

SUPPLEMENTARY AGENDA ITEM

Report to Council

Ward(s) affected: n/a

Report of Joint Strategic Director (Transformation and Governance)

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Date: 17 May 2023

Appointment of Honorary Freeman

Recommendation to Council:

To consider the nomination of former councillor David Goodwin for appointment as an Honorary Freeman and, if so minded, to agree to convene a special meeting of the Council on Thursday 1 June 2023 at 7pm at the Guildhall for the purpose of conferring upon him the title of Honorary Freeman.

Reason for recommendation:

To recognise formally David Goodwin's eminent and distinguished service to the Borough of Guildford.

Is the report (or part of it) exempt from publication? No

1. Background

1.1 Under the provisions of Section 249 of the Local Government Act 1972, the Council may, by resolutions passed by not less than two-thirds of the councillors voting thereon at a meeting specially convened for the purpose admit to be Honorary Freeman of the Borough persons of distinction and persons who have, in the opinion of the Council, rendered eminent service to the Borough.

- 1.2 The Council, at its meeting on 10 April 2014, adopted a “*Protocol on the appointment, role, status, rights and obligations of Honorary Freemen and Honorary Aldermen*”. The Protocol was subsequently reviewed and amended by the Council on 5 October 2021. The procedures set out in this report comply fully with the amended Protocol.

2. Honorary Freemen of the Borough

- 2.1 Since the 1974 re-organisation of local government, the Council has bestowed the office of Honorary Freeman upon the following persons:

- The Right Honourable the Lord Nugent of Guildford (12 June 1985)
- Mr Bill Bellerby MBE (25 March 1995)
- Mrs Doreen Bellerby MBE (25 March 1995)
- Mr David Watts (1 October 2003)
- Mr Andrew Hodges (22 November 2011)
- Mrs Jennifer Powell (3 November 2015)
- Mr Keith Churchouse (1 December 2022)

- 2.2 In addition, the Council bestowed the freedom the Borough on the former Women’s Royal Army Corps in 1988, and the Army Training Centre (Pirbright) in 2017.

- 2.3 Under the adopted Protocol (as amended), a person shall be deemed eligible for appointment as an honorary freeman provided that they meet all of the following requirements:

“The person shall:

- be a person of distinction
- have given eminent service to the borough during that period.

“Eminent service” in this context includes but is not limited to any of the following:

- public service (including past distinguished service as a councillor or officer of the Council)

- artistic and/or cultural endeavours
 - business, economic growth and prosperity
 - charitable work
 - improvement to the built and natural environment
 - political activities
 - religious and spiritual life
 - sporting activities
- have a strong and continuing connection with and commitment to the borough of Guildford, or have made a major contribution to national life and in doing so have enhanced the reputation of the borough.”

3. Nomination received for appointment of Honorary Freeman

- 3.1 In accordance with the Council’s adopted Protocol, Councillor Fiona White has proposed, and Councillor Julia McShane seconded, the nomination of former councillor David Goodwin for appointment as an Honorary Freeman of the Borough, in the light of his eminent and distinguished service to the Borough, full details of which are set out in the nomination attached as **Appendix 1**.
- 3.2 Mr Goodwin has indicated that he would be delighted to accept the appointment. Mr Goodwin stood down as a borough councillor at the May 2023 Borough Council elections due to his ongoing serious health issues.

4. Financial Implications

- 4.1 There will be a need to purchase a Scroll of Freedom, which will cost in the region of £450. This, together with the cost of providing a finger buffet/drinks reception for guests following the special meeting in honour of the new Honorary Freeman, would cost in total approximately £2,500. The cost can be met from the Civic Support budget.
- 4.2 The incidental costs of staging a special meeting of the Council at the Guildhall can be met from within existing budgets.

5. Legal Implications

- 5.1 As stated above, in order to confer the title of Honorary Freeman on anyone, the Local Government Act 1972 requires the Council to adopt a resolution passed by not less than two-thirds of the councillors voting thereon at a meeting specially convened for the purpose.
- 5.2 Under the amended Protocol, any nomination received for appointment as Honorary Freeman shall provide evidence that the person nominated:
- (i) meets the eligibility requirements referred to in paragraph 2.3 above, and
 - (ii) will accept the appointment

Mr. Goodwin has indicated that he would be delighted to have the title of Honorary Freeman of the Borough conferred upon him.

6. Human Resource Implications

- 6.1 There are no human resource implications

7. Background papers

Protocol on the appointment, role, status, rights and obligations of Honorary Freeman and Honorary Aldermen (approved by Council on 10 April 2014 and as amended by Council on 5 October 2021)

8. Appendices

Appendix 1: Nomination for appointment of Honorary Freeman of the Borough

Appointment of Honorary Freeman

Nomination

We wish to nominate former councillor David John Goodwin as an Honorary Freeman of the Borough. We consider that he meets the criteria because of his long service to the borough and the people of Guildford which is evidenced by his service as a borough councillor for a total of 24 years (i.e. 6 consecutive council terms). He was a councillor for the former Friary & St Nicolas Ward for the first 16 years and then represented Onslow Ward for the following 8 years.

He was a member of the Licensing Committee for the whole 24-year period and chaired that Committee for the last 4 years. He was also a designated Licensing Sub-Committee chairman from 2007 to 2023. He served as a member of the Planning Committee for 17 years, and was a member of the Guildford Joint Committee (formerly the Guildford Local Committee) until the summer of 2022 when he was its Vice-Chairman.

David also served a year on the Council's Executive in 2019-20 as the Lead Councillor for Waste, Licensing, and Parking.

In addition to his service as a borough councillor, David was the County Councillor at Surrey for a period of 16 years. His division covered the area comprising the former Friary & St Nicolas and Onslow Wards. As their county councillor, David worked with the Wodeland Action Group for 10 years before Surrey County Council and the police agreed to introduce one of the first 20mph zones in Guildford Town, adding to the safety of local residents.

Outside the formal council setting, David was the borough council's representative at Hillier House (an almshouse for ladies of a certain age) for 20 years and then continued as a Trustee of the charity in a personal capacity.

From 2000, David was also a member of the Taxi Advisory Group for 13 years and a member of the Town Centre Licensing Forum for 7 years. He was also a governor of St Nicolas Infants School for four years. David was also one of the Council's representatives on the Guildford/Freiburg Association for a total of 11 years.

We believe that his service to the borough and community makes him a person of distinction who has given eminent service to the borough for a substantial period who has had and still has a strong and continuing connection with the borough of Guildford.

We confirm that David will be willing to accept the Nomination if it is agreed by the Council.

Councillor Fiona White (proposer)
Councillor Julia McShane (seconder)