

# **CHAPEL EN LE FRITH PARISH COUNCIL**

## **POLICY ON GRANTING OF FREEDOM OF THE PARISH**

(Adopted February 2024)

### **1. Introduction**

This policy sets out the criteria, procedure and arrangements relating to the granting of Freedom of the Parish to individuals, and the selection and appointment process for Honorary Freemen/Freewomen.

Granting the Freedom of the Parish is the highest honour that the Parish Council can bestow. Although it carries no powers, rights or privileges, those who receive the honour are able to use the title of 'Honorary Freeman or Freewoman of the Parish of Chapel en le Frith'.

This award should be given sparingly by the Parish Council, so as not to undermine its status and value.

### **2. Legislation**

Section 249 of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended, permits a Parish Council to admit to be Honorary Freemen/Freewomen of the Parish:

- i) persons of distinction, and/or
- ii) persons who have, in the opinion of the Council, rendered eminent service within the area of the Parish.

A resolution to make such an award must be passed:

- a) at a meeting of the Parish Council that has been convened especially for the purpose and where notice of the object of the meeting to pass a motion relating to the granting of the award has been given, and
- b) by not less than two-thirds of the members of the Council who vote on it.

### **3. Criteria**

It would be inappropriate to set out strict judging criteria, beyond those in section 2 above, when considering candidates for this award. However:

- the person nominated must not be able to be considered, by a reasonable third party, to bring the Parish or Parish Council into disrepute.
- the award will not be granted posthumously unless in exceptional circumstances.
- the award will not be granted to a serving parish councillor.

### **4. Costs**

Section 249 of the Local Government Act 1972 allows a Council to spend "such reasonable sum as it thinks fit" on presenting an address to an Honorary Freeman/Freewoman. A commemorative scroll or framed certificate will normally be presented.

### **5. Procedure for the granting of Freedom of the Parish**

- a. It is expected that a nominee for award of Freedom of the Parish under section 2(ii) above will have given extensive and distinguished service to the community, e.g. service to other organisations, voluntary and community groups, in a largely

voluntary capacity. Freedom of the Parish should not be awarded simply in recognition of longevity of service; instead the nominee must have made an outstanding contribution, demonstrably head-and-shoulders above the contributions made by most other people.

- b. Nominations must be made by a serving Parish Councillor (though any local resident may approach a Councillor to recommend a nomination). The nominating Councillor must be able, when the matter is later considered, to demonstrate to the Council that the nomination meets the laid-down criteria.
- c. It is imperative that all nominations for Honorary Freeman/Freewoman are treated in the strictest confidence, and any disclosure will render the application invalid. The nominee must not be informed that they have been nominated, as it is not fair to raise expectations, in case they are then not met.
- d. Once a nomination is received, it will be considered by a meeting of the full Council as 'restricted business' (thus excluding press and members of the public), applying the provisions of section 2(a) & (b) above. The names of nominees must not appear on the agenda.
- e. A Council resolution to make an award should recite the particular grounds for doing so in respect of each successful candidate. The Council's decision on the award of Freedom of the Parish is final, and no discussion or correspondence will be entered into on it.
- f. There is no limit on the numbers of nominations or holders of the title, but the intention of the nomination criteria is that it is unlikely that the honour will be frequently awarded; it will therefore remain distinctive. The award is conferred for the life of the title-holder, but it is not hereditary.
- g. Following a decision by the Council to award Freedom of the Parish, a nominated Councillor will informally enquire of the proposed recipient as to (i) whether they are willing to accept the award and (ii) whether they know of any reason why their acceptance could be considered by a reasonable third-party to bring the Parish or Parish Council into disrepute.
- h. The title of Honorary Freeman/Freewoman of the Parish of Chapel-en-le Frith will be formally awarded to a successful nominee by the Chair of the Parish Council. If appropriate, this presentation will be at the Annual Parish Meeting.
- i. The roll of Honorary Freeman/Freewomen shall be maintained by the Parish Clerk and be publicly displayed.

## **6. Annual reminder**

While the procedure in section 5 above may be applied at any time of the year, there will additionally be an annual agenda item at November's Council meeting to remind councillors to consider possible nominees, as this (see section 5(h) above) will be consistent with making presentation(s) at the next Annual Parish Meeting.

(End)