

**RIBBLE VALLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL
REPORT TO POLICY AND FINANCE COMMITTEE**

Agenda Item No.

meeting date: 26 JANUARY 2010
title: FREEDOM OF THE BOROUGH
submitted by: CHIEF EXECUTIVE
principal author: MARSHAL SCOTT

1 PURPOSE

1.1 To consider the granting of the Freedom of the Borough of Ribble Valley to the Duke of Lancaster's Regiment.

2 BACKGROUND

2.1 The Freedom of the Borough is the highest honour that the Council can bestow on any citizen or body.

2.2 Section 249(5) of the Local Government Act 1972 allows the Council to confer the Freedom of Entry upon service units which have rendered conspicuous service and have close links with the Borough.

2.3 The Duke of Lancaster's Regiment (King's, Lancashire and Border) was formed on 1 July 2006 following the merger of the King's Own Royal Border Regiment, the King's Regiment and the Queen's Lancashire Regiment, together with their respective companies of the Lancastrian and Cumbrian volunteers and the King's and Cheshire Regiment.

2.4 The Regiment and its predecessors have a long and distinguished history dating originally back to the King's Own Regiment raised by King Charles II on 13 July 1680. Recently the Regiment has and continues to see active service in Iraq and Afghanistan.

2.5 To recognize both the regiments service to the country and the local men and women who have served both in the past and serving in the regiment today, it is proposed to grant the Freedom of the borough to the Duke of Lancaster's Regiment.

2.6 On 18 November 2009 the Regiment hosted a visit by members to the Barracks in Fulwood, when it was made clear by Colonel Amlott, the Regimental Secretary, that the Freedom would be graciously received if the Council chose to honour the regiment in this way.

2.7 The Freedom of Entry has its roots deep within the history of local government and is an example of the power and influence of the old boroughs in the past. During the Middle Ages bodies of troops were not allowed to march through a borough without permission of the Council.

2.8 Permission to enter confers upon individual regiments the right to march through the borough with due ceremony, drums beating, bands playing and banner flying in recognition of the confidence, trust and friendship existing between the citizens and troops.

2.9 Today, martial Freedom of the Borough is an entirely ceremonial honour to show the ties between Borough and Regiment.

3 ISSUES AND ARRANGEMENTS

- 3.1 To confer the honour of Freedom of the Borough upon the Duke of Lancaster's Regiment a resolution passed by not less than two thirds of the Council members voting thereon will be required.
- 3.2 If such a resolution were to be passed by Council in March, further consideration will be required as to the means of presenting the award of Freedom of the Borough.
- 3.3 Section 249(6) of the Local Government Act 1972 allows the Council to spend a reasonable sum as it thinks fit for the purpose of presenting an address or a casket containing an address to the Regiment. We would also have to convene a Special Council Meeting at a time to be mutually agreed with the Regiment. This would normally be a short meeting to pass the formal resolution granting Freedom of the Borough followed by a ceremony to be agreed. This would most likely involve the Regiment forming up for the Presentation of the Freedom Scroll and then marching through the town with bayonets fixed, drums beating, band playing and colours flying. A buffet meal would be held for the Regiment and invited guests. The exact timing and arrangements would be agreed following discussions with the Regiment.

4 RISK ASSESSMENT

- 4.1 Resources – There will be modest costs involved in arranging the scroll and the ceremonial presentation and buffet.
Technical, Environmental and Legal – To award the Freedom of the Borough the Council resolution must be passed by not less than two thirds of the members voting.
Political – None
Reputation – The Council is recognizing the Regiment's Service to the Country and residents of the Borough if Freedom of the Borough is granted.

5 RECOMMENDED THAT COMMITTEE

- 5.1 Recommend to Council that the Freedom of the Borough of Ribble Valley be granted to the Duke of Lancaster's Regiment.

CHIEF EXECUTIVE