

Honorary Freeman of the City of Rockingham

Objective

To outline the nomination, selection and awarding of the prestigious title '*Honorary Freeman of the City of Rockingham*', to recognise exceptional and meritorious service of an individual to the community of the City of Rockingham.

Scope

This policy applies to any nomination proposed for the award of the title of '*Honorary Freeman of the City of Rockingham*'.

Statement

Background

The title of 'Honorary Freeman' has its origins in mediaeval European history where a man who was bound to serve a landowner could, by special decree, be declared a 'free man' and so freed of former obligations to the landlord.

The former 1960 Local Government Act provided that Council may, by absolute majority, pass a resolution which confers the title 'Honorary Freeman of the Municipality' on any person. Such a conferment did not bestow any right or privilege on that person other than the right to use the title. Current legislative provisions are silent on this matter.

Subject to the eligibility and selection criteria of this policy being met, Council may, by an absolute majority decision, confer the title of '*Honorary Freeman of the City of Rockingham*' on any person. The honour is reserved to be awarded on rare and exceptional occasions for persons who have rendered exceptional and meritorious service to the community.

Eligibility

A nominee for the conferral of the title 'Honorary Freeman of the City of Rockingham' should ordinarily –

- have been resident of the City of Rockingham for a significant period (significant usually meaning at least 20 years);
- have given distinguished service to the community, preferably in more than one capacity and predominately on a voluntary basis;
- have made such a contribution that provided demonstrable benefits to the community; and
- displays the highest personal integrity and outstanding leadership.

Serving elected members of the City of Rockingham Council and State and Federal Parliament are ineligible for conferral.

Selection Criteria

Eligible nominees will be judged on their record of service to the community using the following selection criteria –

- Length of Service in a field (or fields) of activity.
- Level of commitment to the field (or fields) of activity.

- Breadth of service and organisations represented and the impact of that service.
- Benefits to the City of Rockingham community (specifically) and more broadly the State and Nation resulting from the nominee's endeavours.
- Personal leadership qualities (including inspiring and mentoring others).
- Special achievements of the nominee.

Nomination Procedure

Nominations for the Award of Honorary Freeman of the City of Rockingham may be made by individuals or organisations and are to be –

- made in the strictest confidence without the knowledge of the nominee.
- sponsored by a Council Member of the City of Rockingham, with support in writing of at least three other Council members.
- submitted to the Chief Executive Officer in writing using the Nomination Form prepared for that purpose.

The Chief Executive Officer (in consultation with the Mayor) is to verify the content of the nomination and will prepare a confidential report to an ordinary Council meeting with a recommendation to support or not to support the nomination.

Council is to consider the confidential report and a decision to confer the title of 'Honorary Freeman of the City of Rockingham' is to be made by absolute majority vote.

Prior to conferring the title the nominee must be advised of the nomination and the obligations and entitlement of the title, and the nominee must confirm their willingness to accept the award.

Awarding the Title

Once a nomination has been accepted by Council, the nominee and any person(s) or organisation(s) involved in the nomination are to be informed of the decision and a suitable press statement is to be released.

The formal conferring of the title is to be carried out at a reception held by Council. This may be a special reception for this purpose, or the ceremony may form the focal point of any other suitable reception hosted by Council. The decision on the occasion and format of the ceremony shall rest with the Mayor, in consultation with the Chief Executive Officer.

Entitlements

The successful nominee shall receive an illuminated framed certificate and a name badge which confirms their status and they may designate themselves as a Freeman of the City of Rockingham. A Freeman and their guest shall be invited to attend the following civic functions –

- Any future function awarding the title
- Australia Day Awards
- Annual Civic Reception
- Pioneers Luncheon
- Volunteer Receptions
- Official 'Opening' ceremonies.

Conduct

Honorary Freeman of the City of Rockingham are to conduct themselves in a manner befitting of the conferred honour at all times when attending a City of Rockingham function or representing the City. They should refrain from making critical or disparaging remarks about the City, Council or past or present Council Member and employees.

Council is entitled to withdraw the award where the conduct of a conferee reflects adversely on the City's reputation. Such a withdrawal shall be through a confidential report provided by the Chief Executive Officer.

Definitions

Nil

Legislation

Nil

Other Relevant Procedures / Key Documents

Council Policy – Functions Hosted by Council

Responsible Division

General Management Services

Review Date

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