

General Purposes and Arbitration Committee

19 December 2019

Subject:	Honorary Freeman of the Borough
Director:	Director of Law and Governance and Monitoring Officer - Surjit Tour
Contribution towards Vision 2030:	
Contact Officer(s):	Surjit Tour Director of Law and Governance and Monitoring Officer

DECISION RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That the Committee indicate whether or not it would wish to recommend persons of distinction and persons who have, in the opinion of the Council, rendered eminent services to the Borough.
2. That, in the event of any persons so nominated, the Director of Law and Governance and Monitoring Officer, in consultation with the Mayor and the Leader, be authorised to make the appropriate arrangements to implement the decision.

1 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 In accordance with Section 249 of the Local Government Act 1972, the Council has the authority to admit suitably qualified persons to be Honorary Freeman/Freewomen of the Borough.
- 1.2 The Council has, from time to time, conferred the title of Honorary Freeman/Freewoman on suitably qualified persons in recognition of the service they have given to the Borough.
- 1.3 This report seeks to obtain the Committee's instructions as to the admittance of suitable persons to be Honorary Freeman/Freewoman of the Borough.

2 IMPLICATIONS FOR SANDWELL'S VISION

- 2.1 Nominations for Honorary Freeman/Freewomen are an endorsement of the talent and achievements of local people.

3 BACKGROUND AND MAIN CONSIDERATIONS

- 3.1 The Council may, by resolution passed by not less than two-thirds of the members voting thereon at a meeting of the Council specially convened for the purpose, consider the admittance of persons to be Honorary Freeman of the Borough. The persons should be of distinction or persons who have, in the opinion of the Council, rendered eminent service to the Borough.
- 3.2 The Committee is invited to indicate whether or not it would wish to confirm the title on any person or persons. If the Committee wishes to nominate a suitable person it is recommended that an extraordinary meeting of Council is held on 14 January 2020, prior to the ordinary meeting of Council. The Council will consider this Committee's recommendations and, if appropriate, pass the necessary statutory resolutions required by Section 249 of the Local Government Act 1972.
- 3.3 It is usual to present the Freeman with a scroll and badge of office at a special ceremony, at which the Honorary Freeman and their guests are invited. The scrolls are personal to each Freeman and the badges specially manufactured. In light of the number of detailed arrangements to be made it is recommended that authority be given to the Director of Law and Governance and Monitoring Officer, in consultation with the Mayor and the Leader, to make the appropriate arrangements to implement the decision.
- 3.4 The Council has previously granted the Freedom on the Borough to:-
- Baroness Boothroyd of Sandwell;
 - Lord Archer of Sandwell;
 - Joseph Adams OBE;
 - Christopher Graham Collins (Frank Skinner);
 - Cyrille Regis MBE;
 - Julie Mary Walters CBE;
 - Wilfred Lunn MBE;
 - Patrick John Sullivan;
 - Dr Hiren Roy;
 - Francis Arthur Betteridge MBE;
 - Lord King of West Bromwich;
 - Lord Snape of Wednesbury;
 - Anthony "Bomber" Brown;
 - Wendy Mary Lawrence (Josie);

- David Heeley (blind Dave);
- Mr David Manners.

4 STRATEGIC RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The cost of the ceremony and associated scrolls and badges will be met from within existing resources.

5 LEGAL AND GOVERNANCE CONSIDERATIONS

- 8.1 The Local Government Act 1972, Section 249 allows the Council to admit suitably qualified persons to be Honorary Freemen/Freewomen of the Borough.

Surjit Tour

Director of Law and Governance and Monitoring Officer