

MINUTE EXTRACT

CABINET 25 APRIL 2016

136 FREEDOM OF THE BOROUGH

Councillor Phil Davies introduced a report that recommended that PC David Phillips be posthumously admitted as an Honorary Freeman of the Borough.

The report informed that PC David Phillips had been employed by Merseyside Police from 24 July 2006 until his untimely death last year. The Cabinet noted his posting history set out in the report and that he had been described as follows:

“David was a kind, polite and very caring. He was very proud of being a police officer and carried out his job with bravery and professionalism. David always did everything to the best of his ability. He never accepted second best. He was very sociable, with a great sense of humour. His priorities in life were his family. He was a devoted Family man – perfect husband to Jennifer, wonderful father to Abigail and Sophie and a fantastic son to Carol and Robin. The family could not be more proud of him. They will dearly miss him and he will always be in their hearts.”

Councillor Phil Davies spoke on behalf of all of his Cabinet colleagues recollecting how shocked everyone had been last October when PC David Phillips had been killed whilst carrying out his police duties in Wallasey. Councillor Davies informed that the whole community had been brought together in grief and in a show of solidarity to the Phillips family. Huge numbers of people had queued at Wallasey and Birkenhead Town Halls to express their grief by writing down their thoughts and signing the Books of Condolence that had been opened in memory of PC Phillips. This had been testimony to how people had felt about this appalling tragedy. Councillor Davies informed that the Police existed to keep us safe on a daily basis and PC Phillips’ tragic death had brought it home to us all that the Police do carry out an incredible job.

The Cabinet was apprised that bestowing Honorary Freeman status (posthumously) on PC David Phillips was the highest award that the Council was able to confer and was a very significant step as such an award had only ever been made when someone had made an exceptional contribution to the Borough. Councillor Phil Davies informed that he and his Cabinet colleagues appreciated the work the Police Officer had carried out and indeed the work of all Police Officers and made reference to their courage and bravery.

Councillor Phil Davies reported that, following consultations with the Phillips family and Merseyside Police, it was proposed to hold an Extra-Ordinary meeting of the Council at 6pm on Friday, 20 May 2016 to confer the honour on PC David Phillips. Members of the Council would have the opportunity to pay tribute to PC Phillips at this meeting. It was also intended to hold a small reception afterwards at Wallasey Town Hall for PC Phillips’ family, friends, colleagues and some invited guests. Councillor Phil Davies and his Cabinet colleagues were of the view that this was the right thing to do as a Council and also as a Borough.

Councillor Ann McLachlan concurred with what Councillor Phil Davies had said and informed that PC David Phillips' name would be added to the Freedom of the Borough plaque that hangs in the foyer of Wallasey Town Hall and lists the names of all the Honorary Freemen of the Borough of Wirral. She informed that, sadly, the Extra-Ordinary Council meeting on 20 May 2016 was expected to be one of the most poignant that Members would ever attend.

RESOLVED: That the Cabinet recommends 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 and bravery during his 10 years of employment with Merseyside Police, PC David Phillips be posthumously admitted as an Honorary Freeman of this Borough at an Extra-Ordinary Council meeting to be held at 6pm on Friday, 20 May 2016; and
- (2) Officers be requested to take all of the necessary actions associated with (1) above and arrange a small civic reception for PC Phillips' family, friends, colleagues and some invited guests to take place on the rise of the Extra-Ordinary Council meeting in the Round Room of Wallasey Town Hall.