

POLICY REVIEW AND DEVELOPMENT PANEL REPORT

REPORT TO:	Corporate Performance Panel		
DATE:	2 September 2020		
TITLE:	Consideration of Notice of Motion 8/19 : Freedom of the Borough		
TYPE OF REPORT:	Policy Review		
PORTFOLIO(S):	Leader		
REPORT AUTHOR:	Sam Winter		
OPEN		WILL BE SUBJECT TO A FUTURE CABINET REPORT:	Yes

REPORT SUMMARY

PURPOSE OF REPORT/SUMMARY:
Notice of Motion 8/19 was referred to the Corporate Performance Panel for consideration by Council at its meeting on 28 November 2019.
KEY ISSUES:
The wording of the Notice of Motion and the existing Council policy are contained in the report.
OPTIONS CONSIDERED:
The Panel is invited to give consideration to the Notice of Motion.
RECOMMENDATIONS:
The Panel is invited to comment on the Motion and if appropriate to make recommendations via Cabinet to Council.
REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS:
To give consideration to the notice of motion.

REPORT DETAIL

1. Introduction

The Council meeting on 28 November 2019 referred the Notice of Motion 8/19 – Freedom of the Borough submitted by Councillor Rust, set out below, to the Corporate Performance Panel for consideration.

2. Proposal

2.1 Notice of Motion (8/19)

Councillor J Rust proposed the Motion, seconded by Councillor Howman.

“Our council resurrected the Freedom of the Borough award in 2003 after a long period of absence. The criteria for the nomination of the award only state that the nominee must have given outstanding service to the borough. The leader of the council has previously stated that “they” have set the bar high. Based on those who

have been awarded the freedom compared to those who have been nominated and not granted it, that bar could be deemed to have been set at a measure invisible to most and arbitrary at best. This motion sets to change that and instead, provide clearer guidelines on what could be considered to fulfil the criteria.

This council is asked to adopt the following criteria when awarding this honour.

The conferment of the Honorary Freedom of the Borough is a mark of distinction upon the person or persons whom the council wishes to honour. The freedom itself carries no privilege and is purely an honour, reflecting the eminence of the person on whom it is conferred or as recognition of significant and/or valuable services rendered to the borough by that person. It is normally an honour bestowed on those of note who have lived or worked in the borough and who are proud to be a part of the history of that borough through that freedom. It should not be awarded to serving councillors.

What criteria should be used to award this status?

The principle is that these awards should be made on merit, defined as:

- Achievement
- Exceptional Service

Awards should not be given merely for a job well done or because someone has reached a particular level. They should be awarded because an individual has gone over and above what is expected or what has previously been seen as the standard, being seen to have demonstrated "Service Above Self" and to stand above others in what has been achieved before.

To be considered for the award a nominee should meet at least two of the following criteria:

1. Delivered in a way that has brought distinction to borough life and enhanced the reputation of the borough in the area or activity concerned
2. Contributed in a way to improve the lives of those less able to help themselves
3. Demonstrated innovation and entrepreneurship which is delivering discernible benefits to the area or activity concerned.

For candidates to be considered they must be able to demonstrate a strong and continuing connection with, and commitment to, the borough or to have made a major contribution to national life and, in doing so, have enhanced the reputation of the borough.

People from all walks of life and all sections of society who have made a difference to the community and the borough are eligible to be nominated, provided that, at the time of nomination, they are living in the borough.

It could include the following:

- Artistic and cultural endeavours
- Business, economic growth and prosperity
- Charitable work
- Improvement to built and natural environment
- Religious and spiritual life
- Sports activities
- Civic service

Nominations for persons or organisations to be granted the Freedom of the Borough may be made by any resident of the borough who are on the electoral roll. Each nomination must be supported by at least 5 referees to testify to the nominee's worthiness, two of whom at least should be currently resident citizens of the Borough.

A form shall be drafted which enables the nominating person to set out clearly the necessary details for the award and should include the following

Nominees details – information about the person being nominated. Surname, forename, nickname, Title Address, Telephone Number, Email address

The recommendation – the details of how the nominee has made a significant contribution in their area of activity – giving as much detail as possible

What role they have excelled in?

How have they demonstrated service worthy of recognition?

How has the nominee contribution impacted on their particular field, locality, group or the community at large?

Over what time period did the nominee make their contribution or major commitment?

What makes this person stand out from others doing similar work?

Background Info:

Full details of post(s) held by nominee, paid or voluntary, which support or are relevant to your nomination. Start and end dates, or if they're still involved.

Letters of support – one letter of support may be submitted. Confidentiality must be maintained and details of the nomination must not be discussed with any other persons or with the nominee.

Details of the person making the nomination:

Surname

Forename

Address

Telephone Number

Email address

Relationship to nominee

Signature

Date

Confidentiality statement"

3. Issues for the Panel to Consider

3.1 The Panel is invited to consider the Motion from Councillor Rust.

3.2 The current criteria agreed by Council in September 2002 are as follows:

“Sept 2002 - Criteria

CAB110: **HONORARY FREEDOM OF THE BOROUGH.**

The report invited Cabinet to consider the draft guidelines from the Standards Board in order to make recommendations to Council on suggested criteria for the award of Freedom of the Borough Status. In discussing the criteria, it was suggested that another should be added preventing any Councillor from being nominated with 10 years of ceasing being a councillor.

RECOMMENDED: That Council be recommended to agree to formalise the advice of the Standards Board, reached at its May and June meetings, in these terms.

1. The public announcement of reviving the tradition should be through a press conference;
2. Any award approved during this municipal year should be made formally at the Annual Meeting of Council on May 15th 2003 and arrangements on subsequent occasions thereafter judged on each occasion;
3. Making the award should be an exceptional event;
4. Organisations as well as individuals should be eligible;
5. Recipients should be persons who, or organisations which, have given outstanding service to the Borough
6. Persons nominating may do so at any time and should do so in writing giving reasons and providing 5 referees to testify to the nominee's worthiness, two of whom at least should be currently resident citizens of the Borough;
7. Nominations received should be business 'exempt' from publicity and considered first by the Standards Board and comments from individual Council members should be invited and reported to it;
8. If this process is agreed by Council, the functions remitted to that Board be updated accordingly at the next opportunity; *(NB The make up of the Standards Committee was changed in June 2012, and now no longer has this element in its terms of reference so goes to Cabinet).*
9. Anyone granted the Honorary Freedom of the Borough should take formal precedence after the Mayor and Deputy Mayor on civic occasions; and
10. Anyone granted the Honorary Freedom of the Borough should receive a badge (similar to an Honorary Alderman's) and an illuminated scroll.
11. Any former council member will remain ineligible for nomination for 10 years after they cease to be a councillor."

3.3 The list of current holders of Freedom of the Borough are set out below:

13 November 1981	The Royal Air Force, Marham
15 July 1983	The Royal Anglian Regiment
2 October 2014	42F (King's Lynn) Squadron Air Training Corps
23 April 2015	Dr Paul Richards FRSA FSA DL
April 2019	Sir Richard Jewson KCVO JP, HM Lord-Lieutenant of Norfolk

4. Corporate Priorities

5. Financial Implications

In the event the Freedom of the Borough is awarded, the costs involved are the provision of the scroll and any reception provided.

6. Any other Implications/Risks

7. Equal Opportunity Considerations

8. Environmental Considerations

None

9. Consultation

10. Conclusion

11. Background Papers

Sept 2002 Cabinet and Nov 2019 Council.