

**CONGLETON TOWN COUNCIL**

**COMMITTEE REPORTS AND UPDATES**

<b>COMMITTEE:</b>	Council Meeting		
<b>MEETING DATE AND TIME</b>	28 <sup>TH</sup> April 2022 7.00pm	<b>LOCATION</b>	Congleton Town Hall
<b>REPORT FROM</b>	David McGifford – Chief Officer		
<b>AGENDA ITEM REPORT TITLE</b>	<b>19 Addition to Civic Protocol – Appointing an Honorary Burgess</b>		
<b>Background</b>	<p>On the 21<sup>st</sup> October 2021 Congleton Town Council approved an amended <a href="#">Civic Protocol</a>. In this protocol, the Mayor’s Operational Note 5 outlined appointing an Honorary Town Burgess. The procedure was not very detailed, and it is proposed that the attached policy in Appendix 19.1 replaces the previous Mayor’s Operational Note Five – Appointing an Honorary Town Burgess.</p> <p>Congleton Town Council currently has four Burgesses – John Pollard, Ernest Clarke, Douglas Parker and Gordon Baxendale. Cllr Denis Murphy was also a Burgess but relinquished this position on becoming a Councillor. He will return to being an Honorary Burgess when he is no longer a Councillor.</p> <p>The Town Council has not appointed a new Burgess since 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2015. The title of Honorary Burgess is given in recognition of great service to the town. There is no legal significance to this title, nor does it confer any rights or privileges. Burgesses are invited to attend civic functions of the Town Council, invited to all Council meetings and are sent copies of agendas and non-confidential reports.</p>		
<b>Points for Consideration</b>	<p>Anyone being put forward for consideration of a Burgess should be seen as an obvious and natural choice.</p> <p>The Council does need to minute Part 2 items, but it could be said that Councillors have approved a new Burgess who will be announced at the next Annual Town Meeting.</p> <p>Nominations will always be discussed as a Part 2 item as they will involve personal information, or they could be discussed at the Informal Town Council meeting when Councillors also make recommendations for Mayor and Deputy Mayor.</p> <p>The Chief Officer will subtly check that the person nominated is agreeable to becoming an Honorary Burgess, in advance of any discussion about a new Burgess.</p> <p>It is proposed that the maximum number of Burgesses is reduced from the current quantity of 25 down to 15.</p>		
<b>Proposal</b>	To approve the criteria for becoming an Honorary Burgess and for it to replace the current Operational Note 5 in the Civic Protocol.		
<b>Decision Requested</b>	To approve the amended and more detailed guidance in Appendix 19.1 on appointing an Honorary Burgess and to include this in the Civic Protocol.		

## **Appendix 19.1 - Draft Policy for Appointing a Congleton Town Honorary Burgess**

(To replace Operational Note 5 in the current Congleton Town Council Civic Protocol)

### **POLICY OBJECTIVE:**

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

### **POLICY SCOPE:**

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

### **POLICY STATEMENT: INTRODUCTION**

From time-to-time residents of Congleton may demonstrate outstanding commitment and contribution to the Town 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 Burgess of the Town of Congleton”. The Council will recognise, under appropriate circumstances, individuals who have demonstrated an outstanding contribution. It is the highest honour available to the Town Council.

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

### **PROVISIONS**

#### **1. GENERAL**

1.1 The conferring of the honour of the “Honorary Burgess of the Town of Congleton” 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 Town or community in a largely voluntary capacity. The nominee must have made an outstanding contribution to the Town or community such that the nominee’s contribution can be seen to stand above the contributions made by most other people.

## **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 Burgess of the Town of Congleton:

- (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 Town of Congleton for a minimum of 12 years.
- (c) the nominee must have identifiable and long-standing connections with the community in the Town of Congleton.
- (d) the nominee must have provided a distinguished service to the local community.
- (e) the nominee's endeavours must have clearly benefited the community Town of Congleton.
- (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.
  - the title shall not be bestowed on anyone who is holding the office of Councillor of the Congleton Town Council.

## **3. NOMINATION PROCEDURE**

3.1 The honour may only be made by a Congleton Town Councillor. A Councillor may make a nomination on their 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 and details are to be submitted to the Chief Officer. The Chief Officer will subtly find out if the proposed person would be interested in becoming a Burgess, and if so, will submit a confidential report to a Council Meeting with details of the nomination.

3.7 Deliberations on the matter will take place in private. No record of the nominee's name shall be recorded in the Minutes of the Council Meeting, whether supported or not by the Council as a part 2 item, although the Council will need to minute when a new Burgess is to be announced.

#### **4. ENTITLEMENTS**

4.1 Any person declared an Honorary Burgess of the Town of Congleton:

- may designate themselves as an "Honorary Burgess of the Town of Congleton".
- will be invited to all civic events and functions and be acknowledged as a dignitary.
- will be provided with a plaque to commemorate receipt of their Award.
- will be conferred at an appropriate civic ceremony for the purpose hosted by the Town Council.

#### **5. LIMITATIONS ON HOLDERS OF THE AWARD**

5.1 A maximum of four persons only, unless otherwise decided by two-thirds of the Council present at the meeting, may be honoured with the title 'Honorary Burgess of the Town of Congleton in any one Council cycle, to a maximum of fifteen living persons. A Council cycle is the four year term of office that Councillors are elected for.

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 Burgess of the Town of Congleton” shall display high standards of personal conduct and behaviour at all times and shall not bring the Town of Congleton 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 offence or brings the honour into disrepute. (Any such decision shall be by an absolute majority decision of those present).

## **7. The Acceptance Ceremony**

7.1 The ceremony for the admitting of an Honorary Burgess is to be a very formal occasion. This will take place on the occasion of a Annual Town Council meeting. The resolution should recite the grounds upon which the recommendation is being made, and details of the public services rendered by the recipient should be included. The procedure should be carried out with the utmost formality and the Honorary Burgess Elect is invited and should attend the Council Meeting and be placed on the left hand of the Mayor. After the passing of the resolution, the newly admitted Burgess should take the appropriate Oath and sign the Burgess Roll, his/her signature being witnessed by the Mayor and the Chief Executive or nominated Officer. A certificate of the grant of Honorary Burgess, containing a copy of the formal resolution, should then be presented to the newly appointed Honorary Burgess by the Mayor with a Burgess medal, with an opportunity being given for the recipient to reply. After the formal proceedings come to an end, it is usual to close the meeting and adjourn for a reception. This gives an opportunity for the invited guests to offer their congratulations to the newly appointed Honorary Burgess.