

REPORT TO CABINET

Exempt	Would any decisions proposed :				
Discretionary	Be entirely within Standards powers to decide		NO		
	Report to Cabinet		YES		
	Need to be recommendations to Council		YES		
Lead Member: Cllr M de Whalley E-mail: <i>cllr.michael.dewhalley@west-norfolk.gov.uk</i>			Other Officers consulted: Chief Executive Monitoring Officer, Civic Officer		
Lead Officer: Samantha Winter E-mail: <i>sam.winter@west-norfolk.gov.uk</i> Direct Dial: 01553 616327					
Financial Implications YES	Policy/Personnel Implications NO	Statutory Implications YES	Equal Impact Assessment NO	Risk Management Implications NO	Environmental Implications No
If not for publication, the paragraph of Schedule 12A of the 1972 Local Government Act considered to justify that are paragraphs 1 & 2					

Date of meeting: 3 June 2024

PROPOSAL FOR THE AWARD OF THE HONORARY FREEDOM OF THE BOROUGH – MS JILL BENNETT

<p>Summary</p> <p>The Borough Council has received a letter of nomination, supported by a number of referees, for Jill Bennett to be awarded Freedom of the Borough.</p> <p>The Standards Committee have given consideration to that nomination which falls within their terms of reference below.</p> <p>The terms of reference of the Standards Committee include:</p> <p>E.15 Consider nominations for the award of Freedom of the Borough, and make recommendations to Full Council for the award or refusal.</p> <p>Any recommendation being presented to Council should first be considered by Cabinet.</p> <p>Recommendation</p> <p>The Cabinet is invited to consider the recommendations from the Standards Committee on the nomination of Ms Jill Bennett for Freedom of the Borough and make recommendations onto Council as set out below:</p> <p>1) That Council consider the recommendations from Standards and Cabinet at an Extraordinary meeting on 17 June 2024 to consider the proposal to bestow the Freedom of the Borough on the Nominee which would be awarded as set out in recommendation 2 below:</p>

- 2) That the Extraordinary Meeting of the Council being held before/after the Council meeting on 27 June 2024 to bestow the honour of Honorary Aldermen also include the award of the Honorary of Freedom of the Borough to the nominee, under s249 of the Local Government Act 1972, in recognition of the eminent service that the nominee has given to the Borough and west Norfolk.
- 3) That the common seal of the Council be affixed to a certificate to be presented to the nominee at that meeting.

Reason for decision

To give consideration to the nomination received.

1 Background of Nomination

A letter of nomination has been received from Councillor M de Whalley to award the Honorary Freedom of the Borough to Ms Jill Bennett, Retired BBC Radio Reporter. The nomination has been supported in writing by:

King's Lynn Civic Society (signed by Ms Alison Gifford (Chair))

Cllr Paul Bland JP

Dr Paul Richards FRSA FSA DL

Mr David Goddard DL

Mr Tony Williams MA FRSA DL

Mr Nick Balaam FSA.

2 Information

Ms Jill Bennett has been proposed for the award of Honorary Freedom of the Borough in recognition of her many decades of media coverage for West Norfolk.

3 Background to the award of the Honorary Freedom of the Borough

Under Section 249 of the Local Government Act 1972, Borough Councils may admit as Honorary Freemen of the Borough 'persons of distinction and persons who have, in the opinion of the council, rendered eminent services to the Borough'. In the case of HM Services units, the Freedom of the Borough can be bestowed upon them.

The Honorary Freedom is the highest award that the Council can bestow.

No legal rights or responsibilities are conveyed by the granting of the Freedom of the Borough, other than a ceremonial role at Civic functions.

When a regiment has been granted the Freedom of the Borough, tradition allows a military unit to parade through the town with fixed bayonets, regimental band playing, and colours flying. Following Council approval, regimental flags may be flown at the Civic Centre, on regimental days only, for those regiments who have been or are granted Freedom of the Borough.

The resolution must be passed by not less than two-thirds of the Members at a meeting of the Council specially convened for the purpose with notice of the object.

4 Previous Awards of Freedom of the Borough

The list of individuals and organisations who have been awarded the Freedom of the Borough are as follows:

10 July 1901	George William Webster
10 July 1901	Walter Harry Rutter
10 July 1901	Charles Ernest Ayre
10 July 1901	John David Franks
10 July 1901	John Leaf Wright
4 November 1901	Harry Lambert
9 May 1907	David Warnes
12 January 1912	Sir William John Lancaster J.P
26 September 1923	Holcombe Ingleby M.A.J.P
21 October 1946	William Russell Sadler O.B.E., J.P.
26 September 1951	Robert Bunnett O.B.E., J.P.
26 September 1951	John Harwood Catlegh O.B.E., J.P.
26 July 1954	Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth, The Queen Mother
15 October 1962	Alice Maud Fisher
25 March 1963	The Lady Fermoy O.B.E
14 October 1969	Sir John Barbirolli C.H., F.R.A.M., F.T.C.L.
6 December 1976	The Royal Air Force, Marham

Awards made since Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk formed

13 November 1981	The Royal Air Force, Marham
15 July 1983	The Royal Anglian Regiment
2 October 2014	No 42 (King's Lynn) Sqn Air Training Corps
23 April 2015	Dr Paul Richards FRSA FSA DL
11 April 2019	Sir Richard Jewson KCVO JP Lord Lieutenant of Norfolk

5 Nominating Criteria

Criteria agreed at Cabinet and Council March 2023 following Corporate Performance Panel Review

1. Bestowing the award of Freedom of the Borough should be an exceptional event.
2. Organisations as well as individuals should be eligible.

3. Recipients should be persons who, or organisations which, have given outstanding service to the Borough. Those services may relate to: artistic and cultural endeavours; business, growth and prosperity; charitable work; improvement to the built and natural environment; religious and spiritual life; sports activities; civic service; community cohesion; racial diversity; or any other service considered to be an asset to the Borough.
4. Persons nominating may do so at any time and should do so in writing giving reasons and providing 5 referees, two of whom at least should be currently resident citizens of the Borough, to testify to the nominee's worthiness.
5. Comments from individual Council members should be invited and reported to Standards Committee, and the Standards Committee would make recommendations to Cabinet and Full Council. Schedule 12A paragraph 1 of the Local Government Act 1972 will be relevant to any consideration of the nominations at Standards Committee.
6. Anyone granted the Honorary Freedom of the Borough should take formal precedence after the Mayor and Deputy Mayor on civic occasions; and
7. Anyone granted the Honorary Freedom of the Borough should receive a badge (similar to an Honorary Alderman's) and an illuminated scroll.
8. Full Council may, following a recommendation from Standards Committee, revoke the award of the Freedom of the Borough granted to any person or organisation at any time, if it considers that the recipient has brought the Council into disrepute.

6 Options Considered

The Standards Committee was invited to consider the nomination and make recommendations either in support or refusal of the proposal. The terms of reference for Standards Committee include the following:

- E.15 Consider nominations for the award of Freedom of the Borough, and make recommendations to Full Council for the award or refusal.

The Standards Committee is recommending the award of the Freedom of the Borough to Ms Bennett.

Cabinet will consider the recommendations from Standards Committee en route to Council. If recommendations are made to Council in support of the proposal, an additional special Council meeting is required to confer the honour, at which it must be a decision of no less than two thirds of the members present at the meeting convened for that purpose to decide whether to make the award.

If the Standards Committee decide to make the recommendation to Council they can make the following recommendations:

7 Policy Implications

There are no policy implications.

8 Financial Implications

The Special Council meeting to bestow the Honour will be held on the same day as an ordinary meeting. The cost of the Honorary Freedom badge and engrossment will be in the region of £800.

9 Personnel Implications

None applicable

10 Statutory Considerations

Section 249 of the Local Government Act 1972

11 Environmental considerations

None

12 Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)

None applicable

13 Risk Management Implications

None.

14 Declarations of Interest / Dispensations Granted

None

15 Background Papers

The letters of request and support. (attached)

Pre-Screening Equality Impact Assessment

Borough Council of
**King's Lynn &
West Norfolk**



Name of policy/service/function	Freedom of the Borough				
Is this a new or existing policy/ service/function?	Existing				
Brief summary/description of the main aims of the policy/service/function being screened. Please state if this policy/service rigidly constrained by statutory obligations	Decision of the Council whether to award the Freedom of the Borough to Jill Bennett				
Question	Answer				
<p>1. Is there any reason to believe that the policy/service/function could have a specific impact on people from one or more of the following groups according to their different protected characteristic, for example, because they have particular needs, experiences, issues or priorities or in terms of ability to access the service?</p> <p>Please tick the relevant box for each group.</p> <p>NB. Equality neutral means no negative impact on any group.</p>		Positive	Negative	Neutral	Unsure
	Age			x	
	Disability			x	
	Gender			x	
	Gender Re-assignment			x	
	Marriage/civil partnership			x	
	Pregnancy & maternity			x	
	Race			x	
	Religion or belief			x	
	Sexual orientation			x	
	Other (eg low income)			x	
Question	Answer	Comments			
2. Is the proposed policy/service likely to affect relations between certain equality communities or to damage relations between the equality communities and the Council, for example because it is seen as favouring a particular community or denying opportunities to another?	No				
3. Could this policy/service be perceived as impacting on communities differently?	No				
4. Is the policy/service specifically designed to tackle evidence of disadvantage or potential discrimination?	No				
<p>5. Are any impacts identified above minor and if so, can these be eliminated or reduced by minor actions? If yes, please agree actions with a member of the Corporate Equalities Working Group and list agreed actions in the comments section</p>	No	Actions:			
		Actions agreed by EWG member:			
Assessment completed by: Name: S Winter					
Job title: Democratic Services Manager	Date: March 2024				