

CITY OF  
WOLVERHAMPTON  
COUNCIL

# Governance and Ethics Committee

10 December 2021

<b>Report title</b>	Freedom of the City	
<b>Cabinet member with lead responsibility</b>	Councillor Ian Brookfield, Leader of the Council	
<b>Accountable director</b>	David Pattison, Chief Operating Officer	
<b>Originating service</b>	Democratic Services	
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<b>Report to be considered by</b>	Council	26 January 2022

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## Recommendation for decision:

The Governance and Ethics Committee recommends that Council:

1. Convene an extraordinary meeting to bestow the honour of Freedom of the City to Lisa Potts in recognition of her exceptional bravery in saving children in the City of Wolverhampton and charity work.

## **1.0 Purpose**

- 1.1 To consider bestowing the honour of Freedom of the City to Lisa Potts in recognition of her exceptional bravery in saving children in the City of Wolverhampton and charity work.

## **2.0 Background**

- 2.1 The Local Government Act 1972 requires that an extraordinary Council meeting has to be held in order to confer the Freedom of the City, with no-less than two thirds of councillors voting having to approve the proposal.
- 2.2 Local Authorities may grant Freedom of the City or Freedom of Entry. The former is given to "persons of distinction and any persons who have rendered eminent services to the City". It is the most honourable distinction that a City can bestow and the recipient is thereafter referred to as Freeman.
- 2.3 The latter is granted to current serving uniformed organisations (usually, but not exclusively, the military) "which have rendered conspicuous service and which are associated with the City". Freedom of Entry grants the organisation the "freedom to march through the streets of the City with bayonets fixed, drums beating and colours flying".
- 2.4 Although being awarded the Freedom of the City does not carry any rights or responsibilities, it is a considerable honour that is bestowed exceptionally.
- 2.5 The conferral of the honour of being made a Freeman of the city is for the Council to determine.
- 2.6 Council agreed the protocol for awarding Freedom of the City on 21 July 2021. The nomination form received has been progressed in line with the nomination protocol. All the Group Leaders and the Mayor have been consulted about the proposed admission of Lisa Potts to Freeman of the City and were in agreement.

## **3.0 Lisa Potts**

- 3.1 Lisa Potts is a former nursery teacher who had saved children from a machete attack at St Luke's Primary School in Blakenhall, in 1996. Lisa was 21 years old at the time and had suffered severe cuts to her head, back and to both arms. Lisa still keeps in touch with many of the children and has supported them through the years.
- 3.2 In 2001, Lisa founded a charity, *Believe To Achieve*, based in schools in Wolverhampton. The charity aims to encourage independence and to increase self-esteem in children.
- 3.3 In 2010 Lisa retrained as an Adult Nurse at Wolverhampton University and then went on to become a specialist Public Health Nurse.

## **4.0 Freedom Scroll**

- 4.1 If the Committee is minded to approve the recommendation, a citation will be prepared for submission to Council which, together with the Resolution passed, will be transcribed

on to a Freedom Scroll, made of vellum, hand decorated and inscribed, which will be sealed with the City Council's Corporate Seal

## **5.0 Financial implications**

5.1 It is traditional to hold a celebratory event in the Mayor's City Suite, the arrangements for which will be made in consultation with Lisa Potts. The total estimated cost of the Freedom Scroll and celebratory event is in the region of £4,000. This will be funded from existing budgets set aside for hospitality and equipment purchases within Governance Services. [GE/25112021/Q]

## **6.0 Legal implications**

6.1 Section 249(5) of the Local Government Act 1972 empowers the Council to admit to be honorary freemen or freewomen of the City persons of distinction or persons who have, in the opinion of the Council, rendered imminent services to the City. The award of the title of Honorary Freeman has to be done by a resolution passed by not less than two-thirds of the Members voting at a meeting of the Council specially convened for the purpose. [TC/26112021/F]

## **7.0 Equalities implications**

7.1 There are no equalities implications arising from the recommendation in this report.

## **8.0 All other Implications**

8.1 There are no other implications arising from the recommendation in this report.

## **9.0 Schedule of background papers**

9.1 [Awarding Freedom of the City, Council, 21 July 2021](#)