

ISLE OF ANGLESEY COUNTY COUNCIL

MEETING:	COUNTY COUNCIL
DATE:	8 DECEMBER, 2011
TITLE OF REPORT:	THE ROYAL WELSH – FREEDOM OF THE COUNTY
REPORT BY:	HEAD OF SERVICE - POLICY
PURPOSE OF REPORT:	TO CONSIDER THE GRANTING OF THE FREEDOM OF THE COUNTY TO THE ROYAL WELSH REGIMENT AND ACCEPT RECOMMENDATIONS

1. A request was submitted to the County Council on 13 September, 2011, setting out the process for the granting of the Freedom of the County of Anglesey to the Royal Welsh Regiment, following a resolution passed by the Council on 8 March, 2011. (A copy of the report submitted to the meeting on 13 September, 2011, is enclosed as background information, setting out the necessary procedures and proposed arrangements - Appendix A).
2. The report refers to the Council's powers under Section 249 of the Local Government Act, 1972, in relation to the granting of the Freedom of the County to the Royal Welsh and the requirement for a two thirds majority of the Council in order to pass the resolution.
3. On 13 September, 2011, the Council resolved that Group Leaders discuss these issues before 8 December.
4. If the Council resolved to grant the Freedom to the Regiment, it is proposed that the Freedom Ceremony and Parade be held in Holyhead in 2013.

Recommendations

The Council resolves to:-

- i) Grant the Freedom of the County to the Royal Welsh Regiment.
- ii) To confirm that the Freedom Ceremony and Parade be held in Holyhead on 27 April, 2013.

ISLE OF ANGLESEY COUNTY COUNCIL	
MEETING:	COUNTY COUNCIL
DATE:	13 SEPTEMBER, 2011
TITLE OF REPORT:	THE ROYAL WELSH – FREEDOM OF THE COUNTY
REPORT BY:	HUW JONES
PURPOSE OF REPORT:	TO CONSIDER THE GRANTING OF THE FREEDOM OF THE COUNTY TO THE ROYAL WELSH REGIMENT AND ACCEPT RECOMMENDATIONS

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1. At its meeting on 8 March, 2011, the County Council supported a Notice of Motion by Councillor Aled Morris Jones and resolved as follows:-

“Council resolves that the Managing Director should commence the process of consultation, with the relevant parties, on the granting of the Freedom of the County of Anglesey to the Royal Welsh Regiment. This is in recognition of their service to the nation.”

- 1.2. Pursuant to the above, initial discussions have been held with Major (Ret'd.) T. P. Wheadon, Assistant Regimental Secretary – The Royal Welsh, on arrangements. A number of authorities have already granted the Freedom of the County to the Regiment to strengthen the relationship between The Royal Welsh and the people of the area concerned, where there has been a history of recruitment to the Regiment down the years.

2.0 Power to make the decision

- 2.1. The County Council has powers under Section 249 of The Local Government Act, 1972, “to admit to be the honorary freemen of the county or county borough, persons of distinction and persons who have in the opinion of the Council, rendered eminent services to the county or county borough”. The granting of the Freedom of the County to the Royal Welsh would mean that the name of the Regiment would be placed on the Roll of Honorary Freemen of the County and the Council would confer the right of the Regiment to march through the streets of the County on all ceremonial occasions with colours flying, drums beating and bayonets fixed. It should be noted that, once the Freedom is conferred, the Regiment could return every three or four years to exercise this.
- 2.2. To confer the Freedom of the County requires particular protocols and procedures and a ceremonial occasion organised to meet certain criteria.

The following procedures would be necessary:-

- 2.3. A report submitted to a Special Meeting of the Council which recommends that, using its powers under S.249 of the Local Government Act 1972, the Council should consider offering the Freedom of the County to the Royal Welsh. A two thirds majority of the Council is required in order to pass the resolution and uniformed representatives of the Regiment would be present in order to accept the offer on behalf of the Royal Welsh. If the resolution was passed, a project team would be formed in order to take forward the arrangements for the ceremonial occasion. This team would comprise the Civic Officer and representatives from the Royal Welsh, the Council's Highways Department, North Wales Police and Holyhead Town Council.

3. Revenue Implications

- 3.1. The average cost of holding such an event is estimated at approximately £6,000. There are insufficient funds available in the civic budget to cover such costs due to other annual demands on the budget . Consequently provision from the special events fund would be necessary.

4. Arrangements

- 4.1. Due to operational duties in Afghanistan next year, Major Wheadon has advised that a date could not be arranged until after their return and the possibility was that a parade, if granted, would be arranged for the Spring of 2013. The 27th April, 2013, has been earmarked for such event.
- 4.2. Holyhead has had a close affinity with the Armed Forces over the years and in return it is recommended that the Freedom Ceremony and Parade be held in the town on that date. Involvement of the Holyhead Town Council would therefore be necessary – (on the project team).

5. Recommendations

- 5.1. The Council convenes a special meeting with the Council on the same day as the next ordinary Council scheduled for 8 December, 2011, for the purpose of resolving the granting of the Freedom of the County to The Royal Welsh Regiment. A two thirds majority is required in order to pass the resolution.
- 5.2. To invite uniformed representatives of The Royal Welsh Regiment to the special meeting.
- 5.3. To confirm that the Freedom Ceremony and Parade be held at Holyhead.