



RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

FREEDOM OF THE BOROUGH WORKING GROUP

15th FEBRUARY 2018

POTENTIAL NOMINATION FOR FREEDOM OF THE BOROUGH

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF CABINET & PUBLIC RELATIONS IN CONSULTATION WITH THE MAYOR, COUNCILLOR M TEGG

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1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 To enable the Committee 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 nomination received
- 2.2 To consider recommending conferring the Freedom of the Borough on the nominee, to Full Council

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, Bernard Baldwin MBE, Elaine Morgan OBE, the Welsh Guards, Matthew James, Dai Dower, The Cory Band and David Roberts CBE

4. NOMINATIONS RECEIVED

- 4.1 The following nomination has been received:

ROYAL AIR FORCE - RAF ST ATHENS

The Royal Air Force, the world's first independent air force, was created on the 1st April 1918. "The World's first independent Air force was born in a battle, created for a single purpose – to defend the skies over Britain"

Wales and the Royal Air Force have a relationship steeped in history. It was the Welsh Prime Minister at the time, David Lloyd George who signed on the dotted line to establish the RAF, the famous bouncing bomb of the Dambusters was tested in the Welsh Elan Valley and factory workers at Broughton, adjacent to RAF Hawarden, in Flintshire, built the Lancaster plane. Closer to home RAF St Athens the No 4 School of Technical Training is situated within MOD St Athans near Llantwit Major in the Vale of Glamorgan, and is where the Royal Air Force's non-aircraft ground engineering technicians are trained.

St Athens was formed as the new school of Technical Training (to be known as No 4), on the 1 September 1938. Still to this day the School provides continuation training for Service personnel of all three Services and MOD Civilian Staff. It is committed to training students to become highly skilled professionals in their chosen Trade and developing them as individuals, in order to make them effective and self reliant members of today's Air Force.

To mark the centenary of the RAF and the 80th Birthday of RAF St Athens it is proposed that the accolade of the Freedom of the Borough be bestowed.

5. GOOD CITIZEN AWARDS

- 5.1 During the 2015/16 Municipal Year the then Mayor, County Borough Councillor Barry Stephens initiated the Mayor's Good Citizen Awards to recognise the achievements and contributions made by local residents to their communities. As agreed at Council, the selection of the recipients for the Good Citizen awards would fall under the remit of the Freedom of the Borough Working Group.
- 5.2 The publicity campaign for this event, seeking nominations will commence during February through to March, following which a further meeting of this Working Group will be scheduled to consider the nominations received.

6. CONCLUSION

- 6.1 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.