

## 1. MEMBERS OF COUNCIL

<b>POLICY NUMBER</b>	-	<b>1.18</b>
<b>POLICY SUBJECT</b>	-	<b>1.18 Honorary Freeman</b>
<b>ADOPTED</b>	-	

### **Policy Objective:**

This policy sets out the circumstances under which the Shire of Merredin Council may bestow the title of “Honorary Freeman of the Shire of Merredin” upon individuals who have made an outstanding and exceptional contribution to the Shire or community.

### **Policy Scope:**

This policy covers matters relating to the nomination and conferring of the honour.

### **Policy Statement:**

#### **Introduction**

From time to time members of the Merredin community may demonstrate outstanding commitment and contribution to the Shire or community and it is recognised that this contribution should be acknowledged. The Council will do this by, in special circumstances that meet the criteria of this policy, awarding to an individual the title of “Honorary Freeman of the Shire of Merredin”. The Council will recognise, under appropriate circumstances, individuals who have demonstrated an outstanding contribution. It is the highest honour available to the Shire.

#### **Principles**

- (a) Outstanding contributions should be recognised by the community and the Shire
- (b) The status of the honour should be protected over time.

#### **Provisions**

##### **1. General**

- 1.1 The conferring of the honour of the Freeman of the Shire of Merredin will occur only in rare and exceptional circumstances to maintain both the significance and prestige of the title.
- 1.2 The nominee must have given extensive and distinguished service to the Shire or community in a largely voluntary capacity. The nominee must have made an outstanding contribution to the Shire or community such that the nominee’s contribution can be seen to stand above the contributions made by most other people.
- 1.3 Bestowing the title of Honorary Freeman of the Shire will only be by an absolute majority decision of the Council and in accordance with this policy.

##### **2. Nomination Criteria**

- 2.1 The following shall be taken into account when consideration is being given to the conferring of the title of Honorary Freeman of the Shire of Merredin:

- (a) the nominee's exceptional service must be recognised as a matter of public record;
- (b) the nominee must have lived in, worked or served the Shire of Merredin for a significant number of years
- (c) the nominee must have identifiable and long-standing connections with the community in the Shire of Merredin
- (d) the nominee must have provided long and distinguished service to the local community;
- (e) the nominee's endeavours must have clearly benefited the Shire of Merredin Community;
- (f) the nominee must have demonstrated both outstanding leadership and personal integrity;
- (g) preference shall be given to a person who performs in a voluntary capacity, but this should not preclude the honour being awarded to a person whose dedication and contribution is significantly above that expected from their occupation;
- (h) the contribution to the welfare of the community must involve one or more of the following factors:
  - significant contribution of the nominee's time in serving members of the Community for the improvement of their welfare;
  - the promotion, achievement and/or delivery of community services in which a real personal role and contribution is made;
  - while difficult to define, the contribution must be outstanding in that it can be seen to stand above the contributions of most other persons; and
  - the title shall not be bestowed on anyone who is holding the office of Council Member of the Shire of Merredin.

### **3. Nomination Procedure**

- 3.1 Formal nominations for the honour may only be made by a Councillor of the Shire of Merredin. A Councillor may make a nomination on his or her own cognisance or act as a sponsor for a wider community desire to honour a person.
- 3.2 A nomination for the honour may be submitted at any time provided that the nomination is in writing and clearly addresses the nomination criteria.
- 3.3 The nomination must clearly outline the history of the nominee in chronological order, outlining their history of the community service.
- 3.4 Nominations must be made in the strictest confidence without the nominee's knowledge and be sponsored by a Councillor and supported in writing by at least two other Councillors.
- 3.5 Nominations are to be submitted to the Chief Executive Officer. The Chief Executive Officer will submit a confidential report to a Council Meeting with details of the nomination. The confidential report for the Council Meeting shall be delivered at least two weeks prior to the meeting date to all Councillors.
- 3.6 If a Councillor expresses an objection to the nomination, that Councillor must give their reasons for the objection in writing to the Chief Executive Officer, at least one week before the Council Meeting. The Chief Executive Officer shall submit all objections (together with any other relevant information) to the Council Meeting.
- 3.7 Deliberations on the matter will take place behind closed doors. No record of the nominee's name shall be recorded in the Minutes of the Council Meeting, whether supported or not by the Council
- 3.8 In the event Council approves the nomination, it shall be by an Absolute Majority decision.

3.9 Prior to any announcement, the Chief Executive Officer shall make personal contact with the nominee to confirm their acceptance of the honour.

#### **4. Entitlements**

- 4.1 Any person declared an Honorary Freeman of the Shire of Merredin:
- (a) may designate themselves as an “Honorary Freeman of the Shire of Merredin”;
  - (b) will be invited to all civic events and functions and be acknowledged as a dignitary;
  - (c) will have their photograph hung in the Shire’s Council Chambers;
  - (d) will be provided with a plaque to commemorate receipt of their Award; and
  - (e) will be conferred at an appropriate civic ceremony for the purpose hosted by the Shire of Merredin.

#### **5. Limitations on Holders of the Award**

- 5.1 At any one time, a maximum of four living persons only, unless otherwise decided by an Absolute Majority decision of the Council, may hold the title ‘Freeman of the Shire of Merredin’.
- 5.2 For avoidance of doubt, the honour shall not be awarded posthumously.

#### **6. Personal Conduct**

- 6.1 A person who has been conferred with the honour of “Honorary Freeman of the Shire of Merredin’ shall display high standards of personal conduct and behaviour at all times and shall not bring the Shire of Merredin into disrepute.
- 6.2 The Council reserves the right to cancel the honour, in the event that the holder is convicted of a serious criminal offense or brings the Shire into disrepute. (Any such decision shall be by an absolute majority decision).

#### **Key Terms/Definitions**

Not Applicable.