



REGULATORY & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

Thursday 7th September 2023

REPORT TITLE:	HONORARY FREEDOM OF THE BOROUGH (POSTHUMOUS AWARD) – GLENDA JACKSON
REPORT OF:	DIRECTOR OF LAW & GOVERNANCE (MONITORING OFFICER)

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.

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. Glenda Jackson of Birkenhead is within this category.

Past recipients of this ward 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 Phillips
2017 The Hillsborough 96
2019 Doctor Nunzia Bertali
2019 2nd Lt. Jay Frederick Simpson USAF
2022 Baron Frank Field of Birkenhead
2022 Andrew Devine
2023 Paul O'Grady

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

This matter affects all Wards within the Borough.

RECOMMENDATION/S

The Regulatory and General Purposes Committee is requested to recommend to Council that:

- (1) in pursuance of the provisions of Section 249 (5) of the Local Government Act 1972 and in recognition of her dedicated service to the Borough, that Glenda Jackson be posthumously admitted as Honorary Freewoman of this Borough at an Extraordinary Council Meeting to be held on 09th October 2023.
- (2) officers be requested to take all the necessary actions associated with (1) above and arrange for a small civic reception for family representatives of Glenda Jackson and some invited guests on a mutually agreeable date following the extraordinary meeting of Council

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

- 1.1 To posthumously honour Glenda Jackson of Birkenhead for her eminent service to the Borough and the people of Wirral.

2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 2.1 The alternative option is not to recommend Glenda Jackson as Honorary Freeman of this Borough.

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 Glenda May Jackson was born on 09 May 1936 in Birkenhead. Glenda Jackson was the oldest of four daughters and she went to school at Holy Trinity Church of England Primary school. Her secondary education was at West Kirby County Grammar School for Girls. She performed in the Townswomen's Guild Drama group in her teens and made her first acting appearance in J.B Priestley's 'Mystery of Greenfingers' in 1952 for the YMCA Players in Hoylake.
- 3.5 Glenda Jackson left school and obtained a job in Boots the Chemist before winning a scholarship in 1954 to study at the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art (RADA) in London. She moved to London to begin her course early in 1955.
- 3.6 Glenda's early career began while she was studying at 'RADA' and she began appearing in repertory theatre whilst also undertaking a role as a stage manager. She unsuccessfully auditioned for the Royal Shakespeare Company (RSC) and undertook what she later described as "a series of soul-destroying jobs". This included waitressing at a coffee bar, clerical work for a large City of London firm, answering phones for a theatrical agent, and a role at British Home Stores. She also worked as a Bluecoat at Pwllheli where her new husband and fellow actor Roy Hodges was a Redcoat. Glenda eventually returned to repertory theatre in Dundee but worked in bars in between acting jobs.

- 3.7 Glenda went on to star in film and TV productions between 1969 to 1980. There had always been a pull towards a political career for Glenda that ran alongside her acting career. In 1991 she retired from acting to devote herself to politics and was elected as an MP for Hampstead and Highgate in 1992. In July 1996 she became the shadow minister for transport. Following Labour's victory in the 1997 General Election Glenda was re-elected and appointed as a junior minister in the government of Tony Blair with responsibility in the London Regional Transport. She remained as an MP until 2015 when she announced that she would not seek re-election in the scheduled 2015 General Election.
- 3.8 Glenda Jackson is the only British actress to have won two Oscars, for her 1970 role opposite Oliver Reed in *Women in Love* and three years later for *A Touch of Class*.
- 3.9 The Glenda Jackson theatre in Wirral was officially named after her at a ceremony in September 1983.
- 3.10 The theatre was named after Ms Jackson after she reached the pinnacle of her fame. The theatre was demolished in 2005 following the establishment of a purpose-built site for students.
- 3.11 Glenda Jackson died on Thursday 15th June 2023 at her home in London with her family by her side. She was 87 years old.

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 Glenda Jackson to be Honorary Freeman 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 known risks associated with this report.

8.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION

- 8.1 Political Group Leaders have been consulted and support the proposals.

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.

REPORT AUTHOR: Kris Cureton
Civic & Electoral Services Manager
Tel: 0151 691 8507
Email: kriscureton@wirral.gov.uk

APPENDICES

None

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Wirral Council Constitution Part 5, Section 19
Online source: Wikipedia

TERMS OF REFERENCE

This report is being considered by the Regulatory and General Purposes Committee in accordance with Section 8.2 of its Terms of Reference

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date
Not applicable	