

# Burley Parish Council Policy

for the granting of

## “Freedom of the Parish of Burley”

Adopted by Burley Parish Council on  
Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> September 2022

### 1. Introduction

This document sets out the legal requirements, criteria and procedures relating to conferring the title of Honorary Freeman or Freewoman of the parish to Individuals.

### 2. Conferring the title

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. Legal Requirements

Section 249 (5) of Local Government Act 1972, as amended by Section 29 of the Local Democracy, Economic Development & Construction Act 2009, allows a relevant authority (including a town or 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.

Section 249 (8) of Local Government Act 1972, A resolution must be passed

- a. at a meeting of the relevant authority which is specially convened for the purpose 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 relevant authority (or, in the case of charter trustees, of the trustees) who vote on it.

Section 249 (9) of Local Government Act 1972 allows Councils 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 freeman or honorary freewoman under subsection (5) above”

### 4. Criteria

There is no statutory guidance that sets out any criteria for the appointment of Honorary Freemen or Freewomen. As Freedom of the Parish is awarded in recognition of exceptional service to, and for the benefit of residents of, the Parish, it would be inappropriate to set out strict judging criteria.

However, when considering a person, or persons, for Freedom of the parish of Burley the following should be considered:

- There must be, or have been, a strong and continuing connection with and commitment to the parish, or
- The person or persons will be making, or have made, a major contribution to parish life and in doing so have enhanced the reputation of the parish.
- The commitment, or contribution, to the community will; have been either
  - i. delivered in a way that has brought distinction to Parish life and enhanced the Parish's reputation in the area or activity concerned, or
  - ii. contributed in a way to improve the lives of those less able to help themselves, in particular the young, the elderly and the vulnerable person within the parish.
  - iii. demonstrated innovation and entrepreneurship which is delivering results in the Parish.

The title will NOT be conferred, or considered, for a member, contractor, or employee of the council whilst still acting as a councillor, contractor or employee.

## **5. Procedure for granting "Freedom of the Parish of Burley"**

### **a. Prior to formal consideration by the parish council**

- i. Any resident of the Parish can put forward a nomination to be considered for the status of Freeman.
- ii. Each nomination must be sponsored by a member of the current Parish Council
- iii. The sponsoring Councillor will
  1. consider whether they are aware of any reason that the granting or acceptance of the award may, or could be considered by a reasonable third-party, bring the parish or the Parish Council into disrepute.
  2. the Chairman and the clerk of his/her intention to nominate a person for the honorary title
- iv. The clerk will include an item on the agenda for consideration by the parish council with the press and public excluded
- v. Subject to the positive outcome of this process the Chairman (or another nominated Councillor) and Clerk shall prior to the issuing of formal calling notice for meeting as required by Section 249 (8) of Local Government Act 1972, informally enquire with the proposed individual(s) as to:
  - i. whether or not they are prepared to accept the award.

### **b. At the meeting convened for the purpose**

The Chairman shall open the agenda item and remind the Members of this Policy Document giving guidance on the criteria and process to be followed

The Chairman will then invite the Member ('the sponsor) to present the nomination and move the resolution

The Chairman shall invite all Members to discuss and debate the merits of the nomination.

The Chairman shall then invite a seconder for the nomination and, subject to the motion being supported, 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 Chairman, 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 and recorded on the "Roll of honorary Freemen and Freewomen of the Parish of Burley"

The "Roll of Honorary Freemen & Freewomen of the Parish of Burley" will be publicly displayed on the parish council website and may be duplicated elsewhere in the parish

**c. The presentation**

The bestowing of the Freedom of the Parish actually occurs at the point the Parish Council resolves to grant the Freedom.

However, the presentation ceremony to mark the occasion will be held in a public and dignified way.

The presentation would normally be made by the Burley Parish Council Chairman with other Members present at a suitable time and place.

Photographs should be taken to record the event and placed on the PC website