



Briefing Report - Freedom of Sandown

Date 12 May 2025

Prepared by Town Clerk

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1. The granting of the Freedom of the Town is a symbolic presentation, which represents the highest honour a Town can bestow on an individual.
- 1.2. Freedom was originally an honour which could be bestowed by a Town or Parish Council upon a valued member of the community, a visiting celebrity or dignitary or a military group.
- 1.3. Although the honour once carried entitlements on how the individual or group could either enter the Town, today it is a symbolic presentation.

2. LEGAL BASIS

- 2.1. The original power to bestow the title of honorary freeman or free women came from the Honorary Freedom of Boroughs Act 1885¹. Initially it was limited to Borough Councils.
- 2.2. This act was repealed and replaced by Section 249 of the Local Government Act 1933², itself subsequently repealed the Local Government Act 1972.
- 2.3. The Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009³ extended the power to Town and Parish Councils.

3. REQUIREMENTS

- 3.1. The decision must be made at a meeting of the relevant authority which is specially convened for the purpose and where notice of the object of the meeting has been given;
- 3.2. It must be supported by not less than two-thirds of the members of the relevant authority who vote on it.

¹ [Honorary Freedom of Boroughs Act 1885](#)

² [Local Government Act 1933](#)

³ [Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009](#)

4. HEATHER HUMBY, MBE

- 4.1. Miss Heather Humby first became a Councillor in 1973 as a member of Sandown & Shanklin Urban District Council.
- 4.2. Two years later when the Local Government Act created two borough councils Miss Humby became a member of South Wight Borough Council.
- 4.3. In 1980 in response to calls from local residents to have more local voice, Miss Humby collected signatures to campaign for a Town Council, lodging the campaign with the Speaker in the Houses of Parliament. Permission was secured in 1984 and Sandown Town Council came into being.
- 4.4. Miss Humby as worked tirelessly as a Councillor and on several occasions Mayor of Sandown in the subsequent decades.
- 4.5. Miss Humby also holds numerous volunteer positions in Sandown. She has been on the Carnival Committee since she was a teenager in the 1950'd and supports the Carnival and Football Club to name a few.

5. RECOMMENDATION

THAT Heather Humby, MBE, be awarded the Freedom of Sandown.