

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL
MUNICIPAL YEAR 2015-2016.

Council
23rd March 2016

Agenda Item 8

NOMINATION FOR FREEDOM OF THE COUNTY BOROUGH.
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REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

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POTENTIAL NOMINATION FOR FREEDOM OF THE BOROUGH

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 9th March, 2016.

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 Mr David William 'Dai' Dower MBE and to Mr Matthew James.
- 2.2 Support the Working Group's recommendation of taking forward the launch of a 'Rhondda Cynon Taf Citizen Award'.
- 2.3 Subject to agreement to 2.1 and 2.2 of the report, to utilise the 'Rhondda Cynon Taf Citizen Award' ceremony to bestow the accolade of Freedom of the Borough to Mr Dower and Mr James, at a date to be agreed.

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.

- 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 9th March, 2016 Members of the Working Group gave consideration to the following nominations received:

- Dai Dower
- Matthew James
- Sir Tom Jones.

- 4.2 Following consideration of the nominations put forward for the reasons outlined in the report, the group unanimously agreed to recommend to Council at its meeting on the 23rd March, 2016 that both Dai Dower and Matthew James be awarded the accolade of Freedom of the Borough.

5 MAYOR'S RHONDDA CYNON TAF CITIZEN AWARD – GOING FORWARD.

- 5.1 At the meeting of the Working Group, the group also considered the proposal to launch a 'Rhondda Cynon Taf Citizen Award' for the reasons outlined below:

5.1.1 It is acknowledged that The Mayor of Rhondda Cynon Taf meets many helpful and considerate residents every day during his/her role, however many go unnoticed or without acknowledgement of the selfless yet important work they undertake. With so many individuals undertaking selfless acts for the good of the community or others without any financial motive – it is felt there is an opportunity to set up the 'Rhondda Cynon Taf Citizen Award' as a means of recognition.

5.1.2 The intention would therefore be to launch a 'Rhondda Cynon Taf Citizen Award' in the near future, which will look to recognise and honour County Borough residents for their selfless hard work within their local communities and /or to recognise a resident's outstanding contribution and achievements within their field.

- 5.1.3 It is proposed that this scheme will take the form of an annual recognition/awards event by the Mayor and will run alongside the bestowing of the Freedom of the Borough on worthy candidates.

- 5.2 Members of the Working Group spoke positively in respect of the proposal to launch a 'Rhondda Cynon Taf Citizen Award' for the reasons outlined within the report and spoke of the cost savings that could be achieved by recognising all worthy candidates for the citizen award, the Freedom of the Borough accolade and the potential of including the Edward Thomas Charity award as a category at the one event where possible.

- 5.3 The Group unanimously agreed to recommend to Council 'to Support the recommendation of taking forward the launch of a 'Rhondda Cynon Taf Citizen Award'.

- 5.4 It was proposed that if taken forward, the first award ceremony would be taken forward before the Council Annual General Meeting in May, 2016.

6 CONCLUSION

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.

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