

31 January 2024		ITEM: 3
Extraordinary Full Council		
Freedom of the Borough		
Wards and communities affected: None	Key Decision: Non-Key	
Report of: Dave Smith, Chief Executive		
Accountable Assistant Director: Not applicable		
Accountable Director: Asmat Hussain, Interim Director of Law and Governance & Monitoring Officer		
This report is Public		

Executive Summary

This report sets out the case for conferring the ceremonial status of 'Freedom of the Borough' to the named individuals.

1. Recommendation(s)

- 1.1 **To confer the award of Freedom of the Borough on the Reverend Canon Darren Barlow**

2. Introduction and Background

- 2.1 In accordance with section 249(5) of the Local Government Act 1972, Members are able to confer the award of Freedom of the Borough on people they deem appropriate.

- 2.2 Section 249(5) of the Local Government Act 1972 provides for:

Subject as follows, a relevant authority may admit to be honorary freemen or honorary freewomen of the place or area for which it is the authority—

(a) Persons of distinction, and

(b) Persons who have, in the opinion of the authority, rendered eminent services to that place or area.

- 2.3 Freedom of the Borough is the highest honour that the Council can bestow on any individual or organisation. In past years, Freedom of the Borough has been conferred upon the following organisations and individuals:

- The Thurrock Branch of the Burma Association (26 November 2008)
- Port of Tilbury Police (25 September 2002)
- Mrs. Dorothy Coker (26 September 2001)
- Royal Anglian Regiment (18 July 1990)
- 215 Essex Squadron (28 June 1986)
- Revd John Guest, Father Brian O'Shea and Father Paul Dynan (30 September 2021)

2.4 At 25 October 2023's Full Council meeting, Members agreed they wished to confer the freedom of the borough to Revd Canon Barlow.

3. Issues, Options and Analysis of Options

3.1 It is the current practice of the Council for recipients of Freedom of the Borough to be invited to civic events, such as Annual Council, the Civic Dinner and the Civic Awards Ceremony.

4. Reasons for Recommendation

4.1 The named individual has made a significant contribution to the civic and pastoral life of Thurrock. Awarding Freedom of the Borough is a suitable and befitting recognition the Council can make for their work.

4.2 Reverend Canon Barlow took up post of Team Rector of the Grays Thurrock Team Ministry in the summer of 2006, this role involved him having oversight of four churches (Grays, Little Thurrock, West Thurrock & Chafford Hundred) but with particularly Grays Parish Church. In early summer 2011, he was asked by the Bishop of Chelmsford to take on the additional role as Area Dean of Thurrock. This has meant that Reverend Cannon Barlow has a leadership oversight of all of the clergy and Church of England churches in Thurrock of which there is 23. Furthermore, in 2021 he became Priest-in-Charge for Chadwell St Mary. Within the wider community he has held various roles in the local community including Chaplain to Grays Athletic FC, Thurrock Scouts, the Grays Thurrock branch of the Royal British Legion, Palmer's College, governor at Quarry Hill, Belmont Castle and Palmer's College and was the Church of England representative on the Children's O & S committee for about six years. He was first asked to become Mayor's Chaplain in 2010 and has since served Ann Cheale, Yash Gupta, Tony Fish, Steve Liddiard, Sue Gray, Tunde Ojetola, Barbara Rise, Terry Piccolo, Sue Shinnick, James Halden and Sue Little.

5. Consultation (including Overview and Scrutiny, if applicable)

5.1 Not applicable.

6. Impact on corporate policies, priorities, performance and community impact

6.1 Granting the Freedom of the Borough to an individual or organisation allows Members to formally recognise exceptional contributions to the civic life of Thurrock and promotes the work and activities of people in the community.

7. Implications

7.1 Financial

Implications verified by: **Rosie Hurst**
Interim Finance Manager (30/11/23)

The financial implications resulting from this is expected to be contained within current budgets.

7.2 Legal

Implications verified by: **Jayne Middleton-Albooye**
Interim Head of Legal Services and Deputy Monitoring Officer (29/11/23)

The power to confer this award is set out at paragraph 2.1 above. Section 249 (5) states that the decision to confer the award should 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.

7.3 Diversity and Equality

Implications verified by: **Becky Lee**
Team Manager – Community Development & Equalities (01/12/23)

There are no diversity or equality implications arising from this report.

7.4 **Other implications** (where significant) – i.e. Staff, Health Inequalities, Sustainability, Crime and Disorder, or Impact on Looked After Children

None

8. **Background papers used in preparing the report** (including their location on the Council's website or identification whether any are exempt or protected by copyright):

- None.

9. Appendices to the report

- None.

Report Author:

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Head of Democratic, Scrutiny and Member Services

Legal Services