

REPORT TO Executive

Date of Meeting: 9 February 2016

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 Richard Atkins in recognition of his outstanding services in the field of college education in Exeter and the wider area, which has led to Exeter's name being known nationally as one which delivers an excellent college education to a very high standard.

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 23 February 2016, to consider granting the Freedom of the City to Mr Richard Atkins.

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 23 February 2016, when Members will be asked to consider granting the Freedom of the City to Mr Richard Atkins.
- 3.4 The following nomination has been received in accordance with the following recently agreed criteria against which nominations would be considered:-
- 1. For those who have achieved national, international or world recognition for excellence in their particular field of expertise.**
 - 2. 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.**

"Mr Richard Atkins has been Principal of Exeter College since 2002. During this time the College (which was the first tertiary college to be established in the UK in 1970)

was judged as outstanding by Ofsted in January 2014. The college has twice featured in The Sunday Times 100 Best Places to Work in the UK listings and has won several Association of Colleges' Beacon Awards for curriculum excellence. In 2012 the college was voted the UK's FE Provider of the Year by the Times Educational Supplement. Richard was also appointed as the President of the Association of Colleges in 2014 (the representative body for the 320 further education, sixth form and tertiary colleges in the UK) and was recently awarded the CBE for his services to further education.

Richard is an innovative, passionate and visionary educational leader who has, quite simply, had a transformative impact, both on the City of Exeter and on the life chances of the many thousands of people who have benefitted from his vision during his distinguished career in further education. ”

3.5 Comparing this nomination against the above agreed criteria, it is considered that it can be recommended for approval.

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

“I am absolutely delighted and flabbergasted to be offered the Freedom of the City of Exeter, this is a huge honour for me , my family and everyone at Exeter College. Please pass on my heartfelt thanks and gratitude to the Lord Mayor, Leader and Chief Executive of the Council. It is wonderful for me to see the College's work recognised in this way.”

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 additional financial implications contained in this 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 to Mr Richard Atkins in recognition of his achievement in putting Exeter very much on the national map during his term as Principal of Exeter College, including during his tenure as President of the Association of Colleges.

8.4 It is felt appropriate that Mr Atkins is awarded the honour now, in the light of the above reasons, particularly as he has announced his intention to retire in March 2016 and also to reflect the Council's on-going commitment to supporting and recognising outstanding individuals from within the City

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 decided not to make the award, although it is felt that this would be against the recently approved criteria.

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

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