

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 in the UK or overseas 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 appropriate consultations, for example with the Foreign and Commonwealth Office regarding Ambassadorial and diplomatic nominations. In these cases it may be normal for the Lord Mayor, the Chairman of Policy and Resources and 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 Sir Tim Berners-Lee in 2014.

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 i.e.: 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.