

SUBJECT: Freedom of the Borough – Royal British Legion (RBL)

MEETING: Council

DATE: 13th May 2021

DIVISION/WARDS AFFECTED: All

1. PURPOSE:

This report is to seek a decision on whether the Council admit as Honorary Freeman of the County the Royal British Legion in recognition of their 100th Year Anniversary on 15th May 2021 and to honour the charitable work of the organisation supporting ex-service men and women and their families. This will give public recognition to the recipient as an expression of high esteem in which they are held by Monmouthshire County Council and the people of the County on the occasion of the 100th Anniversary of the Royal British Legion.

Under Section 249(5) of the Local Government Act 1972 a Council can grant the Freedom of the Borough to "persons of distinction and persons who have, in the opinion of the authority, rendered eminent services to place place or area". In order to grant the Freedom of the Borough, a resolution must be passed by not less than two thirds of the members voting at a meeting of the Council specially convened for the purpose.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

Council are asked to recommend the following: In pursuance of Section 249 (as amended) of the Local Government Act 1972 the Council confers upon the Royal British Legion in 2021, the Freedom of the County of Monmouthshire.

3. KEY ISSUES:

The tradition of Boroughs conferring the Freedom goes back to ancient times when the Royal Charter Boroughs were almost, if not entirely, self governing. Originally, such conferment conveyed special privileges of various kinds upon the recipient that could involve the right to vote, property and local taxation benefits.

Over the years, and especially since the passing of the Reform Act 1983 and the Municipal Corporations Act 1835, successive Acts of Parliament have sought amongst other things severely to curtail the extent of the privileges so that, today, the conferment is purely honorary. Today's Freemen have no special rights.

However, the tradition is maintained as a means whereby public recognition may be given to the recipients as an expression of the high esteem in which, they are held by the Council and people of the Borough.

4. EQUALITY AND FUTURE GENERATIONS EVALUATION (INCLUDES SOCIAL JUSTICE, SAFEGUARDING AND CORPORATE PARENTING):

The Well-being of Future Generations Act asks public bodies to work towards achieving a Wales of cohesive communities. Therefore, by recognising the charitable work of the Royal British Legion the Council can publicly thank the RBL and also the wide range of people in the county borough who raise funds every year to support the RBL.

5. OPTIONS APPRAISAL

Not applicable to this report

6. EVALUATION CRITERIA

Not applicable to this report.

7. REASONS:

By conferring the Freedom of the Borough, Monmouthshire County Council gives an opportunity to recognise the achievements and work of individuals and organisations within its community.

8. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

The Local Government Act 1972 provides that the Authority may spend such reasonable sum as they think fit for the purpose of presenting an address or a casket containing an address to any person admitted to be an honorary freeman.

9. CONSULTEES:

Royal British Legion
MCC Armed Forces Champion
Monmouthshire Armed Forces Forum (MAFF)
Regional Armed Forces Covenant Liaison Officer

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS:

Not applicable to this report

11. AUTHORS:

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