

**Memorandum for Executive Council**

**SUBJECT**

**Recognition of Exceptional Service – Proposed Badge of St Helena and Honorary Citizenship designation or Freedom of the City of Jamestown**

Memorandum by the Chief Secretary

**ADVICE SOUGHT**

**1. Executive Council is asked to consider and advise whether:-**

- (a) the draft criteria for the proposed Badge of St Helena as set out in paragraph 4.1.1 below should be approved and incorporated in legislation;**
- (b) the proposed Honorary Citizenship designation should be replaced with a symbolic “Freedom of the City of Jamestown” for both St Helenians and non-St Helenians;**
- (c) and if so, whether the draft criteria for a “Freedom of the City of Jamestown” as set out in paragraph 5.3 below should also be approved and incorporated in legislation;**
- (d) and if not, whether the draft criteria for an Honorary Citizenship designation as set out in paragraph 4.1.2 below, should be approved and incorporated in legislation.**

**BACKGROUND & CONSIDERATIONS**

2. It was agreed at the Executive Council meeting held on 3 November 2020 that the proposal for the recognition of exceptional service by non-St Helenians should be taken forward by the local Honours Committee in consultation with the Attorney General’s Chambers and the Foreign Commonwealth and Development Office. Council also:

- a) authorised the existing Honours Committee to prepare nomination criteria for a Badge of St Helena and an honorary citizen designation and to work with the Attorney General’s Chambers to develop an appropriate legal basis for granting the new awards, their citations and usage;
- b) permitted the Honours Committee to hold a design competition on St Helena to produce a locally prepared design for the obverse and reverse sides of a Badge of St Helena; and
- c) requested the Honours Committee to submit the designs and arrangements for the awards to Legislative Council within three months.

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3. Council further requested that the criteria for eligibility for the award would be brought back to Executive Council for consideration in due course, along with more details of the financial implications associated with the introduction of this proposal. It should be noted that whilst the Honours Committee suggested that the Badge of St Helena could also be bestowed on businesses, it is somewhat difficult to legislate for different eventualities in respect of business ownership/interest and registration. Businesses have therefore been excluded and eligibility is restricted to individuals.

### 4. **Nomination Criteria**

4.1 The Honours Committee has proposed the following criteria (note that reference to businesses in sub-para (a) below has been removed):

#### 4.1.1 Badge of St Helena –

*(a) The Badge of St Helena shall be awarded by the Governor, in consultation with the Honours Committee, to individuals who make significant contribution to St Helena by supporting and/or enhancing social, cultural, economic, environmental improvement or the understanding of St Helena internationally. A contribution considered for an award should be of direct relevance to St Helena and could be either a significant single action or a notable involvement up to the present time over an extended period. A contribution under consideration for an award may also contribute towards achieving one or more of the Island's national goals or strategic objectives.*

*(b) Contributions can include but are not limited to the following:*

- i. Innovation;*
- ii. Ventures leading to a novel or original improvements to St Helena;*
- iii. Charitable giving;*
- iv. Community engagement and acts of kindness/compassion that enhance inclusivity and generally improve the quality of life; and*
- v. Actions that promote culture, arts, literature, music etc. and positively raise awareness about St Helena as a place to visit, live, work, do business and raise children.*

*(c) Recipients of the Badge of St Helena need not be resident on St Helena and can be of any nationality.*

*(d) The St Helena Badge will not be awarded posthumously.*

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### 4.1.2 Honorary Citizenship designation

- (a) *An Honorary Citizenship designation shall be made by the Governor, in consultation with the Honours Committee and Executive Council, to individuals who are significantly admirable and worthy of distinction. Such designation shall be in the best interests of St Helena and the betterment of its people.*
- (b) *The awardee may be of any nationality and could either be:*
  - i. *resident on St Helena; or*
  - ii. *an international visitor of importance.*
- (c) *The designation is symbolic and does not grant any changes to citizenship or nationality, nor does it bestow any rights, privileges or duties.*
- (d) *The designation would be established by the award of a Certificate.*
- (e) *The Honorary Citizenship ends on the death of the honoured and could be annulled by the Governor following criminal conviction or behaviour not conducive to the reputation or international standing of St Helena.*

## **5. Freedom of the City of Jamestown as an alternative to Honorary Citizenship**

5.1 Notwithstanding the above, a further suggestion has been put forward by elected members to replace the Honorary Citizen award with a symbolic “Freedom of the City of Jamestown” for both St Helenians and non-St Helenians.

5.2 It is somewhat difficult to understand the difference between Honorary Citizenship and Freedom of the City and indeed the advantages of issuing one over the other, especially if the award is intended to be symbolic without any specific rights, privileges and duties and also given the fact that technically, Jamestown is not a city. In this regard, Wikipedia states *“The Freedom of the City (or borough in some parts of the UK is an honour bestowed by a municipality upon a valued member of the community, or upon a visiting celebrity or dignitary. Arising from the medieval practice of granting respected citizens freedom from serfdom, the tradition still lives on in countries such as the United Kingdom, Ireland, Australia, Canada, South Africa and New Zealand – although today the title of "freeman" confers no special privileges. The Freedom of the City can also be granted by municipal authorities to military units which have earned the city's trust; in this context, it is sometimes called the Freedom of Entry. This allows them*

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*the freedom to parade through the city, and is an affirmation of the bond between the regiment and the citizenry.*

*The honour was sometimes accompanied by a "freedom box", a small gold box inscribed to record the occasion; these are not usual today. In some countries, such as the United States, esteemed residents and visitors may instead be presented with the Key to the City, a similarly symbolic honour. Other US cities award Honorary Citizenship, with just a certificate."*

5.3 If the Executive Council is inclined to approve the "Freedom of the City of Jamestown" award as opposed to the Honorary Citizenship award for both St Helenians and non St Helenians, then very similar criteria is proposed for consideration:

- (a) The Freedom of the City of Jamestown shall be made by the Governor, in consultation with the Honours Committee and Executive Council, to individuals who are either St Helenian or non-St Helenian who are significantly admirable and worthy of distinction. Such designation shall be in the best interests of St Helena and the betterment of its people.*
- (b) The awardee may be of any nationality and could either be:
  - i. resident on St Helena; or*
  - ii. an international visitor of importance.**
- (c) The award is symbolic and does not grant any changes to citizenship or nationality, nor does it bestow any rights, privileges or duties.*
- (d) The designation would be established by the award of a Certificate.*
- (e) The Freedom of the City of Jamestown ends on the death of the honoured and could be annulled by the Governor following criminal conviction or behaviour not conducive to the reputation or international standing of St Helena.*

## 6. Legal basis for the awards

6.1 With regard to developing a legal basis for the awards, it is proposed that provision for the granting of honours and awards to recognise exceptional service and significant contribution to the Island and its people, be enshrined in an Ordinance with supporting regulations detailing the criteria for both awards with a description of the Badge of St Helena. Draft legislation will be finalised following the outcome of the decisions sought in this memorandum.

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### 7. Design Competition

7.1 The design competition for the Badge of St Helena was launched on 9 March 2021 and will close on Friday, 26 March 2021. The competition is open to all persons residing on St Helena.

7.2 It is proposed that the panel for judging the design entries be comprised as follows:

(a) an elected Member of Legislative Council;

(b) Hon French Consul, Michel Martineau; and

Members of the Honours Committee: Miss Tracey Williams, Mrs Sandra Sim and Mr Harry Legg OBE.

7.3 When the design is agreed, a description thereof will be inserted in the draft regulations.

8. Contact has been made with the Royal Mint in the UK with regard to minting the Badge of St Helena as this well-established entity also produces the Badge of Honour. Royal Mint has advised that development time is usually around 4 months but due to current capacity and restrictions, this timeframe could extend to 6-8 months.

9. It is proposed that the Honorary Citizenship designation or Freedom of the City of Jamestown award be marked with the award of a certificate that could be printed locally, depicting the St Helena Coat of Arms with the awardee's name and citation for the award.

### **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

10. The FCDO/Governor's Office has made available the sum of £250 for prize money and cost of advertising. £100 has been allocated for the prize.

11. The Royal Mint has advised that their standard tooling costs amount to £1,000 i.e. £500 per side. It is anticipated that the unit cost will be in same region as that for the Badge of Honour i.e. £145 plus VAT (NB price charged in 2020).

### **ECONOMIC IMPLICATIONS**

12. There are no economic implications. These awards will recognise exceptional service and contribution to St Helena and its people, including economic improvements

### **CONSISTENCY WITH INVESTMENT POLICY PRINCIPLES**

13. N/A

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### **PUBLIC/SOCIAL IMPACT**

14. As noted previously, there could be some public sensitivity about a non-St Helenian being awarded a Badge of St Helena or Honorary Citizen. An Honorary Citizen could be wrongly interpreted by some as a back road into citizenship without residency. Similarly, a Freedom of the City of Jamestown award could give rise to different interpretations even if it is available for both St Helenians and non-St Helenians, hence the need for clear criteria.

### **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT**

15. There is no environmental impact.

### **PREVIOUS CONSULTATION/ COMMITTEE INPUT**

16. Executive Council discussed this matter on 3 November 2020 and supported the idea of having a Badge of St Helena and an Honorary Citizen designation for non-St Helenians who provide exceptional services to St Helena - paragraph 3 above refers.

17. A paper outlining progress on this matter was circulated to all elected Members in early February and discussed on 19 February 2021. A number of queries were raised and Members were furnished with additional information 3 March 2021. This resulted in further comments which included the suggestion to replace the Honorary Citizen award with a symbolic "Freedom of the City of Jamestown" for both St Helenians and non-St Helenians. One Member was not in agreement with having two awards for non-St Helenians and one award for St Helenians.

### **PUBLIC REACTION**

18. Public reaction is likely to be mixed. There will be some in favour of such awards that are regulated via the Honours Committee, whilst there may be others with contrary opinions.

### **PUBLICITY**

19. Executive Council's decision should be covered in the media briefing following the meeting.

### **SUPPORT TO STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES**

20. N/A

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**LINK TO  
SUSTAINABLE  
ECONOMIC  
DEVELOPMENT  
PLAN GOALS**

21. N/A

**IMPLEMENTATION  
OF POLICY/  
LEGISLATION**

22. Implementation of, and compliance with, the proposed legislation will rest with the Central Support Service.

**OPEN/CLOSED  
AGENDA ITEM**

23. Recommended for the open agenda.

SO'B

Corporate Support  
Corporate Services

*19<sup>th</sup> March 2021*

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