

**BARNSELY METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**POLICY FOR THE ADMISSION OF PEOPLE TO BE HONORARY  
FREEMEN/FREEWOMEN OF THE BOROUGH**

(with proposed amendments highlighted in red)

**1 Purpose**

To establish a Policy for the admission of people to be honorary Freemen or Freewomen of the Borough, setting out criteria to be considered for this and procedural aspects.

**2 Legal Background**

The power to admit people to be honorary Freemen or Freewomen of the Borough is provided in Section 249(5) of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended. This states that "a relevant authority may admit to be honorary Freemen or honorary Freewomen of the place or area for which it is the authority (a) persons of distinction, and (b) persons who have, in the opinion of the authority, rendered eminent services to that place or area."

**3 Criteria for considering a Person to be an Honorary Freeman or Freewoman of the Borough**

- a) A person of distinction - to fulfil this criterion, the person in question should have some prominence in the local community in their line of work. The person in question is likely to already have some prominence or wider recognition and should have been active and prominent in their field of activity over a sustained period of at least 10 years.
- b) Rendered eminent services - in having that prominence, it is expected that this will have resulted in some tangible, recognised "benefit" to the local area. This could be by raising nationally the profile or reputation of the local area; or by representing the interests of the local community on the national stage; or by attracting jobs, investment or other similar benefits to the Borough; or by encouraging or supporting other local people or local activities in their field.

- c) Timeliness - by admitting a person as an Honorary Freeman or Honorary Freewoman, that person becomes further able to represent the Borough. Therefore, it is important that the Honour is conferred only on those people who are still prominent in their field or, having recently retired, still have sufficient profile to raise the profile or reputation of the Borough. A person would not normally be admitted as a Freeman or Freewoman more than 10 years after they had retired from "public life".
- d) An individual who has made an outstanding contribution during 2020/21 in relation to the pandemic.

#### 4 Process

- a) The Council will next consider the admission of new Freemen and Freewomen in November 2015, and then every 5 years thereafter.
- b) Any nomination for a person to be admitted as an Honorary Freeman or Freewoman of the Borough must have the support of at least 10 members of the Council eligible to vote on such a matter. The nomination must include a citation that demonstrates how that person fulfils the criteria at Section 3.
- c) Nominations will be considered by a panel to be Chaired and convened by the Leader of the Council. The panel will be composed of Elected Members and, where appropriate, community representatives. Elected Member representation will be balanced to represent the political balance of the Council overall. The panel will be advised by the Chief Executive and Director of Legal and Governance or their nominees.
- d) The Panel will meet during the September of the year in question and make recommendations to Council on the admission of new Freemen or Freewomen. The admission of the person(s) in question must be approved at a full Council meeting specially convened for that purpose and must be supported ~~unanimously at that meeting.~~ by not less than two thirds of the members of the authority who vote on it.

## **5 Rescission of Freedom**

The Council may, on a unanimous vote on a motion duly submitted, rescind the honour of Freeman or Freewoman if information comes to light that, in the view of the Council, would render the person concerned ineligible or otherwise unworthy of the honour, when judged against the criteria set out at Section 3 above.

Assistant Director, Governance and Member Services  
16 July 2014

Amendments proposed, Head of Governance  
10 March 2020