



**COUNCILLOR PHIL DAVIES**

**CABINET**

**17 July 2017**

**HONORARY FREEDOM OF THE  
BOROUGH (POSTHUMOUS AWARD)  
TO THE 96**

**Councillor Phil Davies (Leader of the Council) said:**

“On 15 April 1989 thousands of Liverpool fans made their journey across the Pennines to watch their football team play in an FA Cup Semi-Final. 96 of those fans did not come home. 9 of those fans were from Wirral. The tragic events at Hillsborough unfolded for the world to see but it was only in April 2016 that the outcome of the inquests were finally made public and the world now knows that the 96 were unlawfully killed and all fans have been completely exonerated from any blame. In discussions with the Mayor, I believe it is now right for this Borough to mark the heroic fight which overturned the huge miscarriage of justice but also to remember, and never forget, the 96 who lost their lives.

The families of the 96 have been campaigning for justice for nearly 30 years and I believe it is now right for us to bestow upon their family members, the offer of the Freedom of the Borough.

We owe the 96, the families and survivors a debt of gratitude for their commitment to Truth, Justice and Accountability.”

**REPORT SUMMARY**

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

In April 1989, 96 football fans, including 9 from Wirral, travelled to Sheffield to watch a football match and never returned.

The tragic events at Hillsborough and the ongoing fight for justice for nearly 30 years demonstrate the need to recognise and never forget the 96 fans who lost their lives. It is proposed to bestow the award of Freedom of the Borough (posthumously) on them.

This is a very significant step for the Council to take. Very few people have been awarded this status.

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 Oxtou
2010	Mr. Stephen Maddox, OBE
2016	PC David Phillips

A scroll will be presented to a family representative of each of the 96 by the Mayor.

The Hillsborough Family Support Group have been consulted on a possible date for this meeting and it is proposed that the Council holds an Extraordinary meeting for the purpose of bestowing this award (posthumously) on the 96 at 5 p.m. on Friday 15 September 2017 in the Council Chamber at Wallasey Town Hall. It is also proposed that following this meeting, there will be a public event on the plateau at Wallasey Town Hall to dedicate a plaque and the gardens as the 'Memorial Gardens to the 96'. The evening would be concluded with a Civic reception for family representatives of the 96, when the scrolls and a commemorative gift would be given to them.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

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 the tragic loss of life and continued fight for justice on their behalf, the 96 named in paragraph 1.2, be posthumously admitted as Honorary Freeman / Freewoman of this Borough at an Extraordinary Council Meeting to be held on Friday, 15 September 2017 and
2. officers be requested to take all the necessary actions associated with (1) above and arrange for a public event and civic reception for family representatives of the 96 and some invited guests on the evening of 15 September 2017 and
3. to confirm agreement to costs estimated to be up to a maximum of £60,000 for these awards to be met from balances.

## **SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

### **1.0 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

1.1 To honour the 96 in recognition of their deaths in such tragic circumstances and the fight for almost 30 years by their families to seek Truth and Justice.

1.2 The 96 are:-.

- John Alfred Anderson (62)
- Colin Mark Ashcroft (19)
- James Gary Aspinall (18)
- Kester Roger Marcus Ball (16)
- Gerard Baron Snr (67)
- Simon Bell (17)
- Barry Sidney Bennett (26)
- David John Benson (22)
- David William Birtle (22)
- Tony Bland (22)
- Paul David Brady (21)
- Andrew Mark Brookes (26)
- Carl Brown (18)
- David Steven Brown (25)
- Henry Thomas Burke (47)
- Peter Andrew Burkett (24)
- Paul William Carlile (19)
- Raymond Thomas Chapman (50)
- Gary Christopher Church (19)
- Joseph Clark (29)
- Paul Clark (18)
- Gary Collins (22)
- Stephen Paul Copoc (20)
- Tracey Elizabeth Cox (23)
- James Philip Delaney (19)
- Christopher Barry Devonside (18)
- Christopher Edwards (29)
- Vincent Michael Fitzsimmons (34)
- Thomas Steven Fox (21)
- Jon-Paul Gilhooley (10)
- Barry Glover (27)
- Ian Thomas Glover (20)
- Derrick George Godwin (24)
- Roy Harry Hamilton (34)
- Philip Hammond (14)
- Eric Hankin (33)
- Gary Harrison (27)
- Stephen Francis Harrison (31)
- Peter Andrew Harrison (15)
- David Hawley (39)
- James Robert Hennessy (29)

- Paul Anthony Hewitson (26)
- Carl Darren Hewitt (17)
- Nicholas Michael Hewitt (16)
- Sarah Louise Hicks (19)
- Victoria Jane Hicks (15)
- Gordon Rodney Horn (20)
- Arthur Horrocks (41)
- Thomas Howard (39)
- Thomas Anthony Howard (14)
- Eric George Hughes (42)
- Alan Johnston (29)
- Christine Anne Jones (27)
- Gary Philip Jones (18)
- Richard Jones (25)
- Nicholas Peter Joynes (27)
- Anthony Peter Kelly (29)
- Michael David Kelly (38)
- Carl David Lewis (18)
- David William Mather (19)
- Brian Christopher Matthews (38)
- Francis Joseph McAllister (27)
- John McBrien (18)
- Marian Hazel McCabe (21)
- Joseph Daniel McCarthy (21)
- Peter McDonnell (21)
- Alan McGlone (28)
- Keith McGrath (17)
- Paul Brian Murray (14)
- Lee Nicol (14)
- Stephen Francis O'Neill (17)
- Jonathon Owens (18)
- William Roy Pemberton (23)
- Carl William Rimmer (21)
- David George Rimmer (38)
- Graham John Roberts (24)
- Steven Joseph Robinson (17)
- Henry Charles Rogers (17)
- Colin Andrew Hugh William Sefton (23)
- Inger Shah (38)
- Paula Ann Smith (26)
- Adam Edward Spearritt (14)
- Philip John Steele (15)
- David Leonard Thomas (23)
- Patrick John Thompson (35)
- Peter Reuben Thompson (30)
- Stuart Paul William Thompson (17)
- Peter Francis Tootle (21)
- Christopher James Traynor (26)
- Martin Kevin Traynor (16)
- Kevin Tyrrell (15)

- Colin Wafer (19)
- Ian David Whelan (19)
- Martin Kenneth Wild (29)
- Kevin Daniel Williams (15)
- Graham John Wright (17)

## **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.

## **4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 The financial implications to be met from balances.

## **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: ICT, STAFFING AND ASSETS**

6.1 There are no implications associated with staffing or ICT but regarding assets there will be some landscaping and remedial repairs to the outside of the Town Hall.

**7.0 ENGAGEMENT / CONSULTATION**

7.1 The Hillsborough Family Support Group has been consulted and is in favour of the proposals.

**8.0 EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS**

8.1 There are no equality implications.

**REPORT AUTHOR:** Joe Blott  
Managing Director for Delivery Services  
Telephone 0151 691 8182  
Email joeblott@wirral.gov.uk

**APPENDICES:** None

**SUBJECT HISTORY**

<b>Council Meeting</b>	<b>Date</b>