



AWARDING THE FREEDOM OF THE TOWN POLICY

1. Introduction

The origins of Freemen in England go back in history to the guilds of the medieval merchants and craftsmen whose influence helped to found and stabilise urban communities. Freemen enjoyed a special status in boroughs which usually included the right to trade and vote at elections for, and sitting on, the Borough Council. The power to vote at parliamentary elections was usually confined to Freemen - the right to become a Freeman being dependent upon birth, purchase or by apprenticeship to a master craftsman who was himself a Freeman. The Municipal Corporations Act 1835 removed these privileges.

The Honorary Freedom of Boroughs Act 1885, (now replaced by the Local Government Act of 1972, section 249), permitted Councils to give the title of Honorary Freeman to 'persons of distinction and any persons who have rendered eminent services to the Borough'. This is the authority for the election of such Honorary Freemen today.

The title of Honorary Freeman is the highest honour that a Council can bestow although it carries no privileges and is purely an honour to recognise the significant and valuable services rendered to the Town by that person. However, those successful will be able to use the title of 'Freeman' and receive invitations to major civic events. Their name will also be displayed on a roll of honour in a prominent position in a civic building.

2. Procedure

- 2.1 A nomination can be made by a councillor or any resident of Melksham by sending notification to the Town Clerk. Nominations can be submitted by post or email.
- 2.2 Councillors will be notified of the nomination and asked to advise if they are in agreement and if they will be attending the special meeting.
- 2.3 Nominee to be contacted to make sure they would accept the honour.
- 2.4 A special meeting of the full council will be arranged, far enough ahead for a scroll to be ordered.
- 2.5 Agenda will be advised in the normal way through Modern.Gov
- 2.6 The nominee will be invited to attend the meeting.

3. At the meeting

- 3.1 The Town Mayor or Deputy Mayor will read out the motion and seek a proposer and seconder.
- 3.2 Members will vote and the motion will require a two-thirds majority of members present.



3.3 Once approved, the scroll will be signed by the Mayor and the Town Clerk and presented to the nominee.

3.4 Pictures can be taken following the presentation for publication on the Council's social media and, if appropriate, releasing to the press.

Application form attached as Appendix A



Appendix A

MELKSHAM TOWN COUNCIL

Freedom of the Town Nomination Form

Nominators Details

Name & Full Address:

Telephone _____

email _____

Nominees Details

Name & Full Address:

Other Details

Category of nomination (charity/voluntary/former councillor etc) and dates of service:

Are you related to the person you are nominating? Y/N



Reasons for Nomination

Please explain, in as much detail as possible, why you feel the nominee should receive this honour. Please complete on a separate sheet and attach to the completed application form.

Submit the form to Melksham Town Council, The Town Hall, Melksham SN12 6ES
Email: linda.roberts@melksham-tc.gov.uk