

Report of:	Chief Executive
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Portfolio Leader:	Leader of the Council
Key Decision:	No
Report Track:	Extraordinary Council: 22/05/13

**EXTRAORDINARY MEETING OF COUNCIL
22 MAY 2013
GRANTING THE FREEDOM OF THE DISTRICT TO
MRS ETHEL POWELL, M.B.E**

1 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To consider the granting of the honorary Freedom of the District to Mrs Ethel Powell, M.B.E.
- 1.2 To consider a request for a supplementary estimate and budget required to procure an Honorary Freedom Scroll and casket.

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 That Council agree that the Freedom of the District on Ceremonial occasions be conferred upon Mrs Ethel Powell M.B.E in the following form and the same be illuminated in scroll form and present to the recipient.

“To Mrs. Ethel Powell, M.B.E.

We, the Chairman and Councillors of the Council of the District of Cannock Chase in the County of Staffordshire, in pursuance of Section 249 of the Local Government Act, 1972, do by these presents confer upon Mrs Ethel Powell, M.B.E., the Honorary Freedom of the District in recognition of, and gratitude for, your tireless campaigning to improve the conditions and wellbeing of patients at Cannock Hospital and for residents of Cannock Chase.

The Common Seal of the Council of the District of Cannock Chase was hereunto Affixed the day of two thousand and thirteen”.

- 2.2 That the Common Seal of the Council be affixed to the Freedom Scroll.

- 2.3 That Council approve the supplementary estimate and budget required, as detailed in the financial implications, to host the ceremony and ceremonial regalia, be agreed and established.

3 Key Issues and Reasons for Recommendation

- 3.1 There are no existing resources to implement this proposal; Council would, therefore, have to determine a supplementary estimate to support the procurement of a decorated vellum scroll and casket and for inscribing the Honorary Freedom Board.

4 Relationship to Corporate Priorities

- 4.1 These proposals contribute to the promotion of a strong, healthy and just society as identified in the Cannock Chase Sustainable Community Strategy 2008 – 2020.

5 Report Detail

- 5.1 Under Section 249 of the Local Government Act, 1972, a Principal Council may, by resolution passed by not less than two thirds of the Members voting at a meeting of the Council specifically convened for the purpose, confer the Honorary Freedom of the District on Mrs. Ethel Powell, M.B.E. who has campaigned tirelessly since 1977 to help raise more than £1.5 million for medical care in Cannock Chase.
- 5.2 Freedom of the District is granted to persons of distinction and persons who have, in the opinion of Council rendered eminent services to the District. This does not carry any rights or responsibilities but is the most honourable distinction that a District Council can bestow.
- 5.3 A request for Council to consider bestowing the Freedom of the District has been received for Mrs. Ethel Powell, M.B.E., in acknowledgement of the work she has undertaken to improve the conditions and well-being of patients at Cannock Hospital.
- 5.4 Mrs. Powell, M.B.E., was a volunteer between 1974 and June, 2012, and with some dedicated friends formed the Chase Hospital League of Friends. As well as raising more than £1.5 m for medical and other equipment, Mrs Powell re-mortgaged her own home to install lifts at the then Chase Hospital that helped many in-patients to see the outside world, many of whom had not been outside for 10 to 20 years.
- 5.4 Council is requested to consider granting the Freedom of the District to Mrs. Ethel Powell, M.B.E., in recognition and gratitude for her tireless campaigning to raise funds that have helped to improve the conditions and wellbeing of patients at Cannock Hospital and for residents of Cannock Chase.

- 5.5 Due to Mrs. Powell's current health and wellbeing it is not considered appropriate to host a celebratory event to mark this occasion. Council is, therefore, requested to consider a supplementary estimate and budget required to commission the design and production of an Honorary Freedom Scroll and casket, which upon production would be awarded to Mrs. Powell in a private ceremony at her home.

6 Implications

6.1 Financial

The cost of commissioning the design and production of a hand decorated Velum scroll and casket will need to be met and will be between £1500 - £2000 dependent on wording and decoration.

The cost of inscribing the Honorary Freedom board will need to be met which will be up to £ 100.

There is currently no provision in the Budget for this expenditure and a supplementary estimate will be required.

6.2 Legal

Section 249 of the Local Government Act, 1972 gives the Council the power to admit as honorary freemen or freewomen of the District persons of distinction and persons who have rendered eminent service to the district. There is also a power in that section to expend reasonable sums on resending an address or a casket containing an address to the recipient. The power has to be exercised by resolution of the Council. The resolution must be passed at a special meeting of the Council called for that purpose by a majority of at least 2/3 of the members voting on it. The granting of the Freedom of the District does not confer any rights on the person or organisation.

6.3 Human Resources

None.

6.4 Section 17 (Crime Prevention)

None.

6.5 Human Rights Act

None.

6.6 Data Protection

None.

6.7 Risk Management

None.

6.8 **Equality & Diversity**

None.

6.9 **Best Value**

None

7 Appendices to the Report

None

Previous Consideration
Cabinet – Freedom Of District / Freedom Of Entry 19 July 2012
Council – Agenda , Recommendation From Cabinet 8 August 2012

Background Papers