

Weymouth Town Council Honorary Freeman / Freewomen / Freepersons / holders of the Freedom of the Town Policy

1. Weymouth Town Council has the legal power (S 248-249 of the Local Government Act 1972) to recognise the efforts of members of the community and organisations.
2. The Council will do this, only in very special circumstances.
3. The title may be conferred on individuals, or organisations (organisations shall be limited to 5 years, and then reviewed) but may not be conferred on serving Councillors of this Council.
4. The award may be made at any time as the Council see fit, with a maximum of two awards being made per municipal year.

Nomination procedure

5. Any Weymouth Town Councillor may make a nomination.
6. Nominations should be made by the Councillor in the strictest confidence without the nominee's knowledge.
7. Nominations should be sent to the Town Clerk in confidence and must clearly state the name of person or organisation, and full details of the eminent service provided to the town of Weymouth.
8. On receipt of the required information, the Town Clerk will circulate the nomination to all councillors for confidential informal consideration.

Formal agreement of the honour

9. If Councillors are in agreement, by an indication of at least two-thirds of the members highlighting their support for the nominee, the Town Clerk will set up a special Full Council meeting, specifically for the purpose of conferring the title of Honorary Freeman/Freewoman/Freeperson/Freedom of the Town. Failing to reach this voting threshold would mean the nomination would not go forward.
10. At this special meeting, and for an award to be agreed, at least two-thirds of those voting must vote in favour of the award. The vote will take place in confidential session.
11. If and when the Town Council has agreed the honour, the Town Clerk will notify the nominee in confidence and seek his/her/their agreement of acceptance.
12. The decision of the Council on all nominations is final.

Bestowing the honour

13. If the nomination is made and accepted, the Town Clerk will invite the nominee to the next Full Council meeting to formally receive their certificate from the Mayor.
14. In the case of an organisation being awarded the honour, the organisation will be invited to send an appropriate number of representatives to receive the award.

Entitlement

15. Any person awarded the title may designate himself/herself Honorary Freeman/Freewoman/Freeperson of the town of Weymouth for life.
16. Where an organisation is awarded the Freedom of the Town, the honour relates to the organisation as a whole and not individual members. Individual members are not permitted to designate themselves Honorary Freeman/Freewoman/Freeperson.

Council Protocol

17. The honour brings with it no rights, benefits, or requirements.
18. Individual Freeman/Freewomen/Freepersons or representatives of organisations will be invited to attend all Civic Functions and any other such functions as deemed appropriate (i.e. Remembrance Service, etc).
19. Freeman will be acknowledged at ceremonies i.e. during the welcoming speech.
20. Appropriate courtesy will be shown to Freeman/Freewomen/Freepersons i.e. seating arrangements.

Withdrawal

21. The Honorary title may be removed by way of Council resolution in light of circumstances such as imprisonable criminal conviction, or bringing the council into disrepute
22. No fewer than two-thirds of those voting, at a formal vote, must agree the withdrawal.

Agreed: May 2023

Review: May 2025