
Report to:	Council	Date of Meeting:	17 November 2016
Subject:	Honorary Freedom of the Borough – HMS Mersey	Wards Affected:	All
Report of:	Head of Regulation and Compliance		
Is this a Key Decision?	No	Is it included in the Forward Plan?	No
Exempt/Confidential	No		

Purpose/Summary

Under Section 249(5) of the Local Government Act 1972, the Council has the power to grant the Freedom of the Borough to a person or a service unit of distinction who have rendered eminent service to the Borough and this report sets out proposals for the Royal Navy Ship, HMS Mersey to be granted the Honorary Freedom of the Borough.

Recommendation(s)

- (1) In accordance with Section 249 (5) of the Local Government Act 1972, this Council wishes to place on record its high appreciation of, and the debt of gratitude of the Borough to HMS Mersey and in the light of the long and honourable association between the Borough of Sefton, the Royal Navy and HMS Mersey, the Council resolves that the Honorary Freedom of the Borough be conferred on HMS Mersey and that it be granted the right, privilege, honour and distinction of marching through the streets of the Borough on all ceremonial occasions with colours flying, bands playing, drums beating and bayonets fixed at an Extra-ordinary Council meeting to be held on a date to be determined at Bootle Town Hall; and
- (2) the Head of Regulation and Compliance be authorised to take all of the necessary actions associated with (1) above and arrange a civic reception for the Officers and Crew of HMS Mersey and invited guests to take place at the rising of the Extra-ordinary Council meeting in Bootle Town Hall.

How does the decision contribute to the Council's Corporate Objectives?

	<u>Corporate Objective</u>	<u>Positive Impact</u>	<u>Neutral Impact</u>	<u>Negative Impact</u>
1	Creating a Learning Community	x		
2	Jobs and Prosperity		x	
3	Environmental Sustainability		x	
4	Health and Well-Being		x	
5	Children and Young People		x	
6	Creating Safe Communities		x	
7	Creating Inclusive Communities		x	
8	Improving the Quality of Council Services and Strengthening Local Democracy		x	

Reasons for the Recommendation:

To honour HMS Mersey for its eminent service to the Royal Navy and the people of Sefton.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:

None

What will it cost and how will it be financed?

(A) Revenue Costs

The maximum cost of £2,000 associated with the award of the Freedom of the Borough will be met from the existing Mayoral Hospitality revenue budget.

(B) Capital Costs

None

Implications:

The following implications of this proposal have been considered and where there are specific implications, these are set out below:

Financial	
Legal	Section 249 (5) of the Local Government Act 1972
Human Resources	

Equality

- | | | |
|----|--|-------------------------------------|
| 1. | No Equality Implication | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. | Equality Implications identified and mitigated | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. | Equality Implication identified and risk remains | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Impact of the Proposals on Service Delivery:

None

What consultations have taken place on the proposals and when?

The Head of Corporate Resources (FD 4368/16) and Head of Regulation and Compliance (LD.3651/16) have been consulted and any comments have been incorporated into the report.

Implementation Date for the Decision

Immediately following the Council meeting.

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Background Papers:

There are no background papers available for inspection

1. Introduction/Background

- 1.1 Under Section 249(5) of the Local Government Act 1972, the Council has the power to grant the Freedom of the Borough to a person or a service unit of distinction who have rendered eminent service to the Borough and it is proposed that the Royal Navy Ship, HMS Mersey be granted the Honorary Freedom of the Borough.
- 1.2 The conferring of the Freedom of the Borough upon any individual or service unit is the highest honour the Council can bestow and when the Freedom of the Borough is granted to a service unit, they are given the right, privilege, honour and distinction of marching through the streets of the Borough on all ceremonial occasions with colours flying, bands playing, drums beating and bayonets fixed.
- 1.3 Past recipients of the Freedom of the Borough have been:
 - 2004 - Donald "Ginger" McCain
 - 2006 - James Carragher

The Freedom of the Borough (Freedom of Entry) has also been bestowed on the following Service Units:

- 1982 - No. 238 (Sefton) Squadron, 156 Regiment, Royal Corps of Transport, which was subsequently succeeded by No. 238 (Sefton) Squadron, 156 (North West) Transport Regiment, Royal Logistic Corps (Volunteers) in 2001
- 2011 - RAF Woodvale

2. HMS Mersey

- 2.1 HMS Mersey was affiliated to the Borough of Sefton by the Royal Navy in May 2004 when the ship was commissioned because Captain Frederic John Walker's escort ships were based in Bootle during the Battle of the Atlantic and also because the memorabilia from that time is on display at Bootle Town Hall.
- 2.2 The Captain and Officers of HMS Mersey always make a courtesy visit upon the Mayor of Sefton when the ship visits Merseyside and they are always pleased and honoured to see the battle ensigns, paintings and other memorabilia displayed in the Council Chamber associated with Captain Frederick John Walker and other Naval ships. The Mayor is always invited to attend a formal dinner on the ship on its courtesy visit.

- 2.3 HMS Mersey is one of four River class patrol vessels. She patrols the waters of the UK and up to 200 miles in the Atlantic ensuring that fishing boats and trawlers stick to internationally-agreed quotas.
- 2.4 The Council is requested to grant the Freedom of the Borough to HMS Mersey in recognition of the maritime history of Bootle and to ensure that a unit from each of the three Armed Services has been granted the honour of the Honorary Freedom of the Borough.

3. Conferment of Freedom of the Borough

- 3.1 In order to confer the Freedom of the Borough upon an individual or service the Council would need to pass a resolution by not less than two-thirds of the Members voting thereon at a meeting of the Council specially convened for the purpose, where notice of the object of the meeting has been given.
- 3.2 If the Council was minded to grant the Freedom of the Borough to HMS Mersey, the Captain of the ship and the Regional Naval Commander would be advised and arrangements made for the Freedom to be bestowed upon the ship on her next operational visit to Merseyside.
- 3.3 Following the Extraordinary Council meeting, the crew of HMS Mersey would then march through the streets of the Bootle Town Centre to Bootle Town Hall with colours flying, bands playing, drums beating and bayonets fixed.
- 3.4 A scroll bestowing the honour would need to be ordered and produced, and arrangements made for a civic reception for the crew of HMS Mersey, and invited guests to take place at the rising of the Extraordinary Council meeting and the March through Bootle Town Centre. The costs of the scroll and reception could be financed from the Mayoral Hospitality budget provision.