

Gloucester City Council

Meeting:	General Purposes Committee	Date:	12 July 2016
	Council		21 July 2016
Subject:	Recognising good service to the City		
Report Of:	Democratic and Electoral Services Manager		
Wards Affected:	All		
Key Decision:	No	Budget/Policy Framework:	No
Contact Officer:	Tanya Davies, Democratic and Electoral Services Manager		
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Appendices:	1. Honorary Freemen and Freewomen Protocol		
	2. Freedom of Entry Protocol		
	3. Mayor's Medal Protocol		
	4. Honorary Aldermen		

FOR GENERAL RELEASE

1.0 Purpose of Report

1.1 The purpose of this report is to consider and approve the processes and assessment criteria for the various mechanisms for recognising good service to the City and/or the Council.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 General Purposes Committee is asked to **RECOMMEND TO COUNCIL** that

- (1) Subject to any further amendments, the process and criteria for the nomination of Honorary Freemen and Freedom of the City detailed in Appendix 1 be approved.
- (2) Subject to any further amendments, the process and criteria for nominations Freedom of the Entry detailed in Appendix 2 be approved.
- (3) Subject to any further amendments, the process for the nomination of recipients of the Mayor's Medal detailed in Appendix 3 be approved.
- (4) Subject to any further amendments, the process, criteria and entitlements for the nomination of Honorary Aldermen detailed in Appendix 4 be approved.

2.2 Council is asked to **RESOLVE** that

- (1) Subject to any further amendments, the process and criteria for the nomination of Honorary Freemen and Freedom of the City detailed in Appendix 1 be approved.
- (2) Subject to any further amendments, the process and criteria for nominations Freedom of the Entry detailed in Appendix 2 be approved.
- (3) Subject to any further amendments, the process for the nomination of recipients of the Mayor's Medal detailed in Appendix 3 be approved.
- (4) Subject to any further amendments, the process, criteria and entitlements for the nomination of Honorary Aldermen detailed in Appendix 4 be approved.

3.0 **Background and Key Issues**

- 3.1 The Council currently has a number of mechanisms at its disposal to recognise good service to the City and/or the Council. It is proposed that, where appropriate, the processes surrounding these mechanisms be reviewed.

Honorary Freemen and Freewomen

- 3.2 Section 249(5) of the Local Government Act 1972 as amended by the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009 empowers the Council to admit to be Honorary Freemen and Freewomen of the City, persons of distinction or persons who have, in the opinion of the Council, rendered eminent services to the City.
- 3.2 There is no statutory guidance or definition of 'eminent services' and to date Gloucester City Council has not implemented a process or criteria by which to invite and assess nominations. Previous nominees have been admitted following unanimous agreement by the Leaders of each of the three political Groups on the Council, prior to formal ratification by full Council.
- 3.3 In order to bring clarity and consistency to this mechanism for recognising exemplary service to the City, it is proposed that a nomination process and assessment criteria be established and these are set out in Appendix 1.

Honorary Freedom of Entry

- 3.4 Section 249(5) of the Local Government Act 1972 as amended by the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009 also gives the Council the power to grant 'freedom of entry to the City', again to persons of distinction and persons who have, in the opinion of the Council, rendered eminent services to the City.
- 3.5 This power is largely reserved for honouring a distinguished unit of Her Majesty's Forces, which is closely associated with the area in question. It is exercised infrequently, however, for completeness a protocol for managing the process is detailed in Appendix 2.

Mayor's Medal

- 3.6 The Mayor's Medal is presented to persons who have, in the opinion of the serving Mayor, made important contributions to the City of Gloucester. Recipients are chosen by the Mayor during his or her term of office and presented at an appropriate occasion; there is no requirement for medals to be presented at full Council meetings.
- 3.7 It is proposed that recipients continue to be chosen by the Mayor and that consultation with Group Leaders be undertaken with majority agreement required in order to proceed. It is further proposed that the number of Mayor's Medals presented during a Mayor's term of office be limited to two.
- 3.8 A formal protocol is proposed in Appendix 3.

Members

- 3.9 Section 249(1) of the Local Government Act 1972 as amended by the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009 also give the Council the power to confer the title of Honorary Alderman on persons who have, in the opinion of the Council, 'rendered eminent Services to the Council as past members of that Council but who are not then members of the Council'. This power has not been used by the Council to date, but given that this may change at any time, a protocol is proposed at Appendix 4. The protocol outlines the nomination process and the entitlements of those appointed as Honorary Aldermen.
- 3.10 On completion of 20 years' service, elected Members are presented with a Certificate of Long Service. The certificate is presented at a full Council meeting by the Mayor. It is understood that past practice has dictated that a civic reception be held in their honour, however, this did not occur in the case of the last recipient of a long service award and the Council has moved away from holding formal civic receptions over recent years.
- 3.10 It is proposed that the custom of awarding a Certificate of Long Service be continued, but that the tradition of holding a civic reception be formally ceased.

Staff

- 3.11 Employees who have completed 25 years' or more continuous service with the City Council (including service with Gloucestershire County Council) and who retire at that time after satisfactory service will be presented with an appropriate and permanent gift of their choice to the value of £4 per completed year of service. The award will also include a Certificate of Long Service.
- 3.12 Employees not retiring but who have completed 25 years' continuous service with the City Council (including service with Gloucestershire County Council) will be presented with a long service award in the form of a gift bearing the city coat of arms. The employee will be offered a choice of appropriate items available at the time as a token of the Council's appreciation of their loyalty to the Authority.
- 3.13 No changes are proposed to the established practice of recognising employees' continuous service.

- 3.14 Awards for exemplary service and specific pieces of work are given out annually at the Council's Staff Event.

Other mechanisms

- 3.15 From time to time the Council may approach developers with regard to street naming with a view to commemorating individuals who have made a significant contribution to the City.
- 3.16 It should be noted that any individual can nominate a person to receive an honour from the Queen at any time and this may be alternative if nominees are not deemed suitable for the honours and awards available for the Council to present.
- 3.17 Additionally, the Council may nominate existing Councillors or Officers to receive an honour from the Queen through the Local Government Association nomination process. This process should be driven by Members with administrative assistance with the application process available from Officers.

4.0 Asset Based Community Development (ABCD) Considerations

- 4.1 The implementation of nomination processes and assessment criteria for recognising good service and awarding honorary titles is a matter for the Council, therefore, there are no ABCD considerations.

5.0 Alternative Options Considered

- 5.1 The Council could choose not to implement formal processes and assessment criteria, however, there is a risk that, without agreed processes, nominations for awards and titles may be dealt with inconsistently and the decisions made could be open to challenge.

6.0 Reasons for Recommendations

- 6.1 The introduction of formal processes and criteria is intended to bring clarity and consistency to the mechanisms for recognising exemplary service to the City.

7.0 Future Work and Conclusions

- 7.1 Should the respective protocols be approved, they will come into force immediately.

8.0 Financial Implications

- 8.1 Mayor's Medals cost approximately £50 each and the Council currently has a stock purchased from existing budgets. The costs associated with the award of honorary titles are minimal and reflect the production of a scroll and refreshments for the recipient and their guests.

(Financial Services have been consulted in the preparation this report.)

9.0 Legal Implications

9.1 The legal implications are contained in the body of the report.

(One Legal have been consulted in the preparation this report.)

10.0 Risk & Opportunity Management Implications

10.1 There is a risk that, without agreed processes, nominations for award and titles may be dealt with inconsistently and the decisions made could be open to challenge.

11.0 People Impact Assessment (PIA):

11.1 The PIA Screening Stage was completed and did not identify any potential or actual negative impact, therefore a full PIA was not required.

12.0 Other Corporate Implications

Community Safety

12.1 There are no community safety implications.

Sustainability

12.2 There are no sustainability implications.

Staffing & Trade Union

12.3 There are no staffing implications.

Background Documents: None