



Leicester
City Council

WARDS AFFECTED

FORWARD TIMETABLE OF CONSULTATION AND MEETINGS:

Council

21 November 2013

Honorary Freedom of the City

Report of the Director of Delivery, Communications & Political Governance

1. PURPOSE AND SUMMARY OF REPORT

To consider conferment of Honorary Freedom of the City of Leicester

2. RECOMMENDATIONS (OR OPTIONS)

That the City Council under and by virtue of the provisions of Section 249 (5) of the Local Government Act 1972 confers on the Leicester Ladies Hockey Club the Honorary Freedom of the City of Leicester and causes them to be admitted as Honorary Freeman of said City in recognition and appreciation of the honour and distinction brought to the city by their sporting achievements and by their commitment to the development of their members and of sporting relationships across the City and the world.

3. REPORT

3.1 Honorary Freedom Criteria and process

Section 249 of the Local Government Act 1972 allows the City Council to confer the Honorary Freedom of the City persons of distinction and persons who have, in the opinion of the Council, rendered eminent services to the city. The Act requires that any appointment be approved by a resolution passed by not less than two thirds of the Members voting thereon at a meeting of the Council specially convened for the purpose.

The process adopted by the City Council where it relates to organisations, additionally states that

- For an organisation to be granted freedom of the city they must have a well-established and evidenced connection to the city.
- The honour will only be given to an individual or organisation who the citizens of Leicester would recognise as deserving of such an honour and whose contribution would stand out from the contributions of most other individuals / organisations for example being recognised as inspirational in their field.

- The individual / organisation must have made a significant contribution to the City either through improvement in the well-being of a significant proportion of city residents or in raising the reputation and profile of the city.

3.2 Leicester Ladies Hockey Club history and achievements

The Leicester Ladies Hockey Club was formed in 1894 and is the longest standing women's sporting club in the City. The Club has had a strong affiliation with the city since its inception and over the years has been based in a number of locations around the City.

The club has a strong history of success including in the 1970's Lesley Hurley and Dianne Batterham as international players. During that time, Pam Parker OBE was club President and an international umpire, as well as Vice President of England Hockey.

With the introduction of League Hockey in the 1980's, Leicester Ladies won the inaugural Midlands League, qualifying for the first season of the national league in the 1987/88 season. Since its introduction Leicester Ladies has won the national league or championship on nine occasions. International players in the 1980's include Helen Woodward, Sue Holwell, Katherine Gurr and Denise Parker.

The club has a great reputation in developing international links to Leicester. In the 1990's they became the first ever English club to host Russian players in private homes when Skiff of Moscow visited. The club has had numerous successes within European competition. In 1995 after winning the England Hockey Cup, the club won bronze at the Cup Winners Final in Cardiff. Silver medals were won on several occasions at Orense, Spain, Azerbaijan and Holland in competition. Bronze medals have also been won in Edinburgh.

Leicester Ladies has produced many players often selected for Olympic Games Squads, three players featured in the 1988 Seoul Games, four players and the manager (Di Batterham) were selected in 1992 for the Barcelona games in which the team won Bronze medals. 1996 saw two players selected for Atlanta and then three players featured in the Sydney Games in 2000. GB did not qualify in 2004 but four players were selected for the Beijing Games in 2008. Most recently four Leicester Ladies team players represented Great Britain at the London 2012 Olympic Games where team GB won Bronze medals. The consistency of quality players is evident with four other Leicester Ladies Team players training with team GB.

The club has increased its indoor Hockey success and won two national titles out of the last three years.. In 2011 the club also won the European Indoor silver medal.

Junior development is a key part of the club's success., In the past 12 years it has produced junior sides that have reached national finals winning the national under16 Plate twice and finishing as runner ups in the national under 18 competition. Leicester Ladies also produces players for the U21s, U18s, and U16s GB team, the latest being Josie Inverdale. Josie has just returned from the European championships with a Bronze medal.

The Club has produced many local role models for Leicester. The Club champions the cause of women in sport and wants girls to aspire to be like the role models the club has nurtured. The club works hard to promote health and wellbeing for women and actively encourages membership of all ages, with members of the club reaching into their mid 50's.

3.3 Conferment of Honorary Freedom to Leicester Ladies Hockey Club

The significant contribution of the Leicester Ladies Hockey Club to the city of Leicester is clearly demonstrated above, both in terms of their role in raising the reputation and profile of the city through their sporting achievements and national and international links, and in their promotion and support for girls and women of all ages in sport. The Club has a long history within the city and rightly deserve to be recognised through the conferment of Honorary Freedom by Leicester City Council.

4. FINANCIAL, LEGAL AND OTHER IMPLICATIONS

4.1. Financial Implications

There are no significant financial implications arising from this report - Colin Sharpe, Head of Finance, ext 37 4081.

4.2 Legal Implications

The conferment of 'Honorary' Freedom of the City is distinct to the granting of Freedom by 'entitlement' under section 248 Local Government Act 1972. The gesture is a symbolic one, and brings with it no specific entitlements or obligations. The legal definition of "persons" is also given a broad interpretation in law, and includes unincorporated bodies, such as a Members Club. The honour can therefore be conferred upon the club. In law, an unincorporated association (such as a member's club) does not have a distinct legal identity from those of its constituent Members. The 'body' therefore comprises its members". (Kamal Adatia, City Barrister, ext 37 1401).

5. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

OTHER IMPLICATIONS	YES/NO	Paragraph Within the Report	References
Equal Opportunities	N		
Policy	N		
Sustainable and Environmental	N		
Crime and Disorder	N		
Human Rights Act	N		
Elderly/People on Low Income	N		
Corporate Parenting	N		

6. BACKGROUND PAPERS – LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

None

7. CONSULTATIONS

8. REPORT AUTHOR

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