

## **REPORT TO Executive**

**Date of Meeting: 14 November 2017**

**Report of: Corporate Manager, Democratic & Civic Support**

**Title: FREEDOM OF THE CITY**

### **Is this a Key Decision?**

No

### **Is this an Executive or Council Function?**

#### **Council**

#### **1.1 What is the report about?**

- 1.1 This report sets out a proposal to offer the Freedom of the City to Mr Ron Crabb in recognition of his outstanding services to the City and community of Exeter, in a professional, charitable and personal capacity.

#### **2. Recommendations:**

- 2.1 That in accordance with Section 249 of the Local Government Act 1972, an Extraordinary meeting of the Council be arranged, on the rising of the Ordinary meeting of the Council on 19 December 2017, to consider granting the Freedom of the City to Mr Ron Crabb.

#### **3. Reasons for the recommendation:**

- 3.1 Section 249 of the Local Government Act 1972, gives Councils the power to grant "Freedom of the City" to any individual who it feels has given eminent service to the City.
- 3.2 To this end, an Extraordinary meeting of the full Council must be convened to specifically consider this matter, with two thirds of those present, voting in favour.
- 3.3 If the recommendation contained in this report is accepted by The Executive and subsequently adopted by full Council, an Extraordinary meeting of the Council will therefore be organised immediately after the ordinary meeting of the Council scheduled for 19 December 2017, when Members will be asked to consider granting the Freedom of the City to Mr Ron Crabb.
- 3.4 Members are reminded of the following four criteria against which nominations for Freeman of the City are considered:-
- For those who have extraordinarily served the community over a number of years (minimum of 20 years) in a voluntary or professional capacity;
  - For those who have achieved national, international or world recognition for excellence in their particular field of expertise (be it business, entrepreneurial, sport, or any other area);
  - For those who have promoted Exeter during their career so as to significantly raise the profile of the City on a national, international or world basis;
  - For those who have via a particularly extraordinary act, or series of acts, put the safety or well being of themselves secondary to those of others.

3.5 The following nomination has been received:-

*“Ron Crabb has had a marvellous and varied career, the majority of which has been based in Exeter. Not only has he had professional careers as a Royal Marine and Prison Warder, he is well known for his work as Mace Sergeant for the City Council as well as a professional football referee. What isn’t so well known is his charity work within the City, which is seemingly endless. He has worked tirelessly with the Royal Marines Association and the Training camp at Lymington; the local Air Cadets and Scouts; and many many organisations. During his time as Mace Sergeant, he was elected to the position of Prime Warden - the top position in the Honorary Guild of Mace Bearers. In recognition of all of these achievements, he was awarded the British Empire Medal, No matter what Ron did, or where he was, he always promoted the fact that he was from Exeter.”*

3.5 As such, it meets several of the agreed criteria against which such nominations should be assessed, and as such is recommended for approval.

3.6 In response to this nomination, Mr Crabb has stated:-

*“Of all the jobs I have had in my life, my time spent working in the Guildhall was a privilege and I was very proud of working for the City Council, and in particular, its Mayoralty. Throughout my life, I have always said that I have come from Exeter and the thought of becoming a Freeman of this great City, is an absolute honour, and one I am delighted to accept..”*

**4. What are the resource implications including non financial resources.**

4.1 Other than a small cost in preparing a suitable ceremonial scroll and hosting a small reception, there are no resource implications.

**5. Section 151 Officer comments:**

5.1 There are no financial implications contained in the report.

**6. What are the legal aspects?**

6.1 Section 249 of the Local Government Act 1972, gives Councils the power to grant “Freedom of the City” to any individual who it feels has given eminent service to the City.

**7. Monitoring Officer’s comments:**

7.1 This report raises no issues for the Monitoring Officer.

**8. Report details:**

- 8.1 The Council is asked to consider bestowing the honour of Freedom of the City to Mr Ron Crabb, in recognition of his outstanding services to the City and Community of Exeter in a professional, charitable and personal capacity.
- 8.4 It is felt appropriate that Mr Crabb is awarded the honour now, following his retirement from employment with the City Council during which time he served the Mayoralty Office with the utmost dignity and professionalism, whilst continuing with his many charitable and personal endeavours.

**9. How does the decision contribute to the Council's Corporate Plan?**

- 9.1 This decision will help promote the City as a regional capital and one which supports those who support and promote the City as such.

**10. What risks are there and how can they be reduced?**

- 10.1 There are no risks associated with the proposals.

**11. What is the impact of the decision on equality and diversity; health and wellbeing; safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults, community safety and the environment?**

- 11.1 None applicable with this decision

**12. Are there any other options?**

- 12.1 The Council could decide not to make the award, although it is felt that this would be against the Council's approved criteria.

**John Street**  
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Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1972 (as amended)  
Background papers used in compiling this report:-

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