

Withiel Parish Council

Honorary Freedom of Withiel*

Criteria, Procedure & Arrangements for Granting Honorary Freedom

1. Introduction

This document sets out recommendations relating to the selection and appointment process for Honorary Freemen and the Granting of Freedom of the Parish to individuals or organisations.

2. Granting the Freedom of the Parish:

Granting the Freedom of the Parish is the highest honour that the Parish can bestow. Although it carries no powers or privileges, those who receive the honour are able to use the title of Freeman.

As this is the highest honour that the Parish Council can grant it should be used sparingly and should not be given too often in order to preserve its status and value.

3. Criteria:

There is no statutory guidance that sets out any criteria for the appointment of Freemen. As Freedom of the Parish is awarded in recognition of exceptional service to the Parish, it would be inappropriate to set out strict judging criteria. Instead, guidance on the attributes successful candidates would be expected to have is recommended.

4. Cost:

Section 249 (9) of Local Government Act 1972 allows Councils to spend “such reasonable sum as it thinks fit” on presenting an address to Honorary Freemen. A commemorative ‘scroll’ will be provided. Currently there is no budget provision for this but under the S137 of the Local Government Act 1972 the costs of the scroll and frame can be allocated.

5. Legislation

5.1. Section 249 (5) of Local Government Act 1972, as amended by Section 29 of the Local Democracy, Economic Development & Construction Act 2009, allows the Council of a relevant authority (including a Parish Council) to 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 service to that place or area.

5.2. A resolution must be passed:

- a. At a meeting of the Parish Council that has been convened and where notice of the object of the meeting has been given; and
- b. By not less than two-thirds of the members of the Council who vote on it.

6. Procedure for Granting of Freedom of Withiel

6.1. All Members of Withiel Parish Council are responsible for nominating to the Council individuals or organisations, who in their opinion, have rendered eminent services to the Parish of Withiel and who should be granted Freedom of the Parish.

6.2. The Member of the Council making a nomination for the Honorary title needs to demonstrate to the Council that the criteria listed in section 7 below have been met and that the candidate commands substantial support in Withiel Parish Council.

6.3. The Council will consider any recommendations for the Honorary title and, if approved, will request the Chair to consider the nomination at the next Ordinary Meeting.

6.4. The roll of Honorary Freemen shall be maintained by the Parish Clerk.

7. Criteria

7.1. When considering candidates for Freedom of Withiel the following should be considered:

Candidates should have a strong and continuing connection with and commitment to Withiel or have made a major contribution to parish life and in doing so have enhanced the reputation of the parish.

Awards should not be for a job well done or because someone has reached a particular level. They should be awarded because an individual has 'gone the extra mile' in the contribution they have made or stand out 'head and shoulders' above others in what has been achieved.

To be considered, the nominee should meet at least two of the following criteria:

- i. delivered in a way that has brought distinction to Parish life and enhanced the Parish's reputation in the area or activity concerned
- ii. contributed in a way to improve the lives of those less able to help themselves
- iii. demonstrated innovation and entrepreneurship which is delivering results in the Parish

b. Candidates should have made a substantial contribution to the Parish in any area of activity, which could include but is not limited to:

- i. Artistic and Cultural endeavours
- ii. Business, economic growth and prosperity
- iii. Charitable work
- iv. Improvement to the built and natural environment
- v. Religious and spiritual life

c. Candidates should be considered from all walks of life. The honour should not be considered exclusive to a particular endeavour or activity.

d. Candidates should be considered from all parts of the Parish or to those outside of the parish but have made a significant contribution to the parish over a great number of years.

Policy End.

THE POLICY PROCESS

The process of granting 'Freedom' is split into four simple sections

1. Pre-Application
2. The Application Form
3. The Consideration
4. The Presentation

Pre-Application

- A. Any member of the Parish can put forward a nomination to be considered for the status of Freeman
- B. Each nomination must be sponsored by a member of the current Parish Council
- C. The particulars for the nomination must be detailed on the Application Form
- D. Particular attention and consideration must be taken to ensure as much detail as possible is included in regard to 'criteria for nomination' as detailed in Section 7 of the Policy
- E. The consideration of nominees must be noted to the PC Chair in advance so that an agenda item can be published in advance in accordance with Standing Orders

The Application Form – see following:

WITHIEL PARISH COUNCIL

NOMINATION FOR FREEDOM OF THE PARISH OF WITHIEL

I Councillor wish to nominate the following person to be considered for the status of Freedom of the Parish of Withiel.

Nominee.....

I am aware that the following criteria needs to be applied to the achievements of the nominee.

They have:

- delivered in a way that has brought distinction to Parish life and enhanced the Parish's reputation in the area or activity concerned
- contributed in a way to improve the lives of those less able to help themselves
- demonstrated innovation and entrepreneurship which is delivering results in the Parish

I believe that they have met these criteria in the following way:

Please continue overleaf or attach supporting evidence.

The Consideration

At an Ordinary Meeting of the Parish Council, called in line with Standing Orders, at the given Agenda Item the following procedure shall be adopted subject to the discretion provided for in the paragraph below:

- The Chair shall open the agenda item and remind the Members of the Policy Document giving guidance on those criteria for suitable nominations
- The Chair shall invite the Member ('the sponsor) to present the application for nomination
- The Chair shall invite all Members to discuss and debate the merits of the nomination
- The Chair shall then invite the Council to pass the resolution, which should recite the particular grounds upon which the Council have come to their decision and details of the public services rendered by the recipient.
- If the Council passes the resolution by no less than a 2/3rds majority then the resolution shall be recorded in the Council Minutes in the usual way.
- The Chair in consultation with the clerk shall then make arrangements for the formal presentation of the 'Freedom' which will be marked by the giving of a framed certificate.

The Presentation

Albeit that the bestowing of the Freedom of the Parish actually occurs at the point the Parish Council resolves to grant the Freedom, the presentation ceremony marks the occasion in a public and dignified way.

The presentation would usually be made by the Withiel Parish Council Chair with other Members present if required. Photographs should be taken to record the event and placed on the PC website

*This policy was adopted by full council 3rd July 2019 under minute no.117/19.