

Committee(s)	Dated:
Freedom Applications Committee – For Decision	24 November 2016
Subject: Guidance for Members and Non-Members regarding The Freedom of the City of London	Public
Report of: The Chamberlain	For Decision

Summary

At its meeting on 23 July 2015 the Committee agreed the guidance on the Freedom to be issued to City Corporation Members. It followed the introduction of the new governance arrangements for the Freedom process agreed by the Court of Common Council on 5 March 2015. Since the guidance was circulated some issues have arisen particularly relating to high profile potential candidates such as MP's and Ambassadors so the guidance has been revised. It was also considered to be helpful to circulate the guidance in a slightly different format to the other stakeholders in the freedom process namely the Livery Companies

Recommendation

It is **recommended** that the guidance set out in Appendix A be circulated to all elected Members of the City of London and that the guidance set out in Appendix B be circulated to the Livery Clerks of the 110 Companies; the Clerks of the historic Companies without Livery (Watermen and Lightermen and the Parish Clerks; the Guilds and Companies en route to full Livery status and to the Livery Committee.

Main Report

1. On 5 March 2015, the Court approved a number of new arrangements for the Freedom of the City of London. They included an increased role for Members of this Committee in relation to scrutiny and governance generally, improved arrangements for checking the suitability of candidates, the introduction of Freedoms by Special Nomination and an increase in the Freedom Fee.
2. At the Freedom Applications Committee meeting of the 23 July 2015 it was agreed that guidance be issued to City Corporation Members on the new arrangements for the Freedom.
3. The guidance outlined in Appendix A has been revised slightly from the original in order to emphasize the importance of members contacting the Freedom Application Committee should they wish to nominate Ambassadors, Members of Parliament, significant City figures or prominent public figures. This is to ensure that

best use is made of the nomination to assist the City of London with its aims and objectives. It may be that the City of London has an existing agenda with an Ambassador or an MP and it would be more appropriate for the candidate to be nominated by the Lord Mayor, the Chairman of Policy and Resources or the Chief Commoner. Regarding Ambassadorial and diplomatic freedoms it would also enable the Remembrancer to carry out due diligence checks with the Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

Proposed Guidance for Non- Members

4. At the Freedom Applications Committee meeting of the 23 July 2015 it was agreed that guidance be issued to City Corporation Members on the new arrangements for the Freedom. It was also resolved that the Chamberlain prepare similar draft guidance for non-Member nominations.

5. The guidance for City Corporation Members makes clear the type of scrutiny that is now being carried out in respect of each application received and what would happen should something untoward be found, including the role of this Committee.

6. The same guidance should be conveyed to the Livery Companies for information but in practice the Companies have their own internal vetting procedures including Application Committees, Nominators and Interviews.

7. It also sets out how the City Corporation will go about determining who would be eligible to receive the Freedom by Special Nomination, making it clear that the aim of Freedoms in this category is to recognise individuals who have made a significant contribution to the City or the fields of culture, politics and diplomatic life. It may be that the Livery Companies might want to put forward some recommendations although in practice they have their way of honouring outstanding candidates by offering them Honorary Freeman or Liveryman status but embellish this with a Freedom of the City ceremony. For example recently the Worshipful Company of Bakers did exactly this with Mary Berry.

8. In some cases regarding the nominating of Ambassadors, Members of Parliament or prominent public figures it is requested that at first instance they should contact the Freedoms Applications Committee which might be able to assist for example by enhancing the ceremony; perhaps ensuring that the Lord Mayor, Sheriffs, Aldermen, the Chief Commoner or Chairmen of City of London Committees attend; ensuring that the Chamberlain or Remembrancer personally conducts the ceremony and perhaps the provision of a toast for "the youngest freeman"

Conclusion

9. The production of guidance for non-Members about the new arrangements for the Freedom is important so that uniform standards can be applied across the board. In this way, non-Members can better understand the type of individual that the City Corporation might wish to recognise.

10. In addition, to the written guidance, the Clerk and staff in the Chamberlain's Court will be able to offer further advice and guidance to non- Members including, at the initial stages, an indication of whether a particular individual is likely to meet the criteria.

Appendices

- Appendix A –Guidance for Members – The Freedom
- Appendix B – Guidance for Non-Members – The Freedom

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Appendix A

Guidance for Members – The Freedom

1. The Freedom of the City of London is a unique part of London's history to which many people who have lived or worked in the City have been proud to be admitted. People of any nationality may be admitted either through nomination or by being presented by a Livery Company. The City of London is keen to maintain the Freedom as a living tradition and those admitted represent a very broad cross-section of the population.

2. The Court of Common Council recently reviewed aspects of the Freedom including the introduction of Freedoms by Special Nomination and strengthening the governance arrangements. The purpose of this note is to provide Members with some guidance on the Freedom and how those new arrangements work. This is restricted to nominations for the Freedom that come before the Court of Common Council for approval rather than those put forward by the various Livery Companies for approval by the Court of Aldermen.

Freedom by Redemption

3. Freedoms granted by the Court of Common Council (excluding the Honorary Freedom) continue to require the applicant to be nominated by two persons being either Aldermen, Common Councilmen or Liverymen of at least one year's standing and the payment of the requisite fee (currently £100). Nominators must certify that the person they are proposing is known personally to them and is, in their opinion, a fit and proper person for admission to the Freedom.

4. If Members wish to nominate an Ambassador, a Member of Parliament, a significant figure from the City of London or some other prominent public figure then they should consult first with the Freedoms Applications Committee to ascertain whether the City of London has an existing agenda which can be enhanced by the freedom ceremony or to enable the Remembrancer to carry out due diligence checks with the Foreign and Commonwealth Office regarding Ambassadorial and diplomatic nominations. In some cases it may be more appropriate for the Lord Mayor, the Chairman of Policy and Resources or the Chief Commoner to be the nominator.

Honorary Freedoms

5. The rarest Freedom is the Honorary Freedom and is generally only awarded to Royalty, Heads of State or to figures of global renown. It is the highest honour that the City of London Corporation can bestow and takes place in the presence of the Lord Mayor, Sheriffs and Aldermen. One example would be the Honorary Freedom granted to Archbishop Desmond Tutu in November 2013.

Freedoms by Special Nomination

6. The Court has introduced a new category known as Freedoms by Special Nomination. The Freedom Applications Committee will select a limited number of

people for this category although the granting of the Freedom remains with the Court of Common Council. The aim of Freedoms by Special Nomination is to recognise individuals who have made a significant contribution to the life of the Capital or in the fields of culture, politics and diplomatic life. The ceremonies will usually be accompanied by publicity and hospitality provided by the City Corporation. Recipients are sometimes asked to deliver a master class or a question and answer session to further enrich what is hopefully a special occasion.

7. Bearing in mind the special nature of this Freedom, the Freedom Applications Committee will decide who is best to nominate the individual. Nominators are likely to be senior City Corporation Members including the Lord Mayor, the Chief Commoner and the Chairman of the Policy & Resources Committee.

Governance

8. All applications under any of the categories above will be subject to some basic checks by the Chamberlain's Court to ensure that they are people that the City Corporation would be happy to grant the Freedom ie: that they are of good character. The checks include information available in the public domain such as that found on search engines like Google or on social media.

9. The names of the applicants and their nominators are passed to members of the Freedom Applications Committee for some added informal scrutiny before the application goes before the Court.

10. In the event that there is a concern over a particular applicant, the Chamberlain's Court will seek clarification from the applicant and from the nominators and can refer the matter to the Freedom Applications Committee for consideration prior to submission to the Court of Common Council.

Guildhall
2015

Appendix B

Guidance for Non- Members – The Freedom

1. The Freedom of the City of London is a unique part of London's history to which many people who have lived or worked in the City have been proud to be admitted. People of any nationality may be admitted either through nomination or by being presented by a Livery Company. The City of London is keen to maintain the Freedom as a living tradition and those admitted represent a very broad cross-section of the population.

2. The Court of Common Council recently reviewed aspects of the Freedom including the introduction of Freedoms by Special Nomination and strengthening the governance arrangements. The purpose of this note is to provide Non- Members with some guidance on the Freedom and how those new arrangements work. This is restricted to nominations for the Freedom that come before the Court of Common Council for approval rather than those put forward by the various Livery Companies for approval by the Court of Aldermen.

Freedom by Redemption

3. Freedoms granted by the Court of Common Council (excluding the Honorary Freedom) continue to require the applicant to be nominated by two persons being either Aldermen, Common Councilmen or Liverymen of at least one year's standing and the payment of the requisite fee (currently £100). Nominators must certify that the person they are proposing is known personally to them and is, in their opinion, a fit and proper person for admission to the Freedom.

4. Freedom granted by the Court of Aldermen via a Livery Company. It is appreciated that Livery Companies carry out their own extensive vetting procedures and often interview candidates personally through a membership committee. However, it would be appreciated that if the Company is nominating an Ambassador, a Member of Parliament or other prominent public figure that they consult first with the Freedoms Applications Committee which might be able to assist for example by enhancing the ceremony; perhaps ensuring that the Lord Mayor, Sheriffs, Aldermen, the Chief Commoner or a Chairman of one of the City of London Committees attend; ensuring that the Chamberlain or Remembrancer personally conducts the ceremony and perhaps the provision of a toast for "the youngest freeman"

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9. The names of the applicants and their nominators are passed to members of the Freedom Applications Committee for some added informal scrutiny before the application goes before the Court.

10. In the event that there is a concern over a particular applicant, the Chamberlain's Court will seek clarification from the applicant and from the nominators and can refer the matter to the Freedom Applications Committee for consideration prior to submission to the Court of Common Council.

11. It is appreciated that Livery Companies have their own vetting procedures which will often involve a personal interview and a degree of scrutiny by a membership committee. This will remain unchanged and be unaffected by points 8,9 and 10 above.