

Title of Report:	Armed Forces Day 2026 - Update
Committee Report Submitted To:	Leisure & Development Sub Committee
Date of Meeting:	21 October 2025
For Decision or For Information	For Information
To be discussed In Committee	NO

Linkage to Council Strategy (2021-25)	
Strategic Theme	Leader and Champion
Outcome	
Lead Officer	Director of Corporate Services

Estimated Timescale for Completion	
Date to be Completed	June 2026

Budgetary Considerations	
Cost of Proposal	TBC
Included in Current Year Estimates	YES/NO Estimates 2026/27
Capital/Revenue	Revenue
Code	3106
Staffing Costs	

Legal Considerations	
Input of Legal Services Required	NO
Legal Opinion Obtained	NO

Screening Requirements	Required for new or revised Policies, Plans, Strategies or Service Delivery Proposals.		
Section 75 Screening	Screening Completed:	Yes/No	Date:
	EQIA Required and Completed:	Yes/No	Date:
Rural Needs Assessment (RNA)	Screening Completed	Yes/No	Date:
	RNA Required and Completed:	Yes/No	Date:
Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA)	Screening Completed:	Yes/No	Date:
	DPIA Required and Completed:	Yes/No	Date:

1.0 **Purpose of Report**

The purpose of this report is to provide an information update on the preparations for Armed Forces Day 2026.

2.0 **Background**

At the Council Meeting on 5 December 2023 Council resolved to agree the following Notice of Motion:

“I call upon this Council to submit an application to host Armed Forces Day 2026. This significant event is a great opportunity to show our support and give thanks to our military personnel and families both past and present including our veterans and cadets.

This event will attract thousands of visitors to our beautiful Borough, supporting our local traders and tourism providers.”

3.0 **Draft Armed Forces Day Programme**

Officers are working towards the preparation of a programme of activity. The initial draft Armed Forces Day Programme as agreed by the Commemoration and Celebration Sub-Committee is at **Appendix A**.

Armed Forces Day will take place on Saturday 20 June 2026 which is the week before the rest of UK. This will allow access to quality assets in advance of them being required in other parts of the UK.

The Director of Corporate Services attended the Ards and North Down Airshow in June, and has subsequently met with the lead in Ards and North Down following a post event evaluation.

At the Leisure and Development Sub-Committee meeting held on 16 September 2025, the Head of Tourism and Recreation outlined options to possibly combine Armed Forces Day with the International Airshow, in order to combine resources. At that meeting a decision was taken to not run with the Airshow next year and instead plan for the return of the Northern Ireland International Airshow in 2028.

Ongoing planning for the 2026 Armed Forces Days includes:

- Assessments of locations and venues based on the 2018 AFD held in Coleraine. Options are being explored for potential new event spaces including the Market Yard adjacent Coleraine Town Centre.

- Democratic Services have scheduled a meeting at the start of November for Council Officials to meet with senior staff from the Ministry of Defence (MOD).
- Discussions around potential flypast requests will take place with RAF staff as part of the event planning process. If it is feasible, an application request will be submitted.
- Officers have commenced reviewing the format of the activities and how they can be enhanced and improved based on learnings from previous events. These discussions will continue with the MOD, Council Officials and the wider community will be kept informed as plans evolve.
- In preparing a detailed event proposal, Council Officers continue to explore all anticipated costs and revenue streams.

4.0 Financial Implications

A budget of £40,000 has been allocated for 2025/26 to cover activities planned by the Commemoration and Celebration Sub-Committee. It is anticipated that the majority of the spend associated with Armed Forces Day 2026 will be incurred in the 2026/27 financial year and should be factored into the estimates for that year. Estimated budget at this stage is £100K

5.0 Equality Implications

- 5.1 The Armed Forces Day Programme will be screened in accordance with the Council's Policies and Procedures.

6.0 Recommendation

- 6.1 **It is recommended** that Elected Members note the contents of this report for Information.



Commemoration and Celebration Sub-Committee

Draft Armed Forces Day Programme 2026

The role of the Sub Committee is to act as an advisory group, supporting the development of a proposed programme of activity to recognise commemorative and celebratory occasions. • To identify resource requirements to deliver an agreed programme of activity <i>and commemoration</i>; • To share best practice in terms of wider initiatives and approaches; • To promote co-ordination and collaboration in terms of delivery of a range of activity, avoiding duplication of effort.			
What	Details	Responsible	Estimated Cost
Notice of Motion (Two)			
<i>"I call upon this Council to submit an application to host Armed Forces Day 2026. This significant event is a great opportunity to show our support and give thanks to our military personnel and families both past and present including our veterans and cadets.</i> <i>This event will attract thousands of visitors to our beautiful Borough, supporting our local traders and tourism providers."</i>	It has been agreed that Armed Forces Day 2026 will be hosted by Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council. Talks are ongoing with the Chief Executive of the Reserve Forces and Cadets Association for Northern Ireland Official acceptance has now been received (11 December) The Sub-Committee will be updated at a future meeting.		

Date for Armed Forces Day 2026	At this point, it is thought that Armed Forces Day 2026 will take place on Saturday 20 June 2026 which is the week before the rest of UK. This will allow us to maximise assets that might be used in other parts of the UK were it to be held on the same day.		
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