

REPORT TO:	MAYORALTY AND HONORARY FREEDOM SELECTION SUBCOMMITTEE 7 October 2016
AGENDA ITEM:	6
SUBJECT:	GRANT OF FREEDOM OF THE BOROUGH
LEAD OFFICER:	Jacqueline Harris-Baker, Acting Council Solicitor and Acting Monitoring Officer
WARDS:	All

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1.1 The Sub-Committee recommends that the Council agree to convene a Special Meeting of the Council for the purpose of granting the Freedom of the Borough to Colonel Ian McRobbie and Canon Colin Boswell in recognition of the eminent service they have rendered to Croydon.

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 2.1 This report sets out the arrangements for granting Freedom of the Borough to Colonel Ian McRobbie and Canon Colin Boswell.

3. DETAIL

Eligibility Criteria

- 3.1 The Council has the power to grant a person the title of Freedom of the Borough. The criteria for the title is that it is awarded to "Persons of distinction who have rendered eminent service to Croydon".
- 3.2 The title is rarely awarded, past recipients have been Lord Weatherill (a former Speaker of the Commons), Colonel McLelland (a former Representative Deputy Lieutenant), Lord Bowness (a former Leader of Croydon Council and a Life Peer), Bishop Wilfred Wood (a former Bishop of Croydon), former Councillors Adrian Dennis & Derek Loughborough, a previous Chief Executive, Mr. David Wechsler, Mr Malcolm Wicks MP (posthumously) and Mr Ian Austen (former news reporter at the Croydon Advertiser).

Nominee: Colonel Ian McRobbie

- 3.3 Colonel Ian McRobbie was appointed Croydon's Representative Deputy Lieutenant in 1995 on the recommendation of his predecessor, Colonel Douglas McLelland. The post is entirely voluntary, with no expenses attached. As the Queen's Representative Deputy Lieutenant

of Croydon, Colonel McRobbie leads on the armed forces meetings that the council supports as part of the Military Community Covenant. He also represents Her Majesty on Remembrance Sunday, Armistice Day, and on civic visits to Croydon's Dutch twin town, Arnhem. Within weeks of taking post, he was presented with the daunting task of coordinating a visit to the borough by Her Majesty and Prince Philip as part of the 400th anniversary of Whitgift Founder's Day. In July 2002, he coordinated the south London leg of the Queen's Golden Jubilee tour, which saw Her Majesty and Prince Philip visit the Brit School and Addington Palace. More recently, in 2011 and 2012, he accompanied visits by Prince Charles and the Duchess of Cornwall; and, in 2014, the Earl of Wessex. In June 2012, he helped Croydon become the first London borough to host an Armed Forces Week to support service men and women, and played a major part in the setting up of the borough's Military Community Covenant. Colonel McRobbie took early retirement from his civilian job in 1996, but continued his military service with the Territorial Army; completing 38 years of service.

- 3.4 Colonel McRobbie is a serving trustee of a number of charities, including Home-Start Croydon, of which he is chairman and treasurer. In addition, he chairs a group involved in raising funds to provide minibuses for disadvantaged children, and is also heavily involved in the YOU partnership (Youth Organisations in Uniform), working with young people affiliated to organisations such as the police, the fire brigade and cadet groups.

Nominee: Canon Colin Boswell

- 3.5 Canon Colin Boswell has been Area Dean of Caterham, Area Dean of Croydon Central, Borough Dean of Croydon, and has been a Canon of Southwark Cathedral since 1999. He has a great deal of experience in school governorship and was chair of Governors of The Minster School, Croydon. Canon Boswell supports many children through Action Aid, and is a keen believer in animal rights. In addition to his main role as Vicar of Croydon, based at Croydon Minster, he is a patron or trustee of a number of local charities, the chaplain to the Mayor of Croydon and also to the Whitgift Foundation, which has responsibility for three schools (Whitgift, Trinity and Old Palace) and three homes for the elderly (Whitgift Almshouses, Wilhelmina House and Whitgift House). As Vicar of Croydon he regularly conducted the annual Remembrance Sunday service, and the annual civic service attended by the Mayor of Croydon, and members of the council and the judiciary. In 2011 he oversaw the redesignation of Croydon Parish Church to Croydon Minster; and in March 2014 he conducted a service in the presence of the Princess Royal to mark the 400th anniversary of the Whitgift Foundation's Founder's Day services.
- 3.6 In the summer of 2014, Canon Boswell joined fellow clergy and members of the congregation in sleeping rough for one night to raise money for the minster's community fund. The aim was to raise £30,000 to enable it to carry on its work in providing a food bank, shelter for the

homeless, counselling for those affected by drugs and alcohol, education and activities for young people, and meeting places for the elderly. Notably, among many funeral services he has conducted, were those of Croydon MP Malcolm Wicks, former Mayors of Croydon Jonathan Driver and Brenda Kirby, and Meredith Kercher, the young Coulsdon woman murdered in Perugia, Italy, in 2007.

- 3.7 The Sub-Committee may wish to recommend to Council to grant the Freedom of the Borough to Colonel Ian McRobbie and Canon Colin Boswell in recognition of the eminent services they have rendered to Croydon.

Process

- 3.8 The process would be to hold an ordinary meeting of the Council to receive the recommendation from this Sub-Committee to grant the Freedom of the Borough and to call a Special Meeting of the Council for the honour to be awarded.

- 3.9 The recommendation to be moved at that ordinary meeting of the Council, proposed by the Leader of the Council and seconded by the Opposition Leader would be:

“That this Council does hereby confer upon Colonel Ian McRobbie and Canon Colin Boswell, Honorary Freedom of the London Borough of Croydon in recognition of their eminent service and unique contribution to Croydon and its people, and do hereby admit them to be Honorary Freemen of the said Borough. That the Common Seal be affixed to a copy of this Resolution.”

- 3.10 A small reception will be held by the Mayor, prior to the award of the honour, so that photographs could be taken and personal guests received outside of the formal business of the Council Meeting.

4. CONSULTATION

- 4.1 None for the purpose of this report. However, the nominations for recipients are made via the cross-party membership of this Sub-Committee.

5 FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 5.1 There are no such considerations as the limited resource required for this function can be met from within existing budgets.

6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 The awarding of such titles is within the powers of the Council and is governed by section 249 (4), of the Local Government Act 1972 with regard to remuneration and expenditure.

Lead Officer:

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Background Documents:

None