

CHARTER TRUST FOR THE CITY OF DURHAM

1 November 2017

Freedom of the City - RAF



City of Durham

Report of Bryan Smith, Clerk to the Charter Trustees

Purpose of the Report

1. To inform Trustees of a request by RAF for consideration of granting the Freedom of the City.

Background

2. The Council and the Charter Trustees have been notified by Group Captain TC Willbond (retd) RAF of the forthcoming celebrations for the RAF 100th anniversary next year and in particular the possibility of a northern regional event in the summer.
3. It has been suggested that the Charter Trustees may wish to pay tribute to the RAF on this important anniversary and Number 607 (County of Durham) squadron Royal Auxiliary Air force has been suggested for consideration of the granting of the Freedom of City. Brief details have been supplied confirming that 607 squadron came into existence in 1930 and served with great distinction until it was disbanded in 1957. Whilst the squadron was based at RAF Usworth during 1940 it took part in the great Northern battle on 15 August 1940 in which a large enemy advance was repelled to great effect. A squadron standard was presented at a ceremony on Palace Green in 1960 and laid up in the Cathedral. The squadron is now back in being and based at RAF Leeming. It is intended that both 202 squadron RAF and 607squadron RAuxAF will take part in the RAF 100 regional celebrations next year.
4. Following an acknowledgement and request for further details a briefing note is now supplied as attached to this report.
5. Charter Trustees may wish to consider if this is an opportunity to bring the RAF in line with the Army (Rifles) and Navy (HMS Bulwark) who have previously been granted Freedom of entry.

6. Charter Trustees are reminded that under 249 (5) Local Government Act 1972 they may admit to be honorary freemen or honorary freewomen of the place or area for which it is the authority –
 - (a) persons of distinction, and
 - (b) persons who have, in the opinion of the authority, rendered eminent services to that place or area.

7. Charter Trustees previously agreed at a meeting on 28 June 2012 that certain criteria be adopted for considering the granting of Freedom of Entry to the City of Durham namely
 - (1) To recognise and celebrate the long and close links between the City and other organisations.
 - (2) To recognise and celebrate a contribution to the culture and life of our City and/or an ambassador for our region.
 - (3) To recognise the unstinting support for local charities by a resident of our City.
 - (4) To recognise and celebrate a long and outstanding career by someone born and raised in our City.

8. Charter Trustees should consider whether this request is suitable for a further report to a specially convened meeting for the purpose of deciding if Freedom of Entry to the City be granted.

Recommendation

9. That Trustees note this report and decide if a specially convened meeting may be called.

Contact: Bryan Smith Tel: 03000 269717

Appendix 1: Implications

Finance – Detailed within the report.

Staffing - None specific within the report.

Risk - None specific within the report.

Equality and Diversity / Public Sector Equality Duty - None specific within the report.

Accommodation - None specific within the report.

Crime and Disorder - None specific within the report.

Human Rights - None specific within the report.

Consultation – Information contained within the Report as supplied by the RAF.

Procurement - None specific within the report.

Disability Issues - None specific within the report.

Legal Implications – Exercising powers under the Local Government Act 1972.