



**BARROW BOROUGH COUNCIL**  
**TOWN HALL**  
**DUKE STREET**  
**BARROW-IN-FURNESS**

Tuesday, 10 May 2022

To: The Members of Barrow Borough Council

Madam Mayor, Ladies and Gentlemen

You are hereby summoned to attend an Extraordinary meeting of BARROW BOROUGH COUNCIL to be held in the COUNCIL CHAMBER at the TOWN HALL, BARROW on WEDNESDAY, 18TH MAY, 2022 commencing at 6pm or on rising of the Annual meeting for the transaction of the business specified below.

Chief Executive

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Business

1. TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE
2. PROPOSAL FOR AN HONORARY FREEDOM OF THE BOROUGH

To consider a proposal for an Honorary Freedom of the Borough.

To expedite the business of the meeting, Members are requested to give the Chief Executive adequate notice of any Amendment which they propose to raise.

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**PART ONE**

**Barrow Borough Council  
Council**

**Wednesday, 18 May 2022**

**Proposals for an Honorary Freedom of the Borough**

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**Report from:** Head of Legal and Governance and Monitoring Officer

**Report Author:** Debbie Storr

**Wards:** (All Wards);

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**1.0 Summary and Conclusions**

1.1 Under the Local Government Act 1972, the Council has the power to confer an Honorary Freedom to persons of distinction who have rendered eminent service to the Borough.

1.2 The Council is asked to consider a proposal to confer a new Honorary Freewoman of the Borough.

**2.0 Recommendation**

2.1 **It is recommended that Council:-**

**(i) In pursuance of the provisions of section 249(1) of the Local Government Act 1972 and in recognition of her eminent services to the Borough, Margaret Ann Burrow MBE be admitted as an Honorary Freewoman of the Borough; and**

**(ii) That the Common Seal of the Council be affixed to a certificate to be presented at a date to be agreed.**

**3.0 Background and Proposals**

3.1 The conferment of the Freedom of the Borough is the highest honour that the Council can bestow. To be granted freedom of the borough is a mark of distinction upon the person the Council wishes to honour and reflects the eminence of the person on whom it is conferred or as recognition of significant and valuable services rendered to the Borough by that person.

- 3.2 In accordance with the Protocol (attached at **Appendix 1**) which sets out the process to be followed for determining whether the Freedom of the Borough should be conferred a nomination has been referred to Council for consideration.
- 3.3 The criteria for conferring the Freedom of the Borough is set out at 3.1 of the Protocol and should recognise exceptional achievement or service by an individual.
- 3.4 Councillor Kevin Hamilton nominated Mrs Margaret Ann Burrow, MBE to be admitted as an Honorary Freewoman of this Borough.
- 3.5 The nomination was considered in detail by the Members of the Freedom Panel on 25 February 2020 and it was indicated that there was sufficient support for the matter to go to Council for decision. The decision was originally intended for Council in March 2020 but the meeting was cancelled due to the Coronavirus lockdown.
- 3.6 A flavour of the nominee's achievements are listed below.
- 3.7 Margaret has devoted many years to Barrow and its residents. She has raised vast amounts of money for the betterment of the town and its people.
- 3.8 In 2002 she was awarded an MBE for outstanding services to the Barrow and District Disability Association.
- 3.9 Margaret has made many outstanding contributions to disabled people, their carers and families and services and was conferred the Badge of the Order of Mercy in July 2006, as well as being the recipient of numerous other achievements and awards including a special recognition award winner of the 2019 South Cumbria Community Unsung Heroes Awards.
- 3.10 Margaret is a founder member of the Barrow and District Council for Disabled, now the Barrow and District Disability Association, which organisation will celebrate its 40<sup>th</sup> year in 2021. Margaret is the longest serving Trustee and Volunteer.
- 3.11 Margaret spearheaded major projects which has seen derelict properties being converted into a fully adapted disability centre which is the hub of many services provided by the Barrow and District Disability Association, as well as a major building expansion which will provide a larger dedicated Disablement Advice and Benefits Service of one of the many services the Association provides in the community.
- 3.12 Other services include 16 years as a Governor, with a special interest in disability issues, at Furness College.
- 3.13 Margaret has evidence of exceptional voluntary service to the Borough and carries the respect of and inspires her peers. Her work is dedicated to significantly improving the lives of those less able to help themselves or suffering disadvantage.

3.14 It is for the Council to determine who should be awarded Freedom of the Borough. The award must be approved by a formal resolution of a special meeting of full Council. A vote will be taken and if it supported by no less than two thirds of those members present and voting, then the title of Honorary Freewoman of the Borough of Barrow will be bestowed upon the nominee.

3.15 If approved, then a small reception will take place at a later date to formally present the award.

#### **4.0 Consultation**

4.1 The nomination had been considered in detail by Members of the Freedom Panel on 25<sup>th</sup> February 2020 and it was indicated that there was sufficient support for the matter to go to Council for decision.

#### **5.0 Alternative Options**

5.1 The Council could choose not to support the nomination, but the recommendations have been put forward in accordance with the agreed protocol.

#### **6.0 Contribution to Council Plan Priorities**

6.1 None directly applicable, the report is to consider the award of an honorary freedom.

#### **7.0 Implications**

##### **7.1 Financial, Resources and Procurement**

7.1.1 Section 249(9) of the Local Government Act 1972 allows a relevant authority to spend such reasonable sum as it thinks fit for the purpose of presenting an address or a casket containing an address to a person on whom the authority has conferred the title of Honorary Freewoman or Freeman under subsection (5).

7.1.2 The costs of a Freedom Certificate and any civic reception can be met from the Council's financial reserves.

##### **7.2 Legal**

7.2.1 In accordance with Section 249(5) of the Local Government act 1972, the Council may be a resolution passed by not less than two-thirds of the Members voting thereon at a meeting of the Council specifically convened for the purpose with notice of the purpose, admit to be honorary freemen or freewomen of the place or area for which it is the authority persons/organisations of distinction and persons/organisations who have in its opinion rendered eminent services to the Borough.

7.2.2 The title is an honorary role. It offers no legal status and there is no remuneration linked to the honour.

### 7.3 Local Government Reorganisation

7.3.1 The Local Government (Structural Changes) (Transitional Arrangements) No 2 Regulations 2003 provide that, after reorganisation, honorary freemen will continue to be freemen of an area corresponding to the area of which they were freemen prior to the reorganisation. Further, the Regulations preserve the rights of honorary freemen and ensure that services rendered to an abolished council can be treated as services rendered to the continuing or new council.

### 7.4 Equality and Diversity

7.4.1 The recommendation has no implications.

#### Risk

Risk	Consequence	Controls required
N/A	N/A	N/A

#### Contact Officers

Debbie Storr [dstorr@barrowbc.guk.uk](mailto:dstorr@barrowbc.guk.uk)

#### Appendices Attached to this Report

Appendix No.	Name of Appendix
1	Freedom of the Borough Protocol

#### Background Documents Available

Name of Background document	Where it is available
Nomination Form	

## Barrow Borough Council

### Protocol for determining whether the Freedom of the Borough should be conferred

#### 1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Section 249 of the Local Government Act 1972 empowers a local authority to confer the “Freedom of the Borough” to persons of distinction, who have in the opinion of the Council, rendered eminent services to the Borough.
- 1.2 The Freedom of the Borough is the highest honour that the Council can grant. It will only be used sparingly and awarded on merit to exceptional persons. It should not be given too often. The overriding principle **must be** that this award should be made on merit, defined as:
- Achievement
  - Exceptional Service
- 1.3 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.

#### 2.0 Background

- 2.1 It is important that, if a nomination to confer an Honorary Freedom is to be considered, that all Members of the Council will be in possession of sufficient facts in order to make a decision as to whether the honour should be conferred. Furthermore, there may be instances where there are strongly held views for and against and these need to be addressed as far as possible in advance of an Extraordinary Council meeting called for the purpose. The Council will want to meet with the clear consensus that the person of distinction is to be honoured and not humiliated by the proceedings. A unanimous decision is desirable, but the absence of unanimity cannot prevent the nomination coming forward for consideration by the Council.
- 2.2 To be granted, the title of Honorary Freeperson is a mark of distinction upon the person whom the Council wishes to honour. Conferring the Freedom of the Borough does not grant the title holder any privileges, legal rights or responsibilities. For example, they have no rights to attend Council or Committee meetings, nor can they be paid an allowance. However, it does maintain a symbolic connection with the Council and it is hoped that those who are awarded this honour will support the Office of the Mayor at civic events and functions.

### **3.0 Criteria for conferring the Freedom of the Borough**

3.1 It is in the interests of transparency and public confidence that the Council adopts clear criteria for conferring the Freedom of the Borough. It is proposed that one or more of the following are used as the criteria for the award: The person has

- demonstrated exceptional achievement or service to the community which is outstanding in its field;
- made a real difference in their field of work or their community;
- brought distinction to the Borough or enhanced its reputation;
- given outstanding military service;
- demonstrated innovation, entrepreneurship or exceptional business acumen which has delivered benefits to the Borough;
- evidenced exceptional charitable service to the Borough, through either a national or locally based charity;
- evidenced exceptional voluntary service to the Borough or any part of it or community within it;
- carried the respect of and inspired his/her peers;
- significantly improved the lot of those less able to help themselves or suffering disadvantage;
- promoted community cohesion;
- displayed moral courage and vision in making and delivering tough choices;
- contributed to the Borough beyond the call of duty in a way that stands out above others.

3.2 Only in exceptional circumstances should consideration be given to the admission of organisations.

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

3.4 The awarding of the Freedom of the Borough to Service Units “to march through the streets of the Borough with bayonets fixed, drums beating and Colours flying” is really an empty grant. The practice has been generally accepted and provides a dignified and satisfactory means of enabling a Borough to honour a distinguished unit of Her Majesty’s forces.

### **4.0 Procedure to be adopted on receipt of a nomination to confer the Freedom of the Borough**

4.1 Nominations for persons or organisations to be granted the Freedom of the Borough, may be made by any Elected Member to the Monitoring Officer on the appropriate form (See Appendix A). Each nomination must contain the support of the Elected Member’s Group Leader and where appropriate, the Member should first raise the matter for discussion within their Political Group. An



Elected Member who is not a member of a Political Group must have the support of at least one of the Political Group Leaders.

- 4.2 The Monitoring Officer will write to all Elected Members once during the Municipal year, to draw their attention to the opportunity to make nominations.
- 4.3 On receipt of the Nomination form the Monitoring Officer will ensure that sufficient information has been provided on the form. Full reasons why the person should be considered must be included:
  - a person of distinction; or
  - a person who has rendered eminent services to the Borough.
- 4.4 **The Freedom Panel** - When in possession of sufficient information, the Monitoring Officer will convene a Panel of each of the Leaders of the Political Groups on the Council (Deputy Leaders can substitute if their Leader is unable to attend), with relevant officers (The Freedom Panel) to consider:
  - whether they have sufficient information on which to form a view and, if not, to instruct officers to seek further information;
  - once satisfied that they have adequate information, whether there is sufficient support for the matter to go on to the Council for decision.
- 4.5 In the event that it is concluded that it is unlikely that the nomination will receive sufficient support, the Monitoring Officer will advise the Elected Member who made the nomination of this conclusion and the reasons for reaching it. The Elected Member will then be given the opportunity to withdraw his/her nomination, although the Member will still be entitled to have his/her nomination considered by the Council.
- 4.6 **Extraordinary Council Meeting** - Should it be concluded that it is likely that there will be a two thirds majority voting in favour of the nomination, the Monitoring Officer will convene an Extraordinary meeting of the Council specifically for the consideration of the one item of business. The timing of the meeting will be such as, so far as it practicable, to meet the availability of the individual concerned to attend and to concord with the Council's diary commitments.
- 4.7 The subject of the nomination will be invited to attend the Extraordinary meeting of the Council where the nomination is to be considered.
- 4.8 At the Extraordinary meeting of the Council, there will be only the one item of business and the Monitoring Officer will submit a report setting out the matters considered by the Freedom Panel and the recommendation of the Panel to Council to approve the nomination.

4.9 The resolution should recite the grounds upon which the recommendation is being made, and details of the public services rendered by the nominee should be included.

4.10 The Mayor will take a vote on the recommendation of the Freedom Panel and a two-thirds majority of those present and voting is required.

(Note: abstentions do not count as a vote and the required majority will be deduced from the number of Members actually voting on the item).

4.11 After the passing of the resolution the newly admitted Freeperson (or representative of the organisation being admitted) should take the appropriate Oath and sign the Roll, his/her signature being witnessed by the Mayor and the Chief Executive or nominated Officer.

A sealed Certificate of the grant of Honorary Freedom should then be presented to the newly appointed Honorary Freeperson by the Mayor with an opportunity being given for the recipient to reply.

## **5.0 The Ceremony**

5.1 Arrangements for the ceremonial award will be made by the Democratic Services Manager after liaising with the Mayor, Political Group Leaders and the individual concerned. This can be done either at the Extraordinary Council meeting and be followed by a Civic reception or at a Civic reception at a later date arranged specifically for that purpose.

5.2 The new Honorary Title will be added to the Freedom Roll for the Borough of Barrow

## **6.0 Revocation**

6.1 The Council retains the authority to revoke any award of the Freedom of the Borough at any stage following the conferment of the honour. In doing so the Council will pass a resolution to revoke the status as Freeperson of the Borough.

6.2 In revoking the status of Freeperson the Council will remove the individual (s) from the role of honour in the Town Hall.