



Meeting of the

# **FREEDOM OF THE BOROUGH AD HOC PANEL**

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**Monday, 28 February 2011 at 6.00 p.m.**

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## **A G E N D A**

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### **VENUE**

**COMMITTEE ROOM 1, 1ST FLOOR, TOWN HALL, MULBERRY PLACE,  
5 CLOVE CRESCENT, LONDON, E14 2BG**

If you require any further information relating to this meeting, would like to request a large print, Braille or audio version of this document, or would like to discuss access arrangements or any other special requirements, please contact: Amanda Thompson, Democratic Services  
Tel: 0207 364 4651, Email: [amanda.thompson@towerhamlets.gov.uk](mailto:amanda.thompson@towerhamlets.gov.uk)

**LONDON BOROUGH OF TOWER HAMLETS**  
**FREEDOM OF THE BOROUGH AD HOC PANEL**

**Monday, 28 February 2011**

**6.00 p.m.**

**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

To receive any apologies for absence.

**2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (Pages 1 - 2)**

To note any declarations of interest made by Members, including those restricting Members from voting on the questions detailed in Section 106 of the Local Government Finance Act, 1992. See attached note from the Chief Executive.

**3. UNRESTRICTED MINUTES (Pages 3 - 6)**

To confirm as a correct record of the proceedings the unrestricted minutes of the ordinary meeting of the Freedom of the Borough Ad Hoc Panel held on 9 February 2011.

**4. UNRESTRICTED REPORTS FOR CONSIDERATION**

**4.1 Freedom of the Borough (Pages 7 - 12)**

**5. ANY OTHER UNRESTRICTED BUSINESS CONSIDERED TO BE URGENT**

**6. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

In view of the contents of the remaining items on the agenda, the Committee is recommended to adopt the following motion:

“That, under the provisions of Section 100A of the Local Government Act, 1972 as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) Act, 1985, the Press and Public be excluded from the remainder of the meeting for the consideration of the Section Two business on the grounds that it contains information defined as Exempt in Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government, Act 1972”.

**EXEMPT/CONFIDENTIAL SECTION (PINK)**

The Exempt / Confidential (Pink) Committee papers in the Agenda will contain information, which is commercially, legally or personally sensitive and should not be divulged to third parties. If you do not wish to retain these papers after the meeting,

please hand them to the Committee Officer present.

**7. RESTRICTED MINUTES**

**13 - 16**

To confirm as a correct record of the proceedings the restricted minutes of the ordinary meeting of the Freedom of the Borough Ad Hoc Panel held on 9 February 2011.

**8. RESTRICTED REPORTS FOR CONSIDERATION**

**17 - 20**

To consider nominations for Freedom of the Borough.

**9. ANY OTHER RESTRICTED BUSINESS CONSIDERED TO BE URGENT**

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# Agenda Item 2

## DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS - NOTE FROM THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

This note is guidance only. Members should consult the Council's Code of Conduct for further details. Note: Only Members can decide if they have an interest therefore they must make their own decision. If in doubt as to the nature of an interest it is advisable to seek advice **prior** to attending at a meeting.

### Declaration of interests for Members

Where Members have a personal interest in any business of the authority as described in paragraph 4 of the Council's Code of Conduct (contained in part 5 of the Council's Constitution) then s/he must disclose this personal interest as in accordance with paragraph 5 of the Code. Members must disclose the existence and nature of the interest at the start of the meeting and certainly no later than the commencement of the item or where the interest becomes apparent.

You have a **personal interest** in any business of your authority where it relates to or is likely to affect:

- (a) An interest that you must **register**
- (b) An interest that is not on the register, but where the well-being or financial position of you, members of your family, or people with whom you have a close association, is likely to be affected by the business of your authority more than it would affect the majority of inhabitants of the ward affected by the decision.

Where a personal interest is declared a Member may stay and take part in the debate and decision on that item.

**What constitutes a prejudicial interest?** - Please refer to paragraph 6 of the adopted Code of Conduct.

**Your personal interest will also be a prejudicial interest in a matter if (a), (b) and either (c) or (d) below apply:-**

- (a) A member of the public, who knows the relevant facts, would reasonably think that your personal interests are so significant that it is likely to prejudice your judgment of the public interests; AND
- (b) The matter does not fall within one of the exempt categories of decision listed in paragraph 6.2 of the Code; AND EITHER
- (c) The matter affects your financial position or the financial interest of a body with which you are associated; or
- (d) The matter relates to the determination of a licensing or regulatory application

The key points to remember if you have a prejudicial interest in a matter being discussed at a meeting:-

- i. You must declare that you have a prejudicial interest, and the nature of that interest, as soon as that interest becomes apparent to you; and
- ii. You must leave the room for the duration of consideration and decision on the item and not seek to influence the debate or decision unless (iv) below applies; and

- iii. You must not seek to improperly influence a decision in which you have a prejudicial interest.
- iv. If Members of the public are allowed to speak or make representations at the meeting, give evidence or answer questions about the matter, by statutory right or otherwise (e.g. planning or licensing committees), you can declare your prejudicial interest but make representations. However, you must immediately leave the room once you have finished your representations and answered questions (if any). You cannot remain in the meeting or in the public gallery during the debate or decision on the matter.

**LONDON BOROUGH OF TOWER HAMLETS**

**MINUTES OF THE FREEDOM OF THE BOROUGH AD HOC PANEL**

**HELD AT 8.00 P.M. ON WEDNESDAY, 9 FEBRUARY 2011**

**MEETING ROOM M78, 7TH FLOOR, TOWN HALL, MULBERRY PLACE, 5  
CLOVE CRESCENT, LONDON E14 2BG**

**Members Present:**

Councillor Motin Uz-Zaman (Chair)	(Chair of Council)
Councillor Abdul Asad	
Councillor Craig Aston	
Councillor Stephanie Eaton	(Leader, Liberal Democrat Group)
Councillor Denise Jones	
John Ludgate	(Deputy Lieutenant for Tower Hamlets)

**Other Councillors Present:**

**Officers Present:**

Kevan Collins	– (Chief Executive)
Isabella Freeman	– (Assistant Chief Executive - Legal Services, Chief Executive's)
John Williams	– (Service Head, Democratic Services, Chief Executive's)
Caroline Chalklin	– (Committee Officer, Chief Executives')

**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from the Mayor and Councillor Ahmed Omer.

**1.1 CO-OPTED MEMBER OF THE PANEL**

It was **resolved**: That Commander John Ludgate, the Representative Deputy Lieutenant for Tower Hamlets be co-opted to the Panel.

The decision was unanimous.

**2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

None made.

### **3. UNRESTRICTED REPORTS FOR CONSIDERATION**

#### **3.1 Honorary Freedom of the Borough**

Mr Williams presented the report, informing Members that the Honorary Freedom of the Borough was the highest award the Council could bestow, and was rarely given; the last award was in 1999. The award was approved by a 2/3<sup>rd</sup> majority of Council, and the meeting would then be followed by a reception in honour of the recipients. The criterion for the award was that the candidate had rendered exceptional service of the highest distinction to the borough and its residents. It was unusual to have a single nomination.

The following points were made:

- Councillor Jones commented that it would be cheaper to have more than one award
- Councillor Eaton said the request for the award could take place at the civic awards or the Annual Council for the reception
- The Chair indicated that there might not be a reception at Annual Council for the Municipal Year 2011/12
- Councillor Eaton suggested it could be presented at a meeting in the borough
- The Chair said that the award could be presented separately from the night at which Council agreed the award; this award could be presented at the Civic Awards ceremony
- Councillor Asad felt that there had not been much publicity for the award in the past, but there should be more publicity, so residents knew about the award and recipient
- Councillor Jones said that the Honorary Freedom of the City of London was quite low-key, no publicity and a private ceremony at the Guildhall accompanying the presentation of a scroll
- Councillor Aston expressed concern about the logistics at Budget Council
- Mr Williams suggested a Special Council meeting prior to the Budget Council meeting, but emphasised that there would need to be full agreement to the award prior to the Special Council meeting
- Councillor Eaton suggested that criteria should be laid down before receiving any nominations
- The Chair said that all the preceding awards of Honorary Freedom of the Borough had not been considered in relation to any written criteria
- Councillor Asad said that the criteria should be publicised for the public
- Ms Freeman said that the criteria would not be publicised for the public to apply it's a council matter
- The Chair said that it was for the Panel to decide on names to put forward and to ensure there was sufficient support amongst Members
- Commander Ludgate said that as only 25 people had received the award, it was more special than the Honorary Freedom of the City of London. The Panel might consider using the criteria used for national



awards: high value, probity, sustainability etc. The criteria could be found on the Greater London Lieutenancy website (<http://greaterlondonlieutenancy.org.uk>). The award would be recognised across all sections of the community and across the boundaries of Tower Hamlets. It was a huge honour

- Mr Williams reminded the panel that the decision is made by two thirds majority at council so when candidates were agreed at the panel then the parties needed to ensure that this would get party support at the council meeting.
- The chief executive suggested that there may be a conflict if businessmen are put forward if they have dealings with the borough. Those present agreed that this was a factor that needed to be considered. It was also agreed that any potential candidate would have to confirm they were able to accept the honour.
- Ms Freeman suggested that perhaps the Chair would invite all the councillors to put forward candidates based on the new criteria that will be adopted. This could be done within the next 2 weeks so a report back could come to the next meeting for decision.

**4. ANY OTHER UNRESTRICTED BUSINESS CONSIDERED TO BE URGENT**

**5. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

It was **Resolved:**

That pursuant to regulation 21(1)(b) of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2000, the press and public be excluded from the remainder of the meeting:

- (a) As it was likely, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted in Section Two of the agenda, that if members of the public were present during consideration of this business there would be disclosure of exempt information.
- Exempt information is defined in section 100I and, by reference, Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (“the 1972 Act”). To be exempt, information must fall within one of the categories listed in paragraphs 1 to 7 of Schedule 12A, must not fall within one of the excluded categories in paragraphs 8 and 9 and the public interest in maintaining the exemption must outweigh the public interest in disclosing the information.

**6. RESTRICTED REPORTS FOR CONSIDERATION**

**7. ANY OTHER RESTRICTED BUSINESS CONSIDERED TO BE URGENT**

The meeting ended at 8.45 p.m.

Chair, Councillor Motin Uz-Zaman  
Freedom of the Borough Ad Hoc Panel

# Agenda Item 4a

Committee <b>Freedom of the Borough Ad Hoc Panel</b>	Date <b>28 February 2011</b>	Classification <b>Unrestricted</b>	Report No.	Agenda Item No.
Report of: <b>Service Head, Democratic Services</b>		Title: <b>FREEDOM OF THE BOROUGH</b>		
Originating Officer(s): <b>John S. Williams/Amanda Thompson</b>		Ward(s) affected: <b>All</b>		

**Reason for Urgency:** This report was not available five clear working days before the meeting as required by statute unless there are reasons of urgency. The Chair is asked to agree that urgency does apply in relation to this report because it will be necessary to organise an Extraordinary Meeting of the Council to consider nomination(s) for the award of Freedom of the Borough, and allow sufficient time to plan the official awards ceremony if required.

## 1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 The Council is empowered by section 249(5) of the Local Government Act 1972 to admit as Honorary Freemen or Honorary Freewomen of the borough 'persons of distinction and persons who have in the opinion of the Council, rendered eminent services to the borough'.
- 1.2 The Council has established the Freedom of the Borough Ad Hoc Panel to consider any proposals relating to the granting of the Freedom and make recommendations.
- 1.3 The Panel held its first meeting on 9 February and gave its initial consideration to possible proposals.
- 1.4 The Panel were keen to ensure that all potential nominations for the award are brought forward at the same time before they make any recommendations, and so it was agreed that all Members of the Council would be written to and asked to suggest a person in accordance in accordance with the nomination criteria. A copy of the criteria is appended to this report.

## 2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That the Panel considers whether it wishes to co-opt additional non-voting members, as provided for in the Council's constitution, to assist in its deliberations;

- 2.2 That subject to 2.1 above, the Panel considers whether it wishes at this stage to make any recommendations to the Council regarding the award of the Freedom of the Borough in accordance with the nomination criteria; and
- 2.3 If the Panel does wish to make such recommendations, that the Panel resolve to exclude the public and press from the meeting to enable consideration of any individual nominations for the award.

### **3. THE FREEDOM OF THE BOROUGH**

- 3.1 Section 249(5) of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) provides for the Council of a London borough to 'admit to be honorary freemen of the [borough], persons of distinction and persons who have, in the opinion of the Council, rendered eminent services to the [borough]'.
- 3.2 The award of the honorary freedom does not in itself confer any rights on the recipient but conferring the title of Honorary Freeman or Honorary Freewoman is the highest honour that a Council of a borough can bestow and as such is given only rarely. In Tower Hamlets, no such award has been made since 1999.

#### **The process for awarding the Freedom of the Borough**

- 3.3 No Council body except the full Council itself may award the Freedom of the Borough and the 1972 Act requires that any decision to do so must be made 'by a resolution passed by not less than two-thirds of the members voting thereon at a meeting of the Council specially convened for the purpose with notice of the object.'
- 3.4 Following recommendations of the Constitution Working Party on the matter in October 2010, the Council has established the Freedom of the Borough Ad Hoc Panel to 'consider any proposals that may be made in due course relating to the granting of the Freedom of the Borough, including any nominations for that award, and to make recommendations'. The Panel has no delegated powers.
- 3.5 The Membership of the Panel as agreed by the Council comprises of 'Members of the Council to include the Chair of Council, the Mayor, any former Civic Mayors or Chairs of Council still serving as Councillors, and at least one representative of each political group on the Council. The Panel may co-opt additional non-voting members including other former Civic Mayors or Chairs of Council, or independent persons drawn from the business, community or public sectors. The Panel shall be chaired by the Chair of Council.'
- 3.6 In accordance with the above the Panel is asked to consider whether it wishes to co-opt any additional non-voting members to assist in its deliberations.
- 3.7 Once the Panel has identified a person or persons it wishes to propose for the award of the Freedom, it would be normal for further consultation to take place within the political groups to confirm that there is full support for the proposal(s)

before they are put for formal consideration by the Council, as any controversy or debate on the merits of the award at the Extraordinary Council Meeting would be highly embarrassing to the proposed recipient(s).

- 3.8 Although it is possible for the Council to agree to make an award of the Freedom of the Borough and for the award to be presented at a future date, traditionally the whole process takes place on the same day, with the proposed Freeman/women in attendance at the Extraordinary Council Meeting which resolves to make the award. The presentation of a scroll or other gift marking the Freedom is made immediately after the passing of the resolution and the meeting would normally be followed by a reception for Members and invited guests in honour of the new Honorary Freeman/women.

#### **4. COMMENTS OF THE CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER**

- 4.1 Section 249(6) of the 1972 Act empowers the Council to 'spend such reasonable sum as they think fit for the purpose of presenting an address or a casket containing an address to a person upon whom they have conferred the title of honorary alderman or admitted to be an honorary freeman of the [borough].'
- 4.2 Traditionally the Council has presented a sealed and illuminated certificate of the grant of the Honorary Freedom, incorporating a copy of the formal resolution and contained in a suitable casket; and has in all previous cases held a reception in honour of the recipient(s).
- 4.3 The total cost of the presentation and reception would be likely to be in the region of £5-6,000 for which there is currently no budget provision.

#### **5. CONCURRENT REPORT OF THE ASSISTANT CHIEF EXECUTIVE (LEGAL SERVICES)**

- 5.1 The legal requirements and implications of the proposals are contained in the body of the report.

#### **6. IMPLICATIONS FOR ONE TOWER HAMLETS**

- 6.1 The award of the Freedom of the Borough should reflect the exceptional contribution of the recipient(s) to the benefit of all sections of the community within the borough.

#### **7. SUSTAINABLE ACTION FOR A GREENER ENVIRONMENT (SAGE)**

- 7.1 There are no immediate SAGE implications arising from this report.

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT, 2000 (SECTION 97)**

**LIST OF "BACKGROUND PAPERS" USED IN THE PREPARATION OF THIS REPORT**

**Brief description of "background paper"**

**Name and telephone number of holder  
and address where open to inspection**

Freedom of the Borough File

John S. Williams, 020 7364 4204

## **London Borough of Tower Hamlets**

### **Freedom of the Borough: Nomination criteria**

The Council may admit as Honorary Freemen/women of the Borough 'persons of distinction and persons who have in the opinion of the Council, rendered eminent services to the borough' (Local Government Act 1972, section 249(5))

The Freedom of the Borough is the highest honour that the Council can bestow and will only be awarded on merit to exceptional persons. In considering whether to recommend a person or persons for admittance as a Freeman/woman, the Freedom of the Borough Ad Hoc panel will take into account whether the person has:-

- Demonstrated exceptional achievement or service to the community which is outstanding in its field
- Made a real difference in their field of work or their community
- Brought distinction to the borough or enhanced its reputation
- Exemplified sustained and selfless voluntary service
- Demonstrated innovation, entrepreneurship or exceptional business acumen which has delivered benefits to the borough
- Carried the respect of and inspired his/her peers
- Significantly improved the lot of those less able to help themselves or suffering disadvantage
- Promoted community cohesion
- Displayed moral courage and vision in making and delivering tough choices
- Contributed to the borough beyond the call of duty in a way that stands out above others.

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# Agenda Item 7

By virtue of paragraph(s) 1 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A  
of the Local Government Act 1972.

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# Agenda Item 8

By virtue of paragraph(s) 1 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A  
of the Local Government Act 1972.

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