



BEXHILL-ON-SEA TOWN COUNCIL

HONORARY FREEDOM OF BEXHILL AWARDS POLICY

1. Background

- a) With effect from 12 January 2010, all parish councils were given powers to confer the title of “honorary freeman” or “honorary freewoman” upon what the legislation refers to as “persons of distinction” and those who, in the council’s opinion, “have rendered eminent services to the council’s area” (section 249(5) and (6) of the Local Government Act 1972 Act).
- b) The town council recognises this important award to members of the community and shall implement this policy when selecting recipients of freedom awards.

2. Procedure & Guidance Notes

- a) The Council may consider applications for “Freedom of the Town” to be bestowed on individuals or groups as described above during January and February each year;
- b) The Council may, on its own initiative, consider bestowing “Freedom of the Town” on individuals or groups as described above;
- c) Councillors are to be advised of the proposal to bestow honorary freeman/woman onto said person(s) to ensure that at least two thirds of councillors (12) are in agreement prior to arrangements for the extraordinary meeting of council and reception being made.
- d) Nominations are to be agreed by the Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Town Clerk, prior to any resolution being put before Council;
- e) Once agreed arrangements will be made for an extraordinary meeting of council to be held in April, in order to award the Honorary Freedom, followed by a reception to be held in a local venue, subject to agreement of all parties;
- f) The recipient will be informed of the Council’s wish to bestow the honour of Freeman/woman onto them and they will be invited to attend the extraordinary meeting of council in April followed by the reception;
- g) An agenda will be sent to all Members advising them of the date and they will be advised of the venue for the reception and the costs; A “Freedom” scroll will be ordered stating the name and purpose for which the honour is being bestowed;
- h) Once the resolution has been passed at the meeting the Honorary at the meeting the Honorary Freeman/woman will be bestowed on the individual and signed by the Mayor and Proper Officer.

3. Criteria for Qualification When considering a nomination for the awarding of the Freedom of the Town the following should be considered:

- a. The candidate has made an outstanding and lasting contribution to the administrative area known as Bexhill on Sea which could include:
 - i. Artistic and Cultural endeavours
 - ii. Business, economic growth and prosperity
 - iii. Charitable work
 - iv. Improvement to the built and natural environment
 - v. Political activities
 - vi. Religious and spiritual life
 - vii. Sports activities
- b) Candidates should be considered from all walks of life.
- c) The honour should not be considered exclusive to a particular endeavour or activity.
- d) Candidates should be considered from all parts of the Town.

4. At the Meeting

At the special meeting of the Council called to give Freedom of the Town the following procedure shall be adopted:

- a) The Mayor shall open the meeting of Council and welcome all those in attendance
- b) The Mayor shall invite a member ('the proposer') to move a motion to grant Freedom of the Town
- c) The Mayor shall invite a different Member ('the seconder') to second the motion
- d) The Mayor shall invite the proposer to pay tribute
- e) The Mayor shall invite the seconder to pay tribute
- f) The Mayor shall invite any other member who wishes to do so, to pay tribute
- g) The Mayor 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 (s).
- h) If the Council passes the resolution by no less than a 2/3rds majority then the Mayor of Bexhill-on-Sea shall preside over the recipient(s) of the Honorary Freedom coming forward to sign the Roll of Honorary Freemen and receive the scroll and civic gift.
- i) The Mayor of Bexhill-on-Sea may make a short speech
- j) The recipient(s) will give a response
- k) The Mayor will conclude proceedings and invite all Members and guests to attend the civic reception.
- l) The Chair, after consultation with the Town Clerk and the intended recipient of the Honorary Freedom may make such reasonable changes to the procedure set out above as seems necessary and expedient.
 - a. Once the proposal has been voted upon and a resolution made that the Freedom of the Town bestowed upon the individual or group in question and Scroll of Admission will be signed by the Town Mayor and the Town Clerk and officially presented to the recipient;

- b. Pictures will be taken following the presentation;
- c. An offer will be made to the recipient of the award for the Council to hold onto the scroll for the purpose or having it professionally framed on behalf of the recipient (if they so wish).

5. **After the Meeting**

- a) The Council's social media site will be updated;
- b) A press release will be sent to local press (including a photograph)
- c) The recipient or in the case of a group, a representative of the recipient group will be invited to all future civic functions;
- d) The associated wall plaque will be updated within a month of the award being presented.