

<b>Item No.</b> 2.	<b>Classification:</b> Open	<b>Date:</b> 22 May 2013	<b>Meeting Name:</b> Council Assembly (Extraordinary Meeting)
<b>Report title:</b>		Freedom of the Borough	
<b>Ward(s) or groups affected:</b>		All	
<b>From:</b>		Constitutional Steering Panel	

## RECOMMENDATION

1. That council assembly considers the recommendation from the constitutional steering panel (CSP) to confer the award of Freedom of the Borough to the nominees outlined in paragraphs 13 – 20 below.

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

2. The council has power under Section 249(5) of the Local Government Act 1972 to confer the title of “Freeman of the Borough” on persons who have, in the opinion of the council, rendered eminent services to the borough. For the purposes of the Act ‘person’ includes organisations. The constitution (3A.21) provides for council assembly to confer the title of Freedom of the Borough.
3. The council must agree such conferment by resolution passed by not less than two thirds of the members present at a meeting specially convened for that purpose with notice of the purpose being set out in the summons for the meeting.
4. The council has power under Section 249(6) to spend a reasonable sum as thought fit for the purpose of presenting an address or a casket containing an address to such Honorary Freeman.
5. The Honorary Freedom of the Borough is the highest award the council can bestow. Since 1965 Southwark has conferred the award on 39 recipients. On each occasion the council has considered nominations on individual merit.
6. Council assembly agreed on 30 October 2002 the following criteria for conferment of the Freedom of the Borough.
  - That nominations may be received from councillors, officers, MPs, outside organisations and members of the public who are on the council’s Electoral Register.
  - That nominations be limited to one per person/organisation and that they must show by example that the nominee is a “person of distinction who has rendered eminent services to the borough”.
  - That there be no restriction as to how often this award may be conferred.

7. Nominations are initially considered by the CSP which then makes recommendations to council assembly. CSP considered the nominations listed below on 8 May 2013. If council assembly agrees to confer the honour, then a ceremony for presentation of the Honorary Freedom of the Borough is arranged.
8. Previously this has been at a special meeting of the council but this year, given the nature of the nominees, it has been agreed to make it coincident with a "Ceremony of Remembrance and Recognition" for Armed Forces Day 2013 at The Imperial War Museum on Sunday 30 June 2013.
9. A framed certificate and Honorary Freedom Badge on ribbon (individuals) or commemorative plaque (organisations) will be presented to honorands.
10. The office of Honorary Freedom of the Borough does not convey with it any legal rights or responsibilities other than a ceremonial role at civic functions. Conditions apply to an award conferred on an organisation (Appendix A).
11. Four nominations for the Freedom of the Borough listed below have been received and need to be considered by this full council assembly.

## **KEY FACTORS FOR CONSIDERATION**

### **The 2nd Battalion of the Princess of Wales Royal Regiment (2 PWRR)**

12. The deputy leader of the council has nominated the above military battalion. The Princess of Wales Royal Regiment (PWRR) is the infantry regiment for the south east of England and 2 PWRR is one of its three battalions. 2 PWRR regiment is based in Woolwich Garrison, London, on short notice to reinforce the British Army on operations around the world. It specialises in dismounted combat and trains to fight in all types of terrain. It is often deployed on large-scale exercises to places such as Belize and The Falkland Islands. Members of the Battalion regularly travel to Pakistan, Nigeria, Brunei, Nepal, and Korea with training teams or on courses. Its members are constantly developing and preparing so that they are ready for any eventuality. 2 PWRR has also provided soldiers for public duties, supported the Royal Wedding in 2011, and been involved in many other high profile events in London and the Home Counties.
13. Although the regiment is based in Woolwich it has strong historic and contemporary connections with Southwark. It is the most decorated of all British Army regiments, with 57 Victoria Crosses including the Victoria Cross awarded to Lance Corporal Johnson Beharry in 2004 for his gallantry in Iraq. LC Beharry is now a resident of Southwark and received the Freedom of the Borough in May 2012. One of the military antecedents of the 2nd Battalion of the Princess of Wales Royal Regiment (2 PWRR) is the First Surrey Rifles, a voluntary Army Corps formed in 1859 in Peckham and moved to Flodden Road in 1864.

### **256 (City of London) Field Hospital (Volunteers)**

14. The deputy leader of the council has nominated the above military unit. 256 Field Hospital (Volunteers) is a Territorial Army unit based in Southwark and is the capital's only Army Medical Services Hospital. It recruits from most of the south east of England and trains on Tuesday evenings and approximately two weekends per month. Training could be anything from management of patients

in an operational setting or military map-reading. It offers high quality training and operational experience to motivated and enthusiastic volunteers.

15. Its regimental headquarters is co-located with “A Detachment” at Braganza Street, Walworth, and holds the lead command structure of the Regiment as well as elements of administration. Members of the 256 (City of London) Field Hospital regularly serve on frontline operations across the world.

#### **The Royal Marines Reserve (City of London)**

16. The deputy leader of the council has nominated the above military unit. Until 2010 the City of London Royal Marines Reserve (RMR London) was based at Old Jamaica Road in Bermondsey. RMR London is sub-divided into four detachments to enable reservists to be drawn from the main areas of population within South East England. The main detachment is RMR London which is located alongside the HQ of The Royal Marines at RM Barracks Wandsworth in Southfields.
17. RMR London is a commando trained General Reserve with the primary function of reinforcing the Regular Corps on operations and exercises in the UK or overseas, contributing to a world class navy, ready to fight and win. All members of the RMR have passed through the same rigorous Commando Course as their regular Royal Marines counterparts to earn the coveted Green Beret. There are approximately 600 Royal Marines Reservists distributed between the five RMR Centres within the UK, including The City of London. Approximately 10% of the RMR are working with the Regular Corps on long term attachments in all of the Royal Marines regular units. The Royal Marines Reserve (City of London) is now based in Southfields, having moved there when the lease on its base in Bermondsey expired in 2010.

#### **The London Irish Rifles: ‘D’ Company and The London Regiment**

18. The deputy leader of the council has nominated the above military regiment. The London Irish Rifles (LIR) is a volunteer Rifle Regiment with a distinguished history, and now forms 'D' (London Irish) Company of the London Regiment. They are currently based at Connaught House, Flodden Road in Camberwell. The London Regiment is the only Territorial Army (TA) Regiment in the Guards Division and provides infantry soldiers to reinforce the five regiments of Foot Guards on operations. It is the only TA Infantry Regiment based in London and over the last decade has maintained an unbroken presence on British military operations. More than 420 London Regiment soldiers have deployed to Northern Ireland, the Falklands, Bosnia, Macedonia, Kosovo, Croatia, Iraq and Afghanistan and more than 100 soldiers are currently training to support further deployments to Afghanistan.
19. The serving TA soldiers of the London Irish Rifles are reserve volunteers who train evenings and weekends and for a two week Battle Camp each year. They are proud to have sent soldiers to the Balkans, and also during the early stages of the Second Gulf War in the spring of 2003. They contributed troops to the wider London Regiment deployment of two composite companies (Cambrai and Messines) in Iraq in 2004, and also to Somme Company, which participated in operations in Afghanistan as part of wider NATO operations in that country.

The London Irish Rifles train on Tuesday evenings at the TA Centre on Flodden Road in Camberwell.

## RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

20. Occasional Honorary Freedom of the Borough ceremonies can be managed within existing staff and financial resources.
21. The cost of a framed scroll and commemorative plaque is currently in the region of £330.

## LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

22. Legal issues are outlined in the body of the report.

## BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Background Papers	Held At	Contact
CSP and council assembly Freedom of the Borough reports	Constitutional Team 160 Tooley Street London SE1 2QH	Lesley John 020 7525 228

## APPENDICES

No.	Title
Appendix A	Conditions of Award

## AUDIT TRAIL

<b>Lead Officer</b>	Gerri Scott, Strategic Director for Housing & Community Services	
<b>Report Author</b>	Michael Cleere, Civic Engagement Manager	
<b>Version</b>	Final	
<b>Dated</b>	9 May 2013	
<b>Key decision?</b>	No	
<b>CONSULTATION WITH OTHER OFFICERS / DIRECTORATES / CABINET MEMBER</b>		
<b>Officer title</b>	<b>Comments sought</b>	<b>Comments included</b>
Strategic Director for Housing and Community Services	Yes	Yes
Director of Legal Services	No	No
Strategic Director of Finance and Corporate Services	No	No
<b>Cabinet Member</b>	No	No
<b>Date final report sent to Constitutional Team</b>	9 May 2013	