



COUNCIL – 5TH OCTOBER 2021

SUBJECT: FREEDOM OF BOROUGH – OLYMPIC MEDALLISTS

REPORT BY: CORPORATE DIRECTOR EDUCATION AND CORPORATE SERVICES

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1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 This report was considered by Cabinet on 15th September 2021 who unanimously supported a recommendation to Council to award the Freedom of the Borough to the Caerphilly Olympic Medallists. Therefore, Council is asked to admit as Honorary Freeman of the Borough, Lauren Price and Lauren Williams who were successful in achieving medals at the Tokyo Olympics 2020.

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 Under Section 249(5) of the Local Government Act 1972 a Borough Council can grant the Freedom of the Borough to "persons of distinction and persons who have, in the opinion of the Council, rendered eminent services to the Borough". In order to grant the Freedom of the Borough, a resolution must be passed by not less than two thirds of the members voting at a meeting of the Council.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 In pursuance of Section 249 (as amended) of the Local Government Act 1972 the Council confers upon the following athletes, the Freedom of the County Borough of Caerphilly:

Lauren Price Gold Medallist - Boxing Women's Middleweight (75kg)
Lauren Williams Silver Medallist - Taekwondo Women's -67kg

4. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 To give public recognition to the Olympic medallists and demonstrate the high esteem in which they are held by Caerphilly County Borough Council and the people of the County Borough.

5. THE REPORT

- 5.1 Councillor Phillipa Marsden, Leader of Council, Councillor Colin Mann, Leader of Plaid Cymru Group and Councillor Kevin Etheridge Leader of the Independents Group have nominated the following athletes for the Freedom of the County Borough

of Caerphilly, in recognition of their inspirational and outstanding achievements at the Tokyo Olympics 2020:

Lauren Price – Gold Medallist Women’s Boxing Middleweight
Lauren Williams – Silver Medallist, - 67kg Women’s Taekwondo

- 5.2 The tradition of Boroughs conferring the Freedom goes back to ancient times when the Royal Charter Boroughs were almost, if not entirely, self-governing. Originally, such conferment conveyed special privileges of various kinds upon the recipient that could involve the right to vote, property and local taxation benefits.
- 5.3 Over the years, and especially since the passing of the Reform Act 1832 and the Municipal Corporations Act 1835, successive Acts of Parliament have sought amongst other things severely to curtail the extent of the privileges so that, today, the conferment is purely honorary. Today’s Freemen have no special rights.
- 5.4 However, the tradition is maintained as a means whereby public recognition may be given to the recipients as an expression of the high esteem in which, they are held by the Council and people of the Borough.
- 5.5 Council agreed at the meeting dated 29th January 2008 to award Freedom of the Borough and Cabinet subsequently agreed the nomination criteria at the meeting dated 3rd March 2009. These criteria are set out below:

Nomination criteria

(a) Nominations must show that the nominee is a ‘person/s of distinction and/or a person/s who has rendered eminent services to the County Borough’.

(b) In keeping with special nature of the award conferment should be strictly limited to those who have made a very significant contribution to the locality either on the national or international scene. It should be noted that the Council already has an annual award scheme for the Voluntary Sector Achievement Awards, (which also encompasses the Mayoral Civic Awards) to recognise those who have made an important contribution to the local community especially in a voluntary capacity.

5.6 Conclusion

By conferring the Freedom of the Borough, Caerphilly County Borough Council gives an opportunity to recognise the achievements and work of individuals and organisations within its community. The Gold, Silver and Bronze Medals awarded to competitors at the Olympic and Paralympics represent the highest achievement of athletic achievement at the Games. Therefore, awarding the Freedom of the Borough would recognise their achievement and the positive public sentiment that has been demonstrated towards the medallists.

Cabinet are asked to consider the nomination against the criteria outlined in this report as set out in 5.5 and make a recommendation to Council.

6. ASSUMPTIONS

- 6.1 The recommendation as set out in this report assumes that Members will wish to recognise their achievements and support conferring the Freedom of the Borough upon the Olympic Medallists.

7. SUMMARY OF INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 7.1 Council has previously agreed the procedure and criteria for nominations for Freedom of the Borough which is a Civic and Ceremonial function.

8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 The Local Government, Planning and Land Act 1980 provides that the Authority may spend such reasonable sum as they think fit for the purpose of presenting an address or a casket containing an address to any person admitted to be an honorary freeman.
- 8.2 The ceremonial presentation and reception for each nominee shall be funded from the Mayoral office funds in consultation with the Chief Executive and Leader of the Council.

9. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 There are no personnel implications.

10. CONSULTATIONS

- 10.1 There are no consultation responses not included within this report.

11. STATUTORY POWER

- 11.1 The Local Government Act 1972, (as amended) and The Local Government, Planning and Land Act 1980.

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Cllr P Marsden, Council Leader
Cllr C Mann, Plaid Cymru Group Leader
Cllr K Etheridge, Independents Group Leader

Background Papers:

Council report 29th January 2008.