

Committee: Standards and General Purposes

Date: 10 March 2022

Wards: All

Subject: Governance Issues

Lead officer: Louise Round

Lead member: Owen Pritchard

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Recommendations:

- A. To establish a member working group to consider the nominations of Councillor Simpson and Councillor Williams, together with any other nominations received for awarding Freeperson of the Borough Status.
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1 PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1. Members will be aware that the Council has the power under section 249 of the Local Government act to admit “persons of distinction” as freemen or freewomen of the Borough. After receiving the aforementioned nominations, this report proposes a process for doing this over the course of the next committee cycle.

2 DETAILS

- 2.1.1 This Committee has previously agreed that the following process should be followed in order to award freedom of the borough status:
- 2.1.2 Nominations for persons or organisations to be granted Freedom of the Borough, may be made by any serving Member of the Council to the Monitoring Officer on the appropriate form. The Member should first raise the matter for discussion within their political group.
- 2.1.3 Once a nomination is received, the Monitoring Officer will check that sufficient information has been provided on the form and will pass it to the Standards and General Purposes Committee for consideration.
- 2.1.4 The Standards and General Purposes Committee may establish a small working group to informally assess nominations and the likelihood of meeting the 2/3 criteria. The working group would report back to the Standards and General Purposes Committee in regard to any nominee who it believed would meet the criteria and achieve sufficient support at Council.
- 2.1.5 The Standards and General Purposes Committee shall report to Council and, should Council accept the nomination, a Special Meeting of Council would then be called to pass the resolution as required by Section 249 of the Local Government Act 1972.
- 2.1.6 Subject to the Committee’s views, the Monitoring Officer will write to all members seeking any further nominations. The Committee is being asked to establish a working group of members to consider any nominations received with a view to considering that group’s recommendations at its meeting 21

June 2022. If at that stage, any nominations are agreed, a special Council meeting would be arranged. Although such a meeting would formally be a separate meeting, it could be held on the same night as a meeting which has already been scheduled to take place.

3 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 3.1. Members could choose not to make any nominations for freeperson status at this time and defer any such considerations until after the local elections in May.

4 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN OR PROPOSED

- 4.1. In relation to conferring freedom of the borough status, all councillors will be invited to make nominations and the final decision will rest with full Council. There is no requirement for public consultation.

5 TIMETABLE

- 5.1. If the Committee agrees the proposals set out in this report, the aim would be to hold a special council to confer freedom of the borough status in late summer or early autumn.

6 FINANCIAL, RESOURCE AND PROPERTY IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1. There are no significant implications although a modest amount of expenditure will be required to hold the special council referred to above.

7 LEGAL AND STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1. The power to confer freedom of the borough status is contained in section 249 of the Local Government Act 1972 and includes the ability to incur reasonable expenditure in connection with the same.

8 HUMAN RIGHTS, EQUALITIES AND COMMUNITY COHESION IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1. None

9 CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1. None

10 RISK MANAGEMENT AND HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1. None

11 BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 11.1. None.