



Council

Extraordinary Meeting

Town Hall
Wallasey

8 February, 2022

Dear Councillor

You are hereby summoned to attend an extraordinary meeting of the Council to be held at **6.00 p.m. on Wednesday, 16 February 2022** in the Floral Pavilion, New Brighton, to take into consideration and determine upon the following subjects:

Members of the public are encouraged to view the meeting via the webcast (see below), but for anyone who would like to attend in person, seating is limited therefore please contact the Floral Pavilion box office at their website: <https://www.floralpavilion.com/en-GB/categories/wirral%20council> or by telephone on 0151 666 0000 in advance of the meeting, if you would like to reserve a seat. All those attending will be asked to wear a face covering (unless exempt) and are encouraged to take a Lateral Flow Test before attending. You should not attend if you have tested positive for Coronavirus or if you have any symptoms of Coronavirus.

Wirral Council is fully committed to equalities and our obligations under The Equality Act 2010 and Public Sector Equality Duty. If you have any adjustments that would help you attend or participate at this meeting, please let us know as soon as possible and we would be happy to facilitate where possible. Please contact committeeservices@wirral.gov.uk

This meeting will be webcast at
<https://wirral.public-i.tv/core/portal/home>

Contact Officer: Andrew Mossop
Tel: 0151 691 8501
e-mail: www.wirral.gov.uk
Website: <http://www.wirral.gov.uk>

AGENDA

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members of the Council are asked to consider whether they have any disclosable pecuniary interests and/or any other relevant interest, in connection with any matter to be debated or determined at this meeting and, if so, to declare it and state the nature of such interest.

2. CIVIC MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

To receive the Civic Mayor's announcements and any apologies for absence.

3. CIVIC HONOURS

A. CONFERMENT OF THE TITLE OF HONORARY ALDERWOMAN (Pages 1 - 6)

The Council is requested to consider the following recommendation from the Licensing and General Purposes Committee at its meeting on 20 January, 2022 (minute 15 refers):

That the Council be recommended to confer the title of Honorary Alderwoman on former Councillor Jean Stapleton in accordance with Section 249(1) of the Local Government Act 1972.

Minute and report attached.

B. HONORARY FREEDOM OF THE BOROUGH - FRANK ERNEST FIELD, BARON FIELD OF BIRKENHEAD (Pages 7 - 12)

The Council is requested to consider a proposal to admit Baron Field of Birkenhead as an Honorary Freeman of the Borough.

Report attached.



Director of Law and Governance

Audio/Visual Recording of Meetings

Everyone is welcome to record meetings of the Council and its Committees using non-disruptive methods. For particular meetings we may identify a 'designated area' for you to record from. If you have any questions about this please contact Committee and Civic Services (members of the press please contact the Press Office). Please note that the Chair of the meeting has the discretion to halt any recording for a number of reasons, including disruption caused by the filming or the nature of the business being conducted.

Persons making recordings are requested not to put undue restrictions on the material produced so that it can be reused and edited by all local people and organisations on a non-commercial basis.

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MINUTE EXTRACT

REGULATORY AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

THURSDAY 20 JANUARY 2022

15. CONFERMENT OF THE TITLE OF HONORARY ALDERWOMAN

The Director of Law and Governance submitted a report requesting that Members of the Committee give consideration as to whether to recommend to Council that the title of Honorary Alderwoman be conferred on former Councillor Jean Stapleton.

The Head of Democratic Services reported that former Councillor Jean Stapleton had been a Member of the Council from 4 May 2000 and had represented Birkenhead and Tranmere Ward as a Labour Party Member until 6 May 2021. The Council had previously determined that former Members who had served twenty years on the Council or a predecessor Council were eligible for nomination to this award and therefore former Councillor Jean Stapleton is eligible to have the title of Honorary Alderwoman conferred upon her.

Members were informed that Section 249 of the Local Government Act 1972 provides that the title of Honorary Alderman or Honorary Alderwoman may be conferred by the Council on persons who are persons of distinction and/or who have, in its opinion, rendered eminent service to the place or area. The title is to be conferred by a resolution passed by not less than two thirds of the Members voting on it at a meeting of the Council specially convened for the purpose.

It was reported that successful nominees for the office of Honorary Aldermen and Alderwoman of this Council had previously been awarded a suitable badge at a special ceremony. Currently, former Councillor Jean Stapleton was the only former Councillor eligible to be appointed as an Honorary Alderwoman based on the Council's criteria.

Members were further informed that the intention would be to present former Councillor Jean Stapleton with a badge of office, the total cost of which would be approximately £682.75 and there would also be the small cost of inscribing her name on the Roll of Honour board which could be met from existing budgets.

Resolved – That the conferment of the title of Honorary Alderwoman on former Councillor Jean Stapleton be recommended to Council in accordance with Section 249(1) of the Local Government Act 1972.

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REGULATORY AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE**Thursday, 20 January 2022**

REPORT TITLE:	CONFERMENT OF THE TITLE OF HONORARY ALDERWOMAN
REPORT OF:	DIRECTOR OF LAW AND GOVERNANCE (MONITORING OFFICER)

REPORT SUMMARY

This report requests that Committee gives consideration to whether to recommend to Council that the title of Honorary Alderwoman be conferred on former Councillor Jean Stapleton.

The Wirral Plan 2021 - 2026 sets out the Council's vision to secure the best possible future for the Council's residents and covers the following five themes:

- A thriving and inclusive economy, creating jobs and opportunities for all;
- A clean-energy, sustainable borough, leading the way in tackling the environment crisis;
- Brighter futures for all regardless of their background;
- Safe and pleasant communities that our residents are proud of; and
- Healthy and active lives for all, with the right care, at the right time.

By recommending the recognition of eminent service to the community, the proposals within this report align with the theme of safe and pleasant communities that our residents are proud of.

This matter affects all Wards within the Borough.

RECOMMENDATION/S

The Regulatory and General Purposes Committee is requested to recommend to Council the conferment of the title of Honorary Alderwoman on former Councillor Jean Stapleton in accordance with Section 249(1) of the Local Government Act 1972.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

- 1.1 Former Councillor Jean Stapleton was a Member of the Council from 4 May 2000, representing Birkenhead and Tranmere Ward as Labour Party Member until 6 May 2021.
- 1.2 The Council has previously determined that former Members who have served twenty years on the Council or a predecessor Council are eligible for nomination to this award.
- 1.3 Former Councillor Jean Stapleton is therefore eligible to have the title of Honorary Alderwoman conferred upon her. The recommendation provides the committee with the opportunity to give consideration to this and put forward a subsequent proposal to the Council.

2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 2.1 The alternative option is not to recommend Jean Stapleton for the position of Honorary Alderwoman.

3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 3.1 Section 249 of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) provides that the title of Honorary Alderman or Honorary Alderwoman may be conferred by the Council on persons who are:

(a) persons of distinction; and/or

(b) who have, in its opinion, rendered eminent service to the place or area.

A full Council resolution to this effect must be passed by not less than two-thirds of the Members voting thereon at a specially convened meeting.

- 3.2 Honorary Aldermen and Alderwoman are invited to attend Council Meetings in a non-participating capacity. They do not receive any allowances or payments under section 173 – 176 of the Local Government Act 1972. Honorary Aldermen and Alderwomen are also invited to attend and take part in civic ceremonies such as Civic Sundays and Remembrance Sundays and other appropriate Civic events. The names of Honorary Alderman and Alderwoman are inscribed on a Roll of Honour Board on the first-floor landing of Wallasey Town Hall.
- 3.3 Successful nominees for the office of Honorary Aldermen and Alderwoman of this Council have previously been awarded a suitable badge at a special ceremony. Currently, former Councillor Jean Stapleton is the only former Councillor eligible to be appointed as an Honorary Alderwoman, based on the Council's criteria.

4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 It would be the intention to present Jean Stapleton with a badge of office, the total cost of which is approximately £682.75. There will also be the small cost of inscribing her name on the Roll of Honour board which can be met from existing budgets.

5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The formal decision to confer the status of Honorary Alderman/Alderwoman must be ratified by an Extraordinary Meeting of the Council. It is proposed that the Extraordinary Meeting will be scheduled at an appropriate date in the future. A full Council resolution to this effect must be passed by not less than two-thirds of the Members voting thereon at a specially convened meeting.

6.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: STAFFING, ICT AND ASSETS

- 6.1 It is also customary for the Council to cover the cost of hospitality provided for the newly appointed Honorary Aldermen and Alderwomen and a select number of guests. Arrangements for such an event, that could be held on the rise of an Extraordinary Council meeting. (convened to confer the status of Honorary Alderwoman), would be made in consultation with the mayor. There is no specific budget head for this but the funding required can be allocated from the Civic Services catering budget. Consideration will be given to the current Covid-19 pandemic.

7.0 RELEVANT RISKS

- 7.1 There are no risks associated with this report, other than referred to in paragraph 6.1 above, namely those directly arising from any hospitality arrangements that may be considered during the current Covid-19 pandemic

8.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION

- 8.1 Political Group Leaders be consulted on these proposals and an update will be provided at the January meeting of Regulatory and General Purposes Committee.

9.0 EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 Wirral Council has a legal requirement to make sure its policies, and the way it carries out its work, do not discriminate against anyone. An Equality Impact Assessment is a tool to help council services identify steps they can take to ensure equality for anyone who might be affected by a particular policy, decision or activity. Measuring the impact of equality implications and mitigating any negative impact where possible is embedded into the core principles of good governance. There are no equality implications arising from this report.

10.0 ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 This report is for information purposes and as such, there are no direct Environment and Climate Implications

11.0 COMMUNITY WEALTH IMPLICATIONS

11.1 This report is for information purposes and as such, there are no direct Community Wealth Implications

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APPENDICES

None

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Section 249 Local Government Act 1972

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date
Not applicable	



Wednesday, 16 February 2022

REPORT TITLE:	HONORARY FREEDOM OF THE BOROUGH - FRANK ERNEST FIELD, BARON FIELD OF BIRKENHEAD
REPORT OF:	DIRECTOR OF LAW AND GOVERNANCE (MONITORING OFFICER)

REPORT SUMMARY

Under the Local Government Act 1972, the Council has the power to grant a person the title of Honorary Freeman or Freewoman of the Borough to persons of distinction who have rendered eminent service to the Borough.

This is a very significant step for the Council to take. Very few people have been awarded this status and, quite rightly, it should only be awarded to someone who has made an exceptional contribution to the Borough. Frank Field, Baron Field of Birkenhead is considered to be within this category.

Past recipients of this award are:

1993	Lt Commander Ian Fraser, VC
1996	Mr Joseph Lynch, GC, BEM (GAL)
2005	Mr Ray Holmes
2006	The Right Reverend David Urquhart
2006	Lord Chan of Oxton
2010	Mr Stephen Maddox OBE
2016	PC David Philips
2017	The Hillsborough 96
2019	Doctor Nunzia Bertali
2019	2nd Lt Jay Frederick Simpson USAF

In order to confer this honour on Frank Field, Baron Field of Birkenhead, the Council will need to pass a resolution by not less than two-thirds of the Members voting thereon at a meeting of the Council specially convened for the purpose, where notice of the object of the meeting has been given.

RECOMMENDATION/S

It is recommended to the Council: That

- (1) in pursuance of the provisions of Section 249(5) of the Local Government Act 1972 and in recognition of his dedicated service to the borough during his 40 years as MP for the Birkenhead Constituency, Frank Field be admitted as an Honorary Freeman of this Borough at an Extraordinary Council meeting to be held at 6pm on 16 February 2022; and

- (2) Officers be requested to take all of the necessary actions associated with (1) above and arrange a small civic reception for Frank Field's family, friends, colleagues and some invited guests to take place on a date to be agreed.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

- 1.1 To honour Frank Field, Baron Field of Birkenhead for his eminent service to the borough and the people of Wirral.

2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 2.1 No other options are being considered.

3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 3.1 The origin of the Freedom of the Borough goes back to early medieval times, when with the growth of the great English towns, there emerged a class of citizen known as Freemen, who enjoyed important privileges in the government of their own and in the matter of corporate property, as against strangers and the rest of the inhabitants.
- 3.2 With the passing of the Honorary Freedom of the Boroughs Act 1885 the dignity attached to the Office of Freeman was revived and enhanced. This Act conferred upon all Municipal Corporations the power to admit as Honorary Freeman of the Borough "persons of distinction and any persons who have rendered eminent services to the Borough". This can only be achieved by the Council voting at a specially called meeting.
- 3.3 The Freedom of the Borough is the highest award the Council can bestow.
- 3.4 Frank Ernest Field, Baron Field of Birkenhead, CH, PC, DL (born 16 July 1942) was a British politician who was the Member of Parliament (MP) for Birkenhead from 1979 to 2019, serving as a Labour MP until August 2018 and thereafter as an Independent. In 2019, he formed the Birkenhead Social Justice Party and stood unsuccessfully as its sole candidate in the 2019 election. After leaving the House of Commons he was awarded a life peerage in 2020 and subsequently sat in the House of Lords as a crossbencher.
- 3.5 Frank was born in Edmonton, Middlesex, on 16 July 1942, the second of three sons. His father was a labourer at the Morgan Crucible Company's factory in Battersea, and his mother a primary school welfare worker at Belmont Primary School in Chiswick. His parents were Conservatives "who believed in character and pulling oneself up by one's own bootstraps".
- 3.6 Frank was educated at St Clement Danes School, then in Hammersmith, before studying economics at the University of Hull. In his youth he was a member of the Conservative Party but left in 1960 because of his opposition to apartheid in South Africa and joined the Labour Party. In 1964, he became a further education teacher in Southwark and Hammersmith.
- 3.7 Frank served as a Labour councillor for Turnham Green on Hounslow London Borough Council from 1964 until 1968, when he lost his seat. He was Director of the Child Poverty Action Group from 1969 to 1979, carrying out research and influencing policies on income and expenditure for families below the poverty line, and the Low Pay Unit from 1974 to 1980.

- 3.8 Frank unsuccessfully contested the constituency of South Buckinghamshire at the 1966 general election, where he was defeated by the sitting Conservative MP Ronald Bell. He was selected to contest the safe Labour seat of Birkenhead at the 1979 general election on the retirement of the sitting MP Edmund Dell.
- 3.9 He held the seat with a majority of 5,909 and remained the constituency's MP until November 2019 increasing the majority during that time to over 25,000.
- 3.10 In Parliament, Frank was made a member of the Opposition frontbench by the Labour leader Michael Foot as a spokesman on education in 1980 but was dropped a year later. Following the appointment of Neil Kinnock as the Labour leader in 1983, Frank was appointed as a spokesman on health and social security for a year. He was appointed the chairman of the social services select committee in 1987, becoming the chairman of the new social security select committee in 1990, a position he held until the 1997 election.
- 3.11 Following the 1997 election, with Labour now in power, Frank joined the government led by Tony Blair as its Minister for Welfare Reform, working in the Department of Social Security (DSS). Blair has said his mission was to "think the unthinkable".
- 3.12 His time as a minister was shortlived however and he resigned after a short period of time in office, and he often quoted Tony Blair as saying "some people are just not cut out to be ministers"
- 3.13 However he was chosen as Chair of Social Security and Pensions Committee by other MPs and served in that role for several years during the Conservative Governments of Theresa May and David Cameron.
- 3.14 His time as MP for Birkenhead was characterized by his work to improve living standards and life chances for those living in some of the most deprived parts of the country.
- 3.15 He lobbied hard and was successful in bringing employment to Birkenhead with the Child Support Agency and helping to win contracts for Cammell Lairds to maintain shipbuilding in the town.
- 3.16 His priority was to address the causes of poverty as well as relieving the impact of it.
- 3.17 He was able to use experiences of those living in Birkenhead to help shape policy at a national level on social security and was instrumental in shaping Sure Start as a policy and the Foundation Years projects as a means of helping to improve life chances for children.
- 3.18 In more recent years he has worked to eliminate hunger and again was a mover in developing nationally the holiday play and food which started in Birkenhead and has now become a national policy.
- 3.19 He started Feeding Birkenhead with its network of social supermarkets and Café 7 as a citizen's supermarket and Feeding Britain has developed from that.
- 3.20 His work on the "gig" economy has brought about reform of working conditions of people employed by some of the large companies and he lead the campaign to get

pension compensation from BHS when the company ceased to trade and it was discovered that its pension fund had been rifled.

- 3.21 Frank has also been a co-founder of the Cool Earth project which aims to preserve the rain forests.
- 3.22 It was a great sadness to Frank that he could no longer be a member of the Labour Party, but he always hoped that a new era would bring about the reforms he wanted to see, and he never lost his commitment to bringing about social justice and after leaving Labour he stood for the Social Justice Party in 2019, but lost the seat.
- 3.23 Frank has always been recognised as a fierce campaigner for Birkenhead and leading figure on the subject of welfare reform.
- 3.24 As a well respected and long serving Member of Parliament for the Borough, many of his colleagues and friends (and political opponents) would concur with the words of Wirral Chief Executive, Paul Satoor who said:

“Frank served the people of Birkenhead as their MP with distinction for 40 years, as well as holding a number of important roles within Parliament, Government and in opposition.

“Though born in London, he took Birkenhead into his heart after his election in 1979. He championed many important campaigns - not just within his constituency but also across the rest of Wirral, Merseyside and nationally – on a range of issues.

“He was particularly committed to supporting the most disadvantaged people in society and in 2013 he set up an All-Party Parliamentary Group on Hunger, which published a major report on the growth in the numbers of people relying on food banks. This in turn led to him setting up ‘Feeding Britain’ as a charitable organisation to help put the group’s proposals into action to reduce and prevent hunger.

“Wirral had a friend and loyal advocate in Frank Field and the Council joins with many residents in remembering his long service and contribution to the borough of Wirral.”

4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The modest financial implications can be met from within existing budgets.

5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The Council may by a resolution passed by not less than two-thirds of the Members voting thereon at a meeting of the Council specifically convened for the purpose with notice of the purpose, admit to be Honorary Freemen or Freewoman of the place or area for which it is the authority persons/organisations of distinction and persons/organisations who have in its opinion rendered eminent services to the Borough. (Section 249(5), of the Local Government Act 1972.)

6.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: STAFFING, ICT AND ASSETS

- 6.1 There are no implications associated with staffing, ICT or assets.

7.0 RELEVANT RISKS

7.1 There are no risks identified with the implementation of the recommendations contained within this report.

8.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION

8.1 Prior to the matter being presented to Council, all nominations in respect of individuals, groups of individuals, or organisations are circulated as a matter of courtesy to the Mayor and Political Group Leaders.

9.0 EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

9.1 Wirral Council has a legal requirement to make sure its policies, and the way it carries out its work, do not discriminate against anyone. An Equality Impact Assessment is a tool to help council services identify steps they can take to ensure equality for anyone who might be affected by a particular policy, decision or activity. No equality issues have been identified as arising from this report.

10.0 ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS

10.1 The content and/or recommendations contained within this report are expected to have no impact on emissions of Greenhouse Gases

11.0 COMMUNITY WEALTH IMPLICATIONS

11.1 It is anticipated that the content and recommendations contained within this report will help enhance the Council's objectives of a thriving, healthy, accessible, safe and attractive Borough, and by way of encouraging community involvement in volunteering, education, donations to charities and other aspirations will maintain the tradition whereby public recognition may be given to recipients and as an expression of the highest esteem in which they are held by the Council and people of the Borough.

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BACKGROUND PAPERS

Wirral Council Constitution Part 5, Section 10

UK Parliament, Lord Field of Birkenhead – Parliamentary Career & Hansard

Frank Field, Parliamentary Personal Website

Other: en.wikipedia.org