



RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL
COUNCIL

24TH NOVEMBER 2021

NOMINATIONS FOR FREEDOM OF THE COUNTY BOROUGH

REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR OF DEMOCRATIC SERVICES & COMMUNICATION

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to advise and seek Members' approval in respect of the recommendations of the Freedom of the Borough Working Group, which met on the 10th May 2021 and 11th October 2021.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Members:

- 2.1 Support the recommendations of the Freedom of the Borough Working Group in awarding the accolade of Freedom of the County Borough to:
- I. Neil Jenkins
 - II. Key Workers

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Freedom of the Borough is the highest accolade that the County Borough can bestow and is usually granted for outstanding service to, or achievement associated with, the County Borough of Rhondda Cynon Taf. It is generally considered that the number of people receiving this status should be few in number to maintain the importance of the accolade. To date, the Freedom of the County Borough of Rhondda Cynon Taf has been awarded to the Royal Welsh Regiment, Stuart Burrows, the Miners of South Wales, Elaine Morgan OBE, the Welsh Guards and Bernard Baldwin MBE, Matthew James, Dai Dower, The Cory Band and David Roberts CBE and RAF St Athan.
- 3.2 Conferring the Freedom of the Borough is a function of Full Council, which delegated the consideration and decision on nominations to a working group chaired by the Mayor, exercised by this group. The

Group is to then submit a recommendation to Full Council, which will decide on whether to award the Freedom of the County Borough to any individual or organisation.

4. PROPOSAL

- 4.1 At the meeting on the 10th May 2021 Members of the Working Group gave consideration to the nominations received.
- 4.2 Following consideration of the nominations put forward to the working group for the reasons outlined within the report, the group unanimously agreed to recommend to Council that the following nominations be awarded the accolade of Freedom of the Borough for 2020 – 2021:
 - I. Neil Jenkins for his services to rugby
 - II. Key Workers for their selfless hard work and dedication that saved the lives of many through the Covid pandemic.
- 4.3 In respect of the accolade to Key workers it was suggested that a standalone outdoor event is taken forward, as a ‘thank you’ for their work and dedication throughout the pandemic. This event will be taken forward in the next Municipal year in accordance with Welsh Government and the Councils own covid safety standards / requirements.

5. CONSULTATION

- 5.1 The nominations have been considered by members of the Freedom of the Borough Council Working Group comprising the Mayor (Chair), the Leaders of each political group and the Cabinet Member for Council Business, with unanimous agreement as to the recommendations put forward for Council consideration.

6. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS INCLUDING SOCIO ECONOMIC DUTY / WELSH LANGUAGE IMPLICATION

- 6.1 It is important that the award of the Freedom of the Borough should reflect the exceptional contribution of those nominated as it is widely recognised that the Freedom of the Borough is the highest accolade that the County Borough can bestow.
- 6.2 Equality and diversity implications have been considered as part of the Working Group’s recommendations as well as any welsh language implications.

7 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 There will be some costs aligned to the proposals, if the Key worker event is agreed to be taken forward, although it is proposed that this is taken out of existing budgets.

8. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS OR LEGISLATION CONSIDERED

8.1 Not applicable.

9. LINKS TO THE COUNCILS CORPORATE PLAN / OTHER CORPORATE PRIORITIES.

9.1 The report links to all of the Councils corporate priorities in respect of people, places and prosperity as we acknowledge the work of specific individuals linked to the County Borough and look to provide a 'thank you' gesture public event (when covid restrictions allow) which will hopefully be an opportunity for communities to come together after a difficult year).

10. CONCLUSION

10.1 Rhondda Cynon Taf has a proud record of recognising and honouring those who have given extraordinary service to the County Borough and has a well-established tradition of conferring the Freedom of the Borough on worthy candidates. This accolade is highly prestigious and is intentionally relatively scarcely awarded to preserve its importance.

10.2 Due to the current climate and social distancing restrictions greater consideration will need to be taken forward in respect of how these accolades are to be awarded.

10.3 The Freedom of the Borough Working Group has consulted on the nominations received and have put forward their recommendations for Council Consideration.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

AS AMENDED BY

THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985

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Background Papers