



City of Doncaster Council

Report

Date: 13th July 2023

To: Chair and members of
FULL COUNCIL

Report Title:
NOMINATION FOR FREEDOM OF THE CITY – LORD KIRKHAM

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. This report asks Council to consider bestowing the honour of Freedom of the City on Lord Kirkham.

EXEMPT REPORT

2. The report is not exempt.

RECOMMENDATIONS

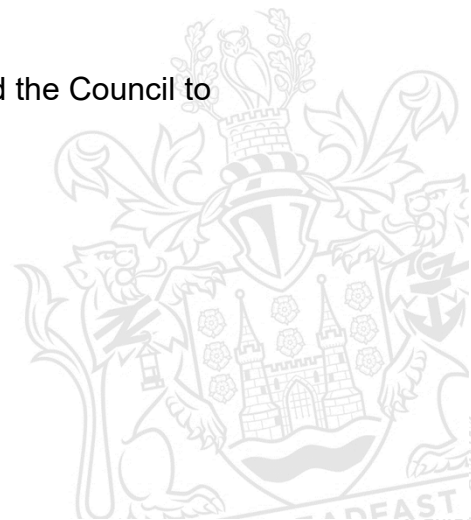
3. The Council is asked to support the application and agree to bestow the Freedom of the City on Lord Kirkham.

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR THE CITIZENS OF DONCASTER?

4. Conferring the Freedom of the City on Lord Kirkham would acknowledge the commercial, charitable, social and civic contributions that he has made to promote the reputation and prosperity of the City of Doncaster.
5. It is felt that his bestowing the status of honorary Freeman will demonstrate the Council's appreciation for his eminent services to the city.

Background

6. Bobbie Roberts (herself a Freeman of Doncaster) has asked the Council to consider bestowing this honour to Lord Kirkham.



7. The Council is able to bestow the Freedom of the City on individuals who have provided exceptional service to the area or enhanced its reputation through their actions.
8. In accordance with the Council's protocol a panel consisting of the Civic Mayor and leaders of each of the political groups (see consultation - paragraph 26 below) met to consider the nomination and gave it their full and unequivocal support.
9. 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 on the individual.
10. This nomination seeks to acknowledge the commercial, charitable, social and civic contributions Lord Kirkham has made to promote the reputation and prosperity of the City of Doncaster. It is felt that his elevation to the status of Freeman of the City will demonstrate the Council's appreciation for the things he has done for the local area.
11. Lord Kirkham has been a lifelong resident of Doncaster. He was born, educated and raised in the county, whilst developing a number of very successful businesses. Having accumulated a multi-million pound business empire he has always remained committed to living in the area; contributing to its economy, charities and promoting its reputation. Two main businesses: DFS Furniture Stores and Whitby's Fish and Chip Restaurant have created employment for numerous local people over decades. The DFS brand is well known nationally and Whitby's has extended its operations across Doncaster and Rotherham.
12. Lord Kirkham acquired Cantley Hall in 1990. He invested in the restoration and maintenance of the estate, using local tradesmen and businesses. He continues to provide employment through the upkeep of the house and grounds and runs some aspects of his business activities from there. He has also used the Hall to entertain royals, dignitaries and celebrities to promote Doncaster's reputation.
13. In 1996 he was Knighted and in 1999 created Lord Baron Kirkham KCVO for his contributions to the Duke of Edinburgh Awards Scheme, Prince's Trust and Animal Welfare charities. He has also supported local schools providing an IT/computer suite. He has financially assisted Doncaster Deaf Trust and the 'Firefly' Cancer Support charity. His companies have provided significant donations to fund Cancer Research, through the University of Bradford.
14. In March 2023, Lord Kirkham kindly agreed to officiate at the planting of a tree in the Danum Gallery library and Museum in honour of the visit of King Charles III and the Queen Consort to bestow City status on Doncaster. It became clear that Lord Kirkham is keen to become more involved in the work of the Council in supporting and sponsoring initiatives that would benefit our City.

15. Since gaining city status, Freemen of the Borough of Doncaster will now be referred to as Freemen of the City to reflect this new status.




OPTIONS CONSIDERED






16. Option one (recommended option) is to recommend that Council supports the application and confer the Freedom of the City on Lord Kirkham to acknowledge the commercial, charitable, social and civic contributions that he has made to promote the reputation and prosperity of the City of Doncaster.
17. Option two is to decline the application to confer the Freedom of the City on Lord Kirkham

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDED OPTION

18. Conferring the Freedom of the City on Lord Kirkham would acknowledge the significant commercial, charitable, social and civic contributions that he has made to promote the reputation and prosperity of the City of Doncaster.

IMPACT ON THE COUNCIL'S KEY OUTCOMES

Great 8 Priority	Positive Overall	Mix of Positive & Negative	Trade-offs to consider – Negative overall	Neutral or No implications
 Tackling Climate Change				✓
Comments:				
 Developing the skills to thrive in life and in work				✓
Comments:				
 Making Doncaster the best place to do business and create good jobs				✓

Comments:					
	Building opportunities for healthier, happier and longer lives for all				✓
Comments:					
	Creating safer, stronger, greener and cleaner communities where everyone belongs				✓
Comments:					
	Nurturing a child and family-friendly borough				✓
Comments:					
	Building Transport and digital connections fit for the future				✓
Comments:					
	Promoting the borough and its cultural, sporting, and heritage opportunities				✓

Comments:				
Fair & Inclusive				✓
Comments: The title of honorary freeman can be bestowed on any eminent individual who has, in the opinion of the Council, rendered eminent service to the City.				

Legal Implications [Officer Initials: SRF | Date: 28.06.23]

19. Section 249 of the Local Government Act 1972 deals with bestowing the honorary title of freeman of “persons of distinction and persons who have, in the opinion of the Council, rendered eminent services to the place or area”. The Council is required to consider this application.
20. The title of Freeman is an honorary role. It offers no legal status and there is no remuneration linked to the honour

Financial Implications [Officer Initials: PH | Date:27/06/2023]

21. Those being honoured receive a framed Freedom Scroll that costs approximately £1600. In addition recipients are given a civic reception, hosted by the Civic Mayor at the Mansion House, to include a buffet and beverages at an approximate cost of £500.
22. The total cost of £2100 will be funded from the Civic Mayor’s budget.

Human Resources Implications [Officer Initials: SH | Date: 27.06.23]

23. There are no HR implications associated with this report

Technology Implications [Officer Initials: ET | Date: 27/06/23]

24. There are no technology implications in relation to this report.

RISKS AND ASSUMPTIONS

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

CONSULTATION

26. In accordance with the agreed protocol, 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 for consideration by Council.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

27. Freedom Application from Annie Roberta (Bobbie Roberts and letters of support from Mr. Dev Das, Lord Andrew Hurst and Kevin McDonald OBE.)

REPORT AUTHOR & CONTRIBUTORS

David Chorlton, Civic Office Manager

Phone Number 01302 734004 Email address david.chorlton@doncaster.gov.uk

Debbie Hogg, Director of Corporate Services