

**AGENDA ITEM 2****RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL****FREEDOM OF THE BOROUGH WORKING GROUP****9<sup>TH</sup> MARCH, 2016.****REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE****Author: Christian Hanagan, Service Director, Cabinet & Public Relations.  
(01443 424005)****POTENTIAL NOMINATION FOR FREEDOM OF THE BOROUGH****1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

- 1.1 To enable the Group to consider the nominations received for the Freedom of the Borough and subsequently make a recommendation to Full Council

**2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is recommended that Members:

- 2.1 Note and consider the three nominations received
- 2.2 Decide on whether or not, and if so how, it wishes to proceed with the nominations outlined in the report in respect of the Freedom of the Borough, which would then be decided upon by Full Council
- 2.3 Support the future proposals in respect of the launch of a 'Rhondda Cynon Taf Citizen Award'

**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 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 Borough to any individual or organisation.

#### **4. NOMINATIONS RECEIVED**

##### 4.1 The following nominations have been received:

###### Dai Dower

David William "Dai" Dower MBE, from Abercynon, is one of the most successful Welsh boxers of all time as a former British, Empire and European Flyweight boxing champion. During his career he also boxed for Great Britain in the 1952 Olympics and had a world title fight in 1957. Shortly before his final fight he took up the position of sports master at Ringwood Grammar School in Bournemouth. He became Head of Sport at Bournemouth University, a position he held for twenty one years, and in June 1998 he became the recipient of an MBE, awarded for his years of teaching sport to children.

###### Matthew James

Matthew James, from Trehafod was holidaying with his fiancée in the Sousse Resort, Tunisia when on the 26<sup>th</sup> June, 2015 a gunman opened fire on the Beach resort, killing 38 tourists. During the attack he used his body as a human shield to save his fiancée and was shot three times in the shoulder, chest and hip while protecting her. His fiancée Sarah Wilson believes that his bravery saved her life and ensured that the children's young family (who were at home at the time of the attacks) were not left without both parents. The Couple flew back home on the 28<sup>th</sup> June, 2015 and Mr James is recovering from his injuries.

###### Sir Tom Jones.

Sir Thomas Jones Woodward OBE, originally from 57 Kingsland Terrace, Treforest, Pontypridd is a welsh singer and actor known by his stage name 'Tom Jones'. He became one of the most popular vocalists to emerge from the mid-1960s and has sold over 100 million records throughout his career, including 36 top 40 hits in the UK and 19 in the US. He was awarded an OBE in 1999 and received a kingship from the Queen for 'services to music' in 2006. Mr Jones now resides in Los Angeles.

#### **5 RHONDDA CYNON TAF CITIZEN AWARD – GOING FORWARD.**

##### 5.1 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 ‘Good Citizen Award’ as a means of recognition.

- 5.2 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.
- 5.3 It is proposed that this scheme will take the form of an annual recognition/awards event and will run alongside the bestowing of the Freedom of the Borough on worthy candidates.

## **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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