

South Willesborough and Newtown Community Council

Draft Honorary Freeperson Scheme Policy

- Recommendation Members agree the draft policy for Honorary Freeperson Scheme Policy

Background

POLICY STATEMENT From 12 January 2010, all local councils may exercise powers to confer the title of “honorary freeman” or “honorary freewoman” or to be in line with our gender neutral policy Freeperson to persons of distinction and those who, in the council’s opinion, have rendered eminent services to the council’s area (section 249(5) and (6) of the 1972 Act). From time to time, members of the community demonstrate outstanding commitment and contribution to the wellbeing of the Ward and it is recognised that their efforts should be acknowledged. The Council will do this, in special circumstances that meet the criteria of this policy, by awarding to an individual the title of ‘Honorary Freeperson) of the Ward of SWAN’. This honour will be awarded only on rare and exceptional occasions.

SERVICE The nominee may have given extensive and eminent service to the Swan CC and its local community (e.g. service to other organisations and voluntary and community groups) in a largely voluntary capacity. The nominee must have made an outstanding contribution to the Ward such that the nominee’s contribution can be seen to stand above the contributions made by most other people.

NOMINATION CRITERIA The following will be taken into account when consideration is given to granting the honour of Honorary Freeperson of the Ward • Preference will be given to a person who performs in a voluntary capacity, but this should not preclude the honour being awarded to a person whose dedication and contribution is significantly above that expected from their occupation. • All nominees should have carried out their largely voluntary roles for a period of 2 years, although in extraordinary circumstances, the Council may consider granting an honour for a lesser period of time. • Nominees need not necessarily be residents of SWAN • The award will not be restricted to Councillors or Council staff. • Any nominated Community Councillor should have retired from the post. The contribution to the wellbeing of the community must involve one or more of the following factors:- • A significant allocation of the person's time in serving members of the community for the improvement of their wellbeing. • The promotion, achievement and/or delivery of community services in which a real personal contribution has been made. • Whilst difficult to define, the contribution must be outstanding in that it can be seen to stand above the contributions of most other persons.

NOMINATION PROCEDURE

1. Nominations must be made to the Clerks in the strictest confidence without the nominee’s knowledge. Any resident or elector of the may make a nomination but it must be sponsored by a Community Councillor.
2. Nominations must be made in writing to the Clerk. The submission should be evidence-based by outlining the voluntary service provided by the individual to the community and any other examples of ‘community spirit’ to justify the honour. On receipt of a nomination, it will be circulated to all Councillors for confidential consideration.
3. Councillors’ reasons for any objection to a nomination must be given. If the Councillors are in agreement that the nominee should be made an Honorary Freeperson of the Ward, the nominee will be invited to accept the honour. If agreed, the nomination will then be put before Council and a formal vote taken, again in confidence.
4. No fewer than two-thirds of the Member Councillors must agree the nomination.
5. The decisions of the Council on all nominations (whether affirmative or negative) are final.

ENTITLEMENTS

Any person declared an Honorary Freeperson of the Ward may designate himself/herself ‘Honorary Freeperson of the Ward of SWAN’. The award shall be made at a small ceremony which may take place at a Council meeting or Annual Meeting of Electors. A scroll will be presented to the recipient. The award does not confer on any recipient any entitlements to attend, participate in meetings of the Community council, or carry out any role on behalf of the council, or bestow any other entitlements, but is intended to be a recognition of the valuable contribution made by that person to the local community.

LIMITATION ON HOLDERS OF AWARD At any one time, a maximum of three persons, unless otherwise decided by the Council, may hold the title ‘Honorary Freeperson of the Ward of SWAN’.