



# Doncaster Council

## Report

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20<sup>th</sup> September 2018

**To the Chair and Members of the  
Council**

### **FREEDOM OF THE BOROUGH APPLICATION – YVONNE WOODCOCK**

#### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

1. This report seeks Council approval to confer the Freedom of the Borough on Yvonne Woodcock.

#### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

2. The Council is asked to support the application and agree to bestow the Freedom of the Borough on Yvonne Woodcock.

#### **WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR THE CITIZENS OF DONCASTER?**

3. Conferring the Freedom of the Borough on Yvonne Woodcock would allow the citizens of Doncaster to offer recognition and endorsement of Yvonne Woodcock's tireless charity and voluntary work and years of public service.

#### **BACKGROUND**

4. Councillor Jane Cox has approached the Council to consider bestowing this honour to Yvonne Woodcock.
5. The Council is able to bestow the Freedom of the Borough on individuals who have provided exceptional service to their town or enhanced its reputation through their actions.
6. In accordance with the Council's protocol, a Panel consisting of the Civic Mayor and leaders of the Conservative Group and the Mexborough First Group (see consultation - paragraph 27 below) met to consider the nomination and gave it their support.

7. The award of Freeman must be approved by a formal resolution of Full Council. A vote will be taken and if it is supported by no less than two thirds of those members present and voting, then the title of 'Honorary Freeman of Doncaster' will be bestowed upon the nominee.
8. Yvonne has devoted many years to Doncaster and its residents. She supports countless charities and community groups in a voluntary capacity.
9. Yvonne served as a Councillor for over 20 years and was the Civic Mayor of Doncaster in 1998/99 during which time she raised over £20,000 for her chosen charities.
10. In addition she has raised thousands of pounds for charities, arranging and attending fundraising events, regularly opening her own home and gardens on many occasions to raise funds. Much of her charity work has focused on the Cancer Detection Trust and with her colleague Jeanette Fish (a Freeman of the Borough who sadly died this year) she has raised tens of thousands of pounds for this charity.
11. Yvonne is very well known around Doncaster and especially in the Finningley Ward where she served as a Councillor. She still volunteers around the ward and serves on the Airport Committee as an honorary member and volunteer. She attends the Cantley Community Centre Committee where she still helps them regularly with their events.
12. Yvonne is the main fundraiser for the Royal British Legion's annual Poppy Appeal in that area raising thousands each year for that charity.
13. Yvonne also spends a lot of time helping at the Mansion House and is a longstanding and active member of the Friends of The Mansion House Group. She is passionate about this historic building and can regularly be seen giving tours and making tea and promoting it to the public.
14. She is also involved in Doncaster Minster and Doncaster Cultural Leisure Trust, becoming an honorary member when she stood down as a Councillor and remaining a DCLT board member.

### **OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

15. Option one (recommended option) is to recommend that Council supports the application and confer the Freedom of the Borough on Yvonne Woodcock.
16. Option two is to decline the application to confer the Freedom of the Borough on Yvonne Woodcock.

### **REASONS FOR RECOMMENDED OPTION**

17. This is the recommended option, not only in recognition of her years of public service but for her tireless charity and voluntary work over many years. The nomination is consistent with the requirement to bestow the award to "persons of distinction and persons who have, in the opinion of the Council, rendered eminent services to the Borough".

## **IMPACT ON THE COUNCIL'S KEY OUTCOMES**

18. There is no significant impact on the Council's key outcomes associated with this nomination.

## **RISKS AND ASSUMPTIONS**

19. There are no identified risks associated with this report.

## **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS [Officer Initials SRF Date 10 September 2018.]**

20. Section 249 of the Local Government Act 1972 deals with the admission to the Freedom of the Borough of "persons of distinction and persons who have, in the opinion of the Council, rendered eminent services to the Borough". The Council is required to consider this application.
21. The title Freeman of the Borough is an honorary role. It offers no legal status and there is no remuneration linked to the honour.

## **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS [Officer Initials AT Date 8 September 2018.]**

22. Citizens receiving the title of Honorary Freeman will receive a personalised scroll and a have the opportunity for a celebratory event at the Mansion House hosted by the Civic Mayor. The estimated cost is approximately £1200 and will be covered from the Governance Services budget.

## **HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS [Officer Initials DK Date 5 September 2018.]**

23. There are no specific human resource implications associated with this report.

## **TECHNOLOGY IMPLICATIONS [Officer Initials PW Date 7 September 2018]**

24. There are no specific technology implications associated with this report.

## **HEALTH IMPLICATIONS [Officer Initials RS Date 4 September 2018]**

25. There are no specific health implications associated with this report.

## **EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS [Officer Initials AS Date 6 September 2018.]**

26. There are no specific equality implications associated with this report.

## **CONSULTATION**

27. The application has been considered initially by representatives of the Labour Group, Conservative Group and Mexborough First Group, who have given their unanimous approval for the application to be taken forward to be considered by Council.

## **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

28. Freedom Application completed by Councillor Jane Cox plus letters of the Venerable Robert Fitzharris, Archdeacon Emeritus and Honorary Freeman of Doncaster, Andrew Burden, Chairman of the DCLT, Ruth Bacon and a note of Support from Ros Jones, Mayor of Doncaster on behalf of Yvonne Woodcock.

## **REPORT AUTHOR & CONTRIBUTORS**

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