
1.15 Honorary Freeman of the Shire of Chittering

Policy Owner: Governance
Person Responsible: Executive Support Officer
Date of Approval: 25 June 2014
Amended:

Objective This policy guides the nomination, selection and awarding of the prestigious ceremonial title to a person designated as “Honorary Freeman of the Shire of Chittering”

Policy Council may, subject to eligibility and selection criteria of this policy being met by 75% special majority (6 out of 7 Councillors), decide to confer the title of “Honorary Freeman of the Shire of Chittering” on any person who has rendered exceptional service to the Shire of Chittering community. This prestigious honour will not be awarded regularly, but only on rare and exceptional occasions.

The award is in title only – no financial benefit is attached to the award. Recipients are however invited to significant events that are sponsored by the Shire of Chittering.

The process for nominating and selecting a person and awarding the title is as follows:

Eligibility

- (1) All members of the Shire of Chittering public including past elected members and staff can be nominated
- (2) A current elected member or employee cannot be nominated for the award
- (3) In recognition of the standing of this award a maximum of five living persons only may hold the title of “Honorary Freeman of the Shire of Chittering” at any one time
- (4) The honour shall not be awarded posthumously

Selection Criteria

Nominees will be judged on their record of service to the community on the basis of the following criteria:

- (a) Nominees must have lived in, worked or served the Shire of Chittering for a significant number of years (20 years or more);
- (b) Level of commitment to their field(s) of activity;
- (c) Outstanding personal leadership qualities and personal integrity;

- (d) Benefits to the community of the Shire of Chittering, to the State of Western Australia or to the nation resulting from the nominee's work; and
- (e) Special achievements of the nominee.

Nomination Process

To preserve the integrity and importance of bestowing the honour of "Honorary Freeman of the Shire of Chittering" upon any individual, the following procedure shall be adopted:

- (1) Nomination for an "Honorary Freeman of the Shire" clearly outlining in chronological order the history of community service and achievements of the nominated person, must be made in writing to the Chief Executive Officer in the strictest confidence, without the nominee's knowledge.
- (2) On receipt of the nomination the Chief Executive Officer will circulate a copy of the nomination and any supporting information to all elected members for initial consideration.
- (3) Elected members shall have reasonable time, being no less than two weeks, to consider the proposal.
- (4) If an elected member expresses an objection to the nomination, they must give their reasons for the objection in writing to the Chief Executive Officer within the prescribed time frame.
- (5) A nomination must be supported in writing by at least one third of the elected members of Council.
- (6) Elected members who do not formally respond in writing will be presumed not to object to the proposal.
- (7) If the nomination is sufficiently supported, the Chief Executive Officer will subject a confidential report to Council.
- (8) The nominee's name and identifying information will be maintained as "confidential" in all meeting papers.
- (9) The recommendation to Council will include a clause requiring confidentiality of the report be maintained until the title is conferred upon the nominee at a formal Council function.
- (10) The decision of Council to adopt the Chief Executive Officer's recommendation requires a 75% special majority (6 out of 7 Councillors).

It is imperative that confidentiality is maintained throughout the nomination process. The standing of the Shire and the individual concerned should not be brought into disrepute or embarrassment in any way.

Awarding the title

Once Council has accepted the nomination, the nominee shall be contacted by the Chief Executive Officer on a confidential basis to determine whether the award will be accepted. Should a nominee decline to accept the award, all elected members will be informed and the matter will lapse.

Conferral of the title shall be carried out at a formal Council function. The Chief Executive Officer, in consultation with the Shire President, will decide the occasion and format of the conferral ceremony. The Governor of Western Australia, the Premier and the Opposition Leader shall be included on the list of distinguished invited guests.

A certificate of “Honorary Freeman of the Shire of Chittering”, signed under the Common Seal by the Shire President and Chief Executive Officer, will be presented to the recipient.

A suitable media statement shall be prepared for release on behalf of the Shire President.

A framed photograph of the “Honorary Freeman of the Shire” will be hung in the Shire’s Administration Building. Upon the passing of a Freeman, this photograph will be removed and offered to the next of kin.

Entitlements

The Honorary Freeman and their partner shall be invited to all formal civic functions conducted by the Shire.

Personal Conduct

An “Honorary Freeman of the Shire of Chittering” shall display high standards of the personal conduct and behaviour at all times and shall not bring the Shire into disrepute.

Council reserves the right to cancel the honour in the event that the holder is convicted of a serious criminal offence or brings the Shire into disrepute. This decision shall be made by absolute majority.