



## PENISTONE TOWN COUNCIL

### FREEDOM OF THE TOWN OF PENISTONE POLICY

#### 1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 In January 2010 the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009 (s. 27) amended the provisions of the Local Government Act 1972 (s. 248) to enable all local councils to confer honorary titles. Pursuant to s. 249 of the 1972 Act as amended, all local councils may exercise powers to confer the titles of honorary Freeman/Freewoman/Freeperson to persons who in the council's opinion, have rendered eminent service to the council's area. Section 249(8) of the 1972 Act as amended provides that the admission of an honorary Freeman/Freewoman/Freeperson must be by resolution made at a meeting of the full council for which the usual statutory notice period has been given; and the resolution must be passed by no less than two thirds of the members of the council.

1.2 The Town Council wishes to recognise the efforts of members of the community who demonstrate outstanding commitment to the well-being of Penistone. The Council will do this, in special circumstances that meet the criteria of this policy, by awarding to an individual their chosen title of Honorary Freeman/Freewoman/Freeperson of the Town of Penistone. *This honour will be awarded only on rare and exceptional occasions.* At any one time, a maximum of twelve persons may hold the title Honorary Freeman/Freewoman/Freeperson of the Town of Penistone for life.

#### 2. NOMINATION CRITERIA

The following will be taken into account when consideration is given to granting the honour of Honorary Freeman/Freewoman/Freeperson of the town of Penistone:

2.1 Individuals from all walks of life and all sections of the community who have made a significant beneficial contribution to the Town of Penistone are eligible to be nominated as Honorary Freepersons. Preference will be given to a person who performs in a voluntary capacity, but this should not preclude the honour being awarded to a person whose dedication and contribution is significantly above that expected for their occupation, including the uniformed services.

2.2 Nominees need not necessarily be resident within the Penistone Town Council area.

2.3 Any nominated Town Councillor should have retired from the post.

2.4 The contribution to the welfare of the community should involve one or more of the following:

2.4.1 A significant allocation of the person's time in serving members of the community for the improvement of their well-being;

2.4.2 The promotion, achievement and/or delivery of community services in which a real personal contribution has been made;

2.4.3 A contribution which is seen to stand above the contributions of most others;

2.4.4 Outstanding courage;

2.4.5 Outstanding acts which promote the town;

2.4.6 Outstanding sporting achievement.

### **3. NOMINATION PROCEDURE**

3.1 Any resident or elector of Penistone may make a nomination but it must be sponsored by a Town Councillor. Nominations will only be accepted in the calendar months September – December.

3.2 Nominations must be made in writing to the Town Clerk and supported by evidence of the voluntary service provided by the individual to the community; and any other examples of service which justifies the honour. The Town Clerk will circulate the nomination to all elected members for confidential consideration.

3.3 Nominations should be made in the strictest confidence and without the nominee's knowledge. It is not fair to raise expectations which may not be met. Any disclosure will make the nomination invalid.

3.4 An acknowledgement will be sent on receipt of the nomination. Correspondence will not be entered into on the merits of a particular nomination while it is under consideration.

3.5 The nomination will be considered by a meeting of the full Town Council and will be treated as a confidential item of business. A formal vote will be taken by the Council; and if the Councillors (at least two thirds) vote to admit the nominee as a Freeperson of the town of Penistone s/he will be invited to accept the honour.

3.6 The decisions of the Council on all nominations are final.

### **4. ENTITLEMENT**

4.1 Any person admitted as an Honorary Freeman/woman/person of the Town of Penistone may so designate themselves for the duration of their lifetime.

4.2 The award may be made at any time the Council sees fit. The recipient will be invited to a meeting of the Council to accept the award. A certificate will be presented to the recipient.

4.3 Honorary Freepersons shall be invited to all subsequent civic events and functions.

### **5. WITHDRAWAL**

5.1 Any Freeman/woman/person of the Town of Penistone who is deemed by the Council to have brought the office into disrepute may have the designation withdrawn by way of a vote (no less than two thirds of the Town Councillors) at a meeting of the full Council.