

Report to:	COUNCIL
Relevant Officer:	Mark Towers, Director of Governance and Partnerships
Relevant Cabinet Member	Councillor Simon Blackburn, Leader of the Council
Date of Meeting	29 June 2016

FREEDOM OF ENTRY – DUKE OF LANCASTER REGIMENT

1.0 Purpose of the report:

- 1.1 Following consultation with the Leader of the Council and the Leader of the Conservative Group, the Council is asked to give consideration to agreeing in principle to confer 'Freedom of Entry' status on the Duke of Lancaster Regiment. 'Freedom of Entry' is associated with the 'Freedom of the Borough' and is granted to Service Units which have rendered eminent service and which are closely associated with the Borough.

2.0 Recommendation(s):

- 2.1 To agree to arrange a Special meeting of the Council to be able then to pass a resolution under 249(5) of the Local Government Act 1972 to confer 'Freedom of Entry' status to the Duke of Lancaster Regiment, in recognition of the service provided by that unit to the Borough.
- 2.2 That the Director of Governance and Partnerships be requested to arrange this Special meeting of Council following the Council recess in the lead up to Remembrance Sunday.

3.0 Reasons for recommendation(s):

- 3.1 To recognise the strong local connection with the Duke of Lancaster Regiment and the unconditional support the Regiment has given to the Borough in supporting many events over recent years.
- 3.2a Is the recommendation contrary to a plan or strategy adopted or approved by the Council? No
- 3.2b Is the recommendation in accordance with the Council's approved budget? Yes

3.3 Other alternative options to be considered:

To not award the 'Freedom of Entry' status.

4.0 Council Priority:

4.1 The recommendations in this report meet all the Council's priorities.

5.0 Background Information

5.1 The status of Honorary Freeman is probably the highest honour that a local authority can bestow on a citizen and has been conferred on rare occasions by the Council. For service units the 'Freedom of Entry' is the equivalent award and again has been issued on few occasions over the many years of the Council. The only surviving Honorary Freeman of Blackpool is Jimmy Armfield CBE (awarded in 2003) and the last time 'Freedom of Entry' was awarded was in 1990 to HMS Penelope.

5.2 The 'Freedom of Entry' grants the service unit the right, privilege and honour of marching through the streets of Blackpool on ceremonial occasions with swords drawn, bayonets fixed, drums beating, bands playing and colours flying.

5.3 The Duke of Lancaster Regiment was formed on 1 July 2006, by the amalgamation of the King's Own Royal Border Regiment, the King's Regiment and the Queen's Lancashire Regiment.

5.4 The Duke of Lancaster's Regiment is the Infantry Regiment for the North-West of England. It consists of two Regular Army Battalions (1 Lancs and 2 Lancs) and one Army Reserve Battalion (4 Lancs). The Battalion 2 Lancs is based at Weeton Barracks, and 4 Lancs is based at Fulwood Barracks with two units based in Blackpool (4 Mortar Platoon and C Squadron 208 Field Hospital). The local Army cadet units also come under the Duke of Lancaster Regiment. Her Majesty the Queen, the Duke of Lancaster, is the Colonel in Chief.

5.5 The Regiment is actively involved in the Armed Forces week and its organisation and has been for many years and when the Regiment became aware that Blackpool had adopted Neuve Chapelle to aid its recovery post war, Blackpool's Mayoral party was invited to attend the 100th anniversary service. They also hold regular career guidance and mentoring sessions within Blackpool schools, support all employment fairs and events within the area that they also have a big part to play in our remembrance day commemorations. The regiment recruits from the Blackpool area with over 100 people recruited annually.

Does the information submitted include any exempt information?

No

List of Appendices:

None.

6.0 Legal considerations:

6.1 Section 249(5) of the Local Government Act 1972 allows Councils to confer the award of Freedom of the Borough (known as Freedom of Entry for service units). A special meeting of the Council would need to be convened where the proposed resolution would receive the support of not less than two-thirds of the Members voting.

7.0 Human Resources considerations:

7.1 There are no Human Resource considerations

8.0 Equalities considerations:

8.1 There are no equalities considerations

9.0 Financial considerations:

9.1 An illuminated scroll would be purchased to be presented to the Regiment, but this can be met from within current budgets.

10.0 Risk management considerations:

10.1 There are no risk management considerations

11.0 Ethical considerations:

11.1 The conferring of such an award recognises the dedicated service the Regiment has and continues to make to the borough of Blackpool.

12.0 Internal/ External Consultation undertaken:

12.1 Consultation has taken place with the Leader of the Council and the Leader of the Conservative Group.

13.0 Background papers:

None