

**REPORT TO:** East Lothian Council

**MEETING DATE:** 23 October 2012

**BY:** Chief Executive

**SUBJECT:** Nomination for the Freedom of East Lothian – The Royal Regiment of Scotland

---

## **1 PURPOSE**

- 1.1 To report on a proposal from the Provost and Leader of the Council that the Freedom of East Lothian is awarded to The Royal Regiment of Scotland (to be accepted on their behalf The Royal Scots Borderers 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, formerly the Royal Scots).

## **2 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 That on the nomination of the Provost, seconded by the Leader of the Council, East Lothian Council resolves to present the award of the Freedom of East Lothian to The Royal Regiment of Scotland, 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion (1 SCOTS) in honour of their long and proud association with East Lothian and its communities.
- 2.2 To instruct officials to make the necessary arrangements for a Freedom of East Lothian parade and presentation ceremony to be held in April 2013 following the return of the Battalion from their 6-month tour of duty in Afghanistan.
- 2.3 To delegate authority to the Chief Executive in consultation with the Provost and Leader of the Council to approve detailed proposals, these to be the subject of a final report to the Members Library.

## **3 BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 The honour of freedom of a city or other council area is the highest accolade that a municipality can offer. Although historically associated with a range of ancient rights and privileges, the title of Freeman or Freewoman is now largely honorary, and usually awarded to men and

women who have strong associations with an area and who have made an outstanding contribution to local, national or international life.

- 3.2 Historically, a number of the former East Lothian Burghs made such an award, with Members of the Royal Family and a former Prime Minister among those honoured. In recognition of their association with the towns of Haddington and Musselburgh, the Royal Scots (The Royal Regiment) were awarded the Freedom of these Burghs in 1947 and 1971 respectively.
- 3.3 In November 2004, East Lothian Council approved the first award of the Freedom of East Lothian to the world-renowned artist Dr John Bellany, who was born in Port Seton and is a former pupil of Preston Lodge High School. In November 2009, the Women's British Open Golf Champion, Catriona Matthew of North Berwick, was also awarded the Freedom of East Lothian in honour of her numerous national and international sporting achievements.
- 3.4 In March 2006, The Royal Scots (The Royal Regiment) merged with the other Scottish Infantry Regiments to form The Royal Regiment of Scotland. In August 2006, this Battalion merged with The King's Own Scottish Borderers to form The Royal Scots Borderers, 1st Battalion The Royal Regiment of Scotland (or 1 SCOTS).
- 3.5 The Battalion began a six-month operational tour in the Helmand province of Afghanistan in early September 2012. Following their return in the Spring of 2013, with the Council's approval, the Battalion would be invited to parade and participate in a presentation ceremony. With the agreement of the Royal Regiment, Friday 19 April has been set provisionally as the proposed date for the homecoming parade and Freedom of East Lothian presentation.

#### **4 POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 None

#### **5 EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

- 5.1 This report is not applicable to the wellbeing of equalities groups and an Equalities Impact Assessment is not required.

#### **6 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 Financial - It is anticipated that costs associated with the organisation of the award ceremony will be contained within the Council's Civic Hospitality budget for 2013/14 with details the subject of a separate report to the Member's Library.

6.2 Personnel - None

6.3 Other - None

## **7 BACKGROUND PAPERS**

7.1 Approved Scheme for the Award of the Freedom of East Lothian – East Lothian Council, January 2005

<b>AUTHOR'S NAME</b>	David Russell
<b>DESIGNATION</b>	Communications Manager
<b>CONTACT INFO</b>	E. <a href="mailto:drussell@eastlothian.gov.uk">drussell@eastlothian.gov.uk</a> T. 01620 827655
<b>DATE</b>	9 October 2012