

Cheltenham Borough Council

Council – 20 May, 2024

Appointment of Honorary Freeman

Accountable member:

Not applicable

Accountable officer:

Chief Executive – Gareth Edmundson

Ward(s) affected:

None directly

Key Decision: No

Executive summary:

Council may confer the title of Honorary Freeman on persons who it considers have rendered eminent and distinguished service to the borough of Cheltenham.

Once agreed by Council, their appointments will be recognised as part of the Inauguration of the Mayor ceremony at the Town Hall on Monday 20 May.

Recommendations:

- 1. Council confers the title of Honorary Freeman on Lesley Bonney, Chun Kong and Michael Ratcliffe MBE.**
-

1. Implications

1.1 Financial, Property and Asset implications

None.

1.2 Legal implications

Full Council may confer the title of Honorary Freeman on persons who have, in the opinion of

Council, rendered eminent service to the Borough.

In accordance with section 249 of the Local Government Act 1972 the decision to confer the title must be passed at a meeting specially convened for the purpose and by not less than two-thirds of the members voting thereon.

An Honorary Freeman may attend and take part in such civic ceremonies as the Authority may from time to time decide but, as such, has no right to: attend meetings of Council, Cabinet or Committee other than as a member of the public, receive any of the allowances or other payments to which councillors are entitled.

Signed off by: Claire Hughes, Director of Governance and Customer Services (Monitoring Officer)

2 Background

2.1 The following persons have been nominated for the position of Honorary Freeman:

- Lesley Bonney
- Chun Kong
- Michael Ratcliffe MBE

2.2 Under the provisions of Section 249 of the Local Government Act 1972, central government gives local councils the power to appoint Honorary Freeman.

2.3 An Honorary Freeman is someone who has shown outstanding commitment to the local community and through their service, dedication and expertise have been able to enhance the standing of Cheltenham and its citizens.

“Eminent service” in this context could include any of the following but is not limited to:

- public service (including past distinguished service as a Councillor or officer of the Council)
- artistic and/or cultural endeavours
- business, economic growth and prosperity
- charitable work
- improvement to the built and natural environment
- political activities
- religious and spiritual life
- sporting activities

2.4 Although nominations can be put forward by anyone, the Head of Paid Service or any other council officer has no influence over the decision. At least two thirds of councillors present and voting must support the formal resolution at a Council meeting specially convened for that purpose and usually held immediately following the Annual Council meeting in May.

3 Consultation and feedback

3.1 The nominations have been discussed by Group Leaders.

4 Key risks

4.1 None identified.

Report author:

Bev Thomas, Democratic Services Team Leader

bev.thomas@cheltenham.gov.uk 01242 264 246

