

Report title	Freedom of Entry – HMS Forward	
Cabinet member with lead responsibility	Councillor Val Gibson, Governance	
Wards affected	All	
Accountable director	Kevin O’Keefe, Director of Governance	
Originating service	Legal Services	
Accountable employee(s)	Shamsher Zada	Solicitor
	Tel	01902 552454
	Email	Shamsher.zada@wolverhampton.gov.uk
Report to be considered by	Council	7 November 2018

Recommendations for decision:

The Standards Committee is recommended to recommend that Council:

1. Convene an extraordinary meeting of the Council on 7 November 2018, to confer the honour of Freedom of Entry on HMS Forward in recognition of their services to the City of Wolverhampton.
2. Arrangements be made in due course to celebrate the honour.

1.0 Purpose

- 1.1 To consider granting the honorary Freedom of Entry to the City of Wolverhampton to HMS Forward (the "Unit").

2.0 Background

- 2.1 HMS Forward was officially opened in 1999 by HRH The Princess Royal. It is a modern purpose-built training centre for Royal Navy Reservists from across the region. Although the Unit is located centrally in Birmingham it acts as the single representative for the Royal Navy across the five counties of the West Midlands, Warwickshire, Staffordshire, Shropshire and Worcestershire. There is a crew of nearly 100 personnel of which twenty percent originate from the City of Wolverhampton.
- 2.2 HMS Forward has built firm relations with the City of Wolverhampton over the last twenty years. The Unit regularly visit and present at the City of Wolverhampton College, as well as attending events at the University of Wolverhampton. The Unit engage with numerous Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) job fairs across the City to raise awareness and offer part-time job opportunities to the public. They have a monthly presence in Queens Square with the HMS Forward Outreach Trailer. The Unit regularly attend New Cross Hospital for the same reason.
- 2.3 HMS Forward has attended many Council led job fair events, including West Park, Molineux Stadium and Wolverhampton Racecourse. More recently they have been working closely with Defence Relations Management based at West Midlands Reserves Forces and Cadets Association (WMRFCA) by supporting employer engagement events in the City and forging strong links with the Chamber of Commerce.
- 2.4 HMS Forward supports military events in the City of Wolverhampton, they have provided a team of personnel for several parades, including Armed Forces Day and Remembrance Day. In addition, the Commanding Officer and Staff Officer try to accommodate invitations from the Mayor's Officer to provide a senior Naval Officer for all military events. The Unit provide personnel to support the Royal British Legion with the annual Poppy Appeal in the City Centre of Wolverhampton.
- 2.5 Members of the Standards Committee may wish to consider if this is an opportunity to bring HMS Forward in line with RAF Cosford, 210 Battery, The Mercian Regiment and West Midlands Fire Service who have all received Freedom of Entry.

3.0 Freedom Scroll

- 3.1 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.

4.0 Financial implications

- 4.1 It is traditional to hold a celebratory event in the Mayor's Parlour, the arrangements for which will be made in consultation with HMS Forward. The total cost of the Freedom Scroll and celebratory event is anticipated to be in the region of £1,000. This will be funded from existing budgets set aside for hospitality and equipment purchases within Civic Support.
[GE/16102018/P]

5.0 Legal implications

- 5.1 Section 249 (5) of the Local Government Act 1972 allows Council to confer the award of honorary freemen or honorary freewomen of the place or area (known as Freedom of Entry for service units) of which it is the authority. A special meeting of the Council would need to be convened where the proposed resolution would receive the support of not less than two-thirds of the Members voting.
[SZ/14092018/S]

6.0 Equalities implications

- 6.1 There are no equalities implications arising from the recommendations in this report.

7.0 Environmental implications

- 7.1 There are no environmental implications arising from the recommendations in this report.

8.0 Human resources implications

- 8.1 There are no human resource implications arising from the recommendations in this report.

9.0 Corporate landlord implications

- 9.1 There are no corporate landlord implications arising from the recommendations in this report.