

## **NATIONAL HOLOCAUST DAY (Min 477/99)**

### **1 SUMMARY**

- 1.1 This report brings to Members' attention Central Government's decision to designate Saturday, 27<sup>th</sup> January, 2001, as Holocaust Memorial Day and seeks Members' guidance as to how the day could be marked.

### **2 INTRODUCTION**

- 2.1 In October 1999, Central Government consulted on proposals for Holocaust Memorial Day. The response to the consultation was very positive, including 150 responses from Local Authorities, a clear majority of which supported the proposal. This Council considered the consultation at its meeting on 30<sup>th</sup> November, 1999.
- 2.2 On the basis of the consultation exercise, Central Government has now decided that Holocaust Memorial Day will be commemorated for the first time on Saturday, 27<sup>th</sup> January, 2001, and has produced advice and guidance for Local Authorities on the role which they might wish to play.

### **3 PURPOSE OF THE DAY**

- 3.1 The purpose of the day is intended to ensure that the crimes against humanity committed during the Holocaust are never forgotten and that its relevance for each new generation is understood. Clear objectives for the day are as follows:
- Provide a national mark of respect for all victims of Nazi persecution
  - Raise awareness and understanding of the Holocaust as a continuing issue for all humanity
  - Reflect on recent atrocities that raise similar issues
  - Assert a continuing commitment to opposing racism, anti-Semitism, victimisation, and genocide
  - Promoting a democratic society which respects and celebrates diversity

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- Highlight the values of universal human dignity and good citizenship

#### **4 HOW THE DAY COULD BE MARKED**

4.1 The Government suggests that the day could be marked in a number of ways:

- Ceremonial Service, common symbolic rituals, etc.
- Through the education process with education materials, books, videos, events, etc.
- Symbols e.g. memorial garden
- Raising community awareness

#### **5 THE ROLE OF THE COUNCIL**

5.1 The Government advice and guidance states that it will be for each Authority to decide how it wishes to mark the day. Part of the consideration will need to include the question of the level of resources available to put to the task.

5.2 It is suggested that for this first year the Authority consults with the local Jewish community with a view to organising a Commemorative Service similar to that associated with Remembrance Day, to which local dignitaries, groups, and organisations could be invited. It is considered that the most appropriate venue would either be around the beacon in Rayleigh, where the beacon could be lit in memory, or alternatively, the gardens at the rear of the Council Offices in Rochford.

5.3 Members' views would be welcome as to whether they would consider such an event to be a suitable means of marking the day in the first instance, and any suggestions as to how the event could be further developed would be welcome.

#### **6 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

There would clearly be expenditure both in officer and Member time and in resources, together with the necessary publicity in organising such an event. However, it is felt that this could be accommodated from existing civic budget provision.

#### **8 PARISH IMPLICATIONS**

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All parish and town councils would be invited to attend the event.

**9 RECOMMENDATION**

It is proposed that the Committee **RESOLVES** how they would wish for Holocaust Memorial Day to be marked.

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**Background Papers:** None

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