: Director of Finance & Resources**

---

**Heading: FLY THE RED ENSIGN FOR MERCHANT NAVY DAY – 3  
SEPTEMBER 2015**

---

**1. Summary**

- 1.1 A letter has been received from Commodore Bryant, Director General of Seafarers UK and Captain John Sail, National Chairman, Merchant Navy Association, requesting that local authorities take part in flying the Merchant Navy flag (the Red Ensign) at Council offices to commemorate Merchant Navy Day. The event will take place on 3 September and annually thereafter.
  - 1.2 All neighbouring Local Authorities have agreed to take part.
  - 1.3 The Provost and Leader of the Council had indicated that they supported flying the flag in principle subject to Board approval and Seafarers UK were advised of this by the deadline of 31 July, 2015.
  - 1.4 It is proposed that the Red Ensign be flown outside Renfrewshire House in place of the European flag.
-

## 2. **Recommendations**

- 2.1 That the Council agrees to participate in Merchant Navy Day by flying the Red Ensign outside Renfrewshire House on 3 September, 2015 and thereafter annually.
- 2.2 That the Council agrees that on the occasion 3 September falls on a weekend the flag will be raised on the preceding Friday in September.

---

## 3. **Background**

- 3.1 The Red Ensign has been the recognised flag of the British Merchant Navy since 1854. On 3 September, 1939, which marked the outbreak of the second World War, the first major British maritime casualty was the merchant vessel SS Athenia which was torpedoed just a few hours after hostilities were declared with the loss of 128 passengers and crew. Many hundreds of merchant ships and thousands of seafarers met the same fate and 3 September is now enshrined as Merchant Navy Day to honour those who died during both World Wars and also during the routine perils of sea faring.
- 3.2 In recent years the UK's dependence on the Merchant Navy has increased with more than 90% of imports and 75% of exports being carried by ship.
- 3.3 In recognition of this, Seafarers UK has asked that merchant seafarers be publically recognised on 3 September by local authorities flying the Red Ensign. In Scotland, Merchant Navy Day has been included on the official national list of flag flying days. Merchant Navy Day is also formally observed in Australia, Canada and New Zealand. All local authorities flying the Red Ensign will be added to a Merchant Navy Day Roll of Honour on the Seafarers UK websites and will be promoted via their PR and social media channels.

---

## **Implications of the Report**

- 1. **Financial** – The purchase of the flag will be met from the current budget.
- 2. **HR & Organisational Development** - None
- 3. **Community Planning** – None
- 4. **Legal** - none.
- 5. **Property/Assets** - none.
- 6. **Information Technology** - none
- 7. **Equality & Human Rights**

(a) The Recommendations contained within this report have been assessed in relation to their impact on equalities and human rights. No negative impacts on equality groups or potential for infringement of individuals' human rights have been identified arising from the recommendations contained in the report. If required following implementation, the actual impact of the recommendations and the mitigating actions will be reviewed and monitored, and the results of the assessment will be published on the Council's website.

- 8. **Health & Safety** – none
- 9. **Procurement** - none
- 10. **Risk** - none
- 11. **Privacy Impact** - none.

---

### **List of Background Papers**

(a) Background Paper 1 – letter dated June 2015

The foregoing background papers will be retained within Finance & Resources for inspection by the public for the prescribed period of four years from the date of the meeting. The contact officer within the service is Donna Gallagher, member Services Officer (Telephone – 0141 618 6794, e-mail – [donna.gallagher-pt@renfrewshire.gov.uk](mailto:donna.gallagher-pt@renfrewshire.gov.uk))

---

**Author:** Donna Gallagher – Member Services Officer. Tel: 0141 618 6794  
E-mail [donna.gallagher-pt@renfrewshire.gov.uk](mailto:donna.gallagher-pt@renfrewshire.gov.uk)