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<b>Report To:</b>	<b>Policy and Resources Committee</b>	<b>Date:</b>	<b>6 August 2019</b>
<b>Report By:</b>	<b>Head of Organisational Development, Policy &amp; Communications</b>	<b>Report No:</b>	<b>HR/13/19/GB</b>
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	<b>George Barbour/ Barbara McQuarrie</b>	<b>Contact No:</b>	<b>01475 712385/2845</b>
<b>Subject:</b>	<b>VE Day 75 Commemorations</b>		

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## 1.0 PURPOSE

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to inform the Policy and Resources Committee of the UK Government's decision to change the date of the May bank holiday to mark the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of VE Day and to seek a view on the option to incorporate this as an additional bank holiday and whether 'May Day' should continue to be recognised locally.

## 2.0 SUMMARY

- 2.1 The UK Government has approved a change in the date of next year's early May bank holiday from Monday 4 May to Friday 8 May 2020 to mark the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of VE Day. The holiday will form part of a three day weekend of commemorative events nationally.
- 2.2 The timing of the decision to change the May bank holiday means that an amendment is required to the school session term dates for 2019/20 and Inverclyde Council's public holidays. The Education and Communities Committee previously approved the school term dates for session 2019/2020 at its meeting on 4 September 2018. Similarly, Inverclyde Council's public holidays for 2020 have been approved and are published on the council's website.
- 2.3 At the most recent Strategic Leadership Forum (SLF), officers sought the view of Members on the proposal and an alternative has emerged which is, while supportive of the proposal to mark the commemoration of VE day, to continue to recognise Monday 4 May (May Day) in addition to designating Friday 8 May (VE Day) as a bank holiday.
- 2.4 Any change to previously agreed public and school holidays requires the Council to give parents, employees and the community as much notice as possible and following Policy and Resources communication with Council staff would take place and a report will be submitted to the Education and Communities committee on 29 August 2019.
- 2.5 The Council also proposes to support the national commemorations by encouraging local groups, churches, businesses and other organisations to commemorate the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of VE day over the weekend of Friday 8 May to Sunday 10 May 2020 with the Council's focal point being the start of the Scottish piping season at the Gourock Highland Games on Sunday.

## 3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 The Policy and Resources Committee is asked to consider the options set out in 5.0 and agree to:
- One of the options at 5.1, 5.2 or 5.3 as the Council's preferred choice.
  - That a report is prepared for the next meeting of the Education and Communities Committee to reflect the Committee's decision on the arrangements for the May holiday.
  - Encourage the wider community to support VE Day 75 anniversary and include a focus of commemoration activity at the Gourock games event on Sunday 10 May 2020.

**Steven McNab**  
**Head of Organisational Development,**  
**Human Resources & Communications**

## 4.0 BACKGROUND

- 4.1 8 of May 1945 was the day peace emerged after nearly six years of war and the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary on 8 May 2020 represents an important milestone in our history.
- 4.2 Nationally celebrations of VE Day 75 are being led by the Pageantmaster with three days of commemorations planned throughout the UK from Friday 8 May to Sunday 10 May 2020.
- 4.3 In addition, the UK Government has agreed that the existing May Day public holiday on Monday 4 May 2020 should be moved to Friday 8 May 2020 to mark VE Day 75.
- 4.4 At a recent meeting of the Strategic Leadership Forum, Members were supportive of commemorating the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of VE Day on Friday 8 May but also considered this as an additional public holiday while retaining support for May Day on Monday 4 May 2020.
- 4.5 After reviewing the options set out at 5.0, the Corporate Management Team (CMT) is supportive of following the UK Government proposal to move the existing May Day holiday to Friday 8 May 2020 (Option 5.1) and highlighted concerns over indirect financial costs and impact on services to the public of additional public holidays.

## 5.0 OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION

### 5.1 Move the existing public holiday from Monday 4 May 2020 (May Day) to Friday 8 May 2020 (VE Day)

This would be mostly cost neutral as it swaps one public holiday for another and is the option proposed by the UK Government and already adopted by a number of UK councils. There may be a small number of employees affected by a change of public holiday from Monday to Friday. For example working patterns for some services include shorter shift patterns on Friday, therefore local arrangements may need to be put in place though it is expected that this can be managed directly by services. Representatives of the GMB, Unison and Unite unions have highlighted issues around working patterns with the change of holiday from Monday to Friday including shorter shift work patterns and Friday being a shorter working day. This change would require formal approval for schools through the normal approval process for school holidays but would have no direct impact on the 195 school working days.

### 5.2 Recognise VE day in 2020 as an additional public holiday on Friday 8 May 2020 and retain the public holiday on Monday 4 May 2020 (May Day)

There would be cost and service delivery implications with this option. In relation to teaching staff there would continue to be a requirement to have 195 school working days so the school calendar would require to be adjusted accordingly. However, if an additional public holiday was granted to other local government employees within Inverclyde only essential services would be available on this day. Any employees delivering essential services would receive enhanced payments / time off in lieu at a later date. The additional costs for enhanced payments would be in the region of £100k. In addition there would be some extra cost in certain processing teams who will have a day's work to catch up on.

### 5.3 Recognise VE day in 2020 as an additional public holiday on Friday 8 May 2020 and recognise May Day on Monday 4 May 2020 as an additional annual leave day

As with 5.2 there would be cost and service delivery implication for this option although less costly than above as the Council would not pay 'public holiday' enhanced pay. However those employees delivering essential services (e.g. social work) will require an additional annual leave day at a later date which will require to be covered potentially with overtime payments. An estimated allowance for this is estimated to be between £10-20,000 Similar to 5.2 there would be some extra cost in certain 'processing' teams who will have a day's work to catch up on. The school calendar would also require to be adjusted accordingly.

## 6.0 COMMEMORATING VE DAY 75

- 6.1 Nationally the office of Pageantmaster leads major commemorations and to commemorate VE Day 75 proposals have been developed to mark the occasion across the UK over three days – Friday 8 May – Sunday 10 May 2020.
- 6.2 Anyone planning services or commemoration events locally will be encouraged to register their participation on the national website: [www.veday75.org](http://www.veday75.org)
- 6.3 The national commemoration proposals incorporating Inverclyde opportunities to commemorate include:

### FRIDAY 8 MAY 2020

#### 3pm – Battle's O'er & VE 75 Years

3pm is the time Winston Churchill officially announced the end of WW2 from the Cabinet Office at 10 Downing Street, London.

Pipers from around the world will open VE Day 75 by playing Battle's O'er and VE 75 Years at 3pm local time in the country they are in, paying tribute to the millions who gave so much to earn our freedom today. Battle's O'er is the traditional tune played by pipers at the end of a battle, and VE 75 Years has been specially written for this occasion by Pipe Major Roger Bayes of the City of Norwich Pipe Band. Inverclyde pipers will be encouraged to take part in the commemorations by playing at 3pm across the area.

#### 3pm – The Nation's Toast to the Heroes of WW2

The British Beer & Pub Association has produced, through the Pageantmaster's office, a 'pub toolkit' to encourage licensed premises to encourage customers to raise a glass as part of the nation's toast at 3pm. It is proposed that this toolkit is distributed to every licensed premise in Inverclyde to encourage participation.

#### 7pm – A Cry for Peace Around the World

Town Criers and others around the world will be undertaking 'A Cry for Peace Around the World' kindly written for this occasion by Crier Peter Taunton.

The cry, which can be downloaded from the website, will be performed at 7pm local time in locations around the world, starting in New Zealand. Locally it is proposed that the Provost read this 'cry for peace' at an appropriate location in Inverclyde and that local groups and organisations are encouraged to hold their own events and activity to encourage commemoration:

*Citizens, one and all,  
Please join this cry for peace, that you now hear from me.  
Remember men & women, old & young, who died to make us free.  
The women left at home did not just sit and wait.  
They toiled in harsh conditions before dawn to very late.  
Factories, farms, other essential jobs, the women were quick at learning.  
They worked, some died, to keep the home fires burning.  
As we remember this special day, do not forget that every day someone needs  
your aid,  
Do not put away your poppies, letting your memories fade.  
Celebrate with the knowledge that VE Day is also a time to remember,  
Beyond the solemn wreaths of the 11th of November.  
Let's thank all those who have gone before, with their colours proudly unfurled.  
Join us as united we say, "Peace to the world".*

## 7pm – Ringing out for Peace

Bells in churches and cathedrals will ring out at 7pm in a collective celebration of VE Day 75. The sound of church bells is deeply rooted in British culture and local churches across Inverclyde will be encouraged to participate at the allotted hour with celebrations and parties taking place in the evening and on Saturday 9 May 2020.

## SUNDAY 10 MAY 2020

### 10.30am – Church services of celebration and commemoration

Services will take place in cathedrals and churches throughout the UK, Channel Islands and the Isle of Man to celebrate and commemorate and locally churches in Inverclyde will be encouraged to join the celebration.

### Noon – 6pm – Tribute to the millions and the last post

The Gourock Highland Games takes place on the weekend of the commemorations and holds a unique place in Scotland as the event that traditionally marks the start of the Scottish Highland Games and Piping season.

It is proposed that the Council works in partnership with the Royal Scottish Pipe Band Association (RSPBA) to mark the occasion of VE Day 75 including incorporating the playing of Battle's O'er (pipes), The Last Post (bugler) and the reading of the 'Tribute to The Millions' message (appendix 1).

## **7.0 IMPLICATIONS**

### **7.1 Finance**

#### Financial Implications:

##### One off Costs

<b>Cost Centre</b>	<b>Budget Heading</b>	<b>Budget Years</b>	<b>Proposed Spend this Report £000</b>	<b>Virement From</b>	<b>Other Comments</b>
N/A			Option 5.2: Potentially £100		To be contained within existing budgets.

##### Annually Recurring Costs/ (Savings)

<b>Cost Centre</b>	<b>Budget Heading</b>	<b>With Effect from</b>	<b>Annual Net Impact £000</b>	<b>Virement From (If Applicable)</b>	<b>Other Comments</b>
N/A					

### **7.2 Human Resources**

Union representatives have highlighted concerns around changing public holiday dates from Monday to Friday due to the shorter working day and some shift patterns being different on Fridays for employees.

**7.3 Legal**

N/A

**7.4 Equalities**

Has an Equality Impact Assessment been carried out?

YES (see attached appendix)

NO -

**7.5 Repopulation**

N/A

**8.0 CONSULTATION**

8.1 Consultation has taken place with union representatives and with the Strategic Leadership Forum on the proposal to move the Monday holiday to Friday.

**9.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS**

9.1 None.



**VE DAY**  
75<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY  
A SHARED MOMENT OF CELEBRATION  
8 - 10 MAY 2020

# *Tribute to The Millions*

Let us remember those who so selflessly gave their lives at home and abroad, whose sacrifice enables us to enjoy the peace and freedom we have today.

Let us remember those who came home wounded, physically and mentally, and the friends and family who cared for them.

Let us remember those who returned to restore their relationships and rebuild their working lives after years of dreadful conflict and turmoil.

Let us remember the families that lost husbands, sons and sweethearts.

Let us remember the servicemen, merchant seamen, miners, brave civilians and others from Commonwealth and Allied countries who fought, suffered and died during several years of war.

Let us remember those in reserved occupation and the brave people who kept us safe on the home front - the doctors and nurses who cared for the wounded, the women and men who toiled in the fields, those who worked in the factories, who all played such a vital role in the war effort at home.



**LOWESTOFT  
SIXTH FORM COLLEGE**  
Designed by Elle Crebbin of  
Lowestoft Sixth Form College

*Bruno Peek*  
Bruno Peek IVO OBE OPR  
Pageantmaster  
VE Day 75

**6 August 2019**

**VE Day 75 Commemorations – Addendum to Committee Report**

There have been a number of developing implications and issues arising in relation to the options for consideration in Section 5 of the above report.

**Trade Union Position**

Discussions have taken place with trade union representatives regarding the potential changes to public holiday arrangements in May 2020.

The SJC trade unions feel very strongly that we should not switch the PH from Monday 4<sup>th</sup> to Friday 8<sup>th</sup> May. The trade unions would support either proposal 5.2 (Recognise VE day as an additional public holiday and retain the public holiday on 4<sup>th</sup> May) or 5.3 (Recognise VE day as an additional public holiday but also recognise 4<sup>th</sup> May as an additional leave day) in the report. However, given the potential cost for 5.2 then they recognise that 5.3 may be a more appropriate option.

Should 5.3 be the preferred option the trade unions have asked that Monday 4<sup>th</sup> remain the public holiday with Friday 8<sup>th</sup> being the additional leave day.

**Implications for Schools**

Should the Committee decide to recognise VE day as an additional day off (i.e. option 5.2 or 5.3) then there will be implications for schools.

This could be managed for schools by swapping an existing holiday (e.g. Friday 22 May 2020) to 8 May 2020. However, it would mean teachers and other school based term time staff (admin, janitors, cleaners/caterers etc.) would not be benefitting from an extra day off like all other Local Government Employees. This may lead to some parity issues being raised by the trade unions.

Should committee agree to having both days off then the only way to ensure the same benefit was given to all school based staff would be to seek permission from the Scottish Government to reduce the number of school days by one day for the 2019/20 session.

This would involve writing to the Scottish Government requesting this reduction and awaiting a response. It is anticipated that any amendments to the school year arising out of today's decision will be agreed at the Education and Communities Committee on 3 September 2019.