

# North Tyneside Council Report to Council Date: 21 May 2015

## ITEM 13

Title: Freedom of the  
Borough

Portfolio(s): Elected Mayor

Cabinet Member(s): N Redfearn

Report from Service Area: Law and Governance

Responsible Officer: Vivienne Geary, Head of Law and Governance  
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Wards affected: All

### PART 1

#### 1.1 Purpose:

To inform the full Council of a nomination received for Freedom of the Borough and invite the Council to consider this nomination.

#### 1.2 Recommendation(s):

The Council is recommended to consider the nomination set out in the report for the award of the Freedom of the Borough.

#### 1.3 Forward Plan:

Twenty eight days notice of this report has been given and it first appeared on the Forward Plan that was published on 7 April 2015.

#### 1.4 Council Plan and Policy Framework

This report has no direct relevance to the 2014/18 Our North Tyneside Plan priorities.

#### 1.5 Information:

##### Background

##### 1.5.1 The eligibility criteria for nominations are as follows:

Nominees for the award of Freedom of the Borough of North Tyneside must be persons/organisations of distinction who, in the opinion of the Council, have rendered eminent service to the borough and have either:

- (a) lived in the borough; or
- (b) worked or been based in the borough; or
- (c) been born in the borough

The nominee for Freedom of the Borough can be an individual or an organisation. Serving councillors, serving members of the Overview, Scrutiny and Policy Development Committee, the Elected Mayor or serving council employees will not be considered.

Nominations can only be made through Councillors or the Elected Mayor of North Tyneside Council.

- 1.5.2 At the Council meeting held on 26 September 2013, responsibility for the assessment of nominations for the award of the Freedom of the Borough was transferred from the Standards Committee to the Overview, Scrutiny and Policy Development Committee.
- 1.5.3 The Overview, Scrutiny and Policy and Development Committee may recommend a maximum of two nominations to the Annual Council meeting for final consideration.
- 1.5.4 On 30 March 2015, the Overview, Scrutiny and Policy Development Committee received a report which outlined the process for the award of the Freedom of the Borough and gave details of the eligible nomination(s) submitted.
- 1.5.5 The Committee agreed to recommend the following nomination for consideration by the Council:

#### Tynemouth Volunteer Life Brigade

Nominated by Councillor T Mulvena, seconded by Norma Redfearn – Elected Mayor. Supported by Councillors G Bell, L Bell, S Day and C Johnson:

“The Tynemouth Volunteer Life Brigade was established in the old Borough of Tynemouth (now part of North Tyneside) in 1864 following the wreck of the schooner ‘Friendship’ and the passenger steamer ‘Stanley’ on the Black Middens Rocks at Tynemouth with the loss of 32 lives. Two Crew members from the Tynemouth Lifeboat ‘Constance’ died during the course of the attempted rescue, this led to the recognition for the need of a land based rescue service.

Over the following 150 years the Brigade has developed from only being trained in ship-to-shore Breeches Buoy Rescue to a highly specialist coastal rescue team, dealing with an average of 120 incidents per year.

The members who make up the Brigade’s Rescue Team, all of whom are unpaid volunteers, are trained in Rope Rescue, Water Rescue, Coastal Search and Rescue and First Aid.

The Organisation itself being funded from public donation and fund raising by its members, offers a 24/7 service, 365 days per year and covers the whole of the borough’s coast line and also our river frontage. The Brigade also offers a free-to-visit museum based at Spanish Battery Tynemouth thus enhancing the Culture, History and Tourism of North Tyneside.

It is for the above reasons that I would nominate the Tynemouth Volunteer Life Brigade for the Freedom of the Borough of North Tyneside, I believe that they have served this Borough and preceding borough by not only their Dedication to duty but also with Distinction, Courage and Valour over the past 150 years.”

1.5.6 The Authority's Constitution requires any nominations received for Freedom of the Borough to be included with the business for the Annual Council Meeting.

The full Council is asked to consider the above nominations taking into account the provisions of section 249 of the Local Government Act 1972, which permits the Council to admit to be honorary freemen persons of distinction and persons who have, in the opinion of the Council, rendered eminent services to the Borough. Any decision to admit the nominee must be approved by not less than two thirds of Members voting thereon at the Council meeting.

**1.6 Decision options:**

The Council can agree to award or not to award the Freedom to the nominee.

**1.7 Reasons for recommended option:**

The recommendation is procedural and a recognised part of the business of the Annual Council meeting.

**1.8 Appendices:**

None.

**1.9 Contact officers:**

Yvonne Harrison, Law and Governance (0191) 643 5320  
Alison Campbell, Finance (0191) 643 7038

**1.10 Background information:**

The following background papers/information has been used in the compilation of this report and available at the office of the author:

The Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).  
Minutes of the Overview, Scrutiny and Policy Development Committee - 30 March 2015.  
Nomination Form.

## **PART 2 – COMPLIANCE WITH PRINCIPLES OF DECISION MAKING**

### **2.1 Finance and other resources**

There is estimated expenditure in the region of £1,000 if an award was to be made. Costs include catering, ceremony programme, handmade scroll and photographer. This expenditure would be met from existing budgets in Law and Governance.

### **2.2 Legal**

The Council is authorised to award Freedom of the Borough by virtue of section 249 of the Local Government Act 1972.

### **2.3 Consultation/community engagement**

There is little scope for the award of Freedom of the Borough to be driven by the views of external consultees. The Member approval process, as set out in section 249 of the Local Government Act 1972, therefore provides the key element to the consultation process.

### **2.4 Human rights**

The proposals within this report do not themselves have direct implications in respect of the Human Rights Act 1998.

### **2.5 Equalities and diversity**

There are no direct equalities or diversity implications arising from this report.

### **2.6 Risk management**

As the recommendation is procedural and a recognised part of the business of the Annual Council meeting, no further risk assessment has been undertaken.

### **2.7 Crime and disorder**

There are no direct crime and disorder implications arising from this report.

### **2.8 Environment and sustainability**

There are no direct environment and sustainability implications arising from this report.

## **PART 3 - SIGN OFF**

- Deputy Chief Executive
- Head of Service
- Mayor/Cabinet Member(s)
- Chief Finance Officer
- Monitoring Officer
- Head of Corporate Strategy