

SPECIAL MEETING OF COUNCIL

Award of Honorary Freedom of the City of Lancaster to Mr Richard Brock

17th December 2025

Report of Chief Officer (Governance)

PURPOSE OF REPORT

This report is to consider awarding the Freedom of the City of Lancaster to Richard Brock, together with the suggested arrangements for the presentation of the award.

This report is public

RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE CHIEF OFFICER (GOVERNANCE)

- (1) That in pursuance of Section 249 (5) of the Local Government Act 1972, this Council confers the Freedom of the City of Lancaster on Mr Richard Brock in recognition of his contribution in World War II and as a valued member of the Bay Veterans.
- (2) That the Chief Officer (Governance) be authorised to make the necessary arrangements for the award to be made in the New Year.

1. Introduction

Mr Richard Brock has been nominated to receive the Honorary Freedom of the City in recognition of his contribution in World War II and as a valued member of the Bay Veterans.

Richard joined the East Lancashire Regt in 1943 and landed on Gold Beach in Normandy on June 8th 1944 – his ship was delayed due to bad weather. He immediately joined the battle for Caen and, once liberated, his regiment was deployed to liberate Holland in Operation Market Garden where he was involved in the battle for Arnhem (A Bridge Too Far). The winter of 1944 saw his regiment engaged in the Battle of the Bulge. He then went on to drive an interpreter into Belsen concentration camp 2 days after it was liberated and saw the horrific death and destruction there. The regiment eventually reached Hamburg where Richard stayed with the occupation forces until returning home in 1947. Only 19 of his company of 130 survived.

It is possible that Richard is the last survivor of the East Lancs Regt and is one of a handful of WWII veterans locally. He is a prominent member of the Bay Veterans Association in Morecambe and attends many functions locally as he is still fit and active even though he is 101 years old.

He was awarded the French Legion D'Honneur in recognition of his service to help liberate France.

2. Proposal Details

With the agreement of Council it is proposed that Mr Richard Brock be awarded the Freedom of the City of Lancaster. Should this award be granted, Mr Brock would be invited to attend a Special Meeting of Council in the New Year when the award will be formally presented.

3. Details of Consultation

Mr Brock has indicated that he would be delighted to accept this honour should it be bestowed upon him by the City and initial discussions with Members of the Council have indicated that there is Council support for this award.

4. Conclusion

Mr Richard Brock is a local war-hero. He has given so much of his life for his Country that to bestow this honour on him seems entirely appropriate.

CONCLUSION OF IMPACT ASSESSMENT

(including Diversity, Human Rights, Community Safety, Sustainability and Rural Proofing)

None.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Section 249(5) of the Local Government Act 1972 allows a principal Council of a district having the status of a City, by a resolution passed by not less than two-thirds of the Members voting thereon at a meeting of the Council specially convened for the purpose with notice of the object, to admit to be Honorary Freemen of the City persons of distinction and persons who have in the opinion of the Council rendered eminent services to the City.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Costs will be met from existing budgets for Civic Hospitality. If a buffet is provided after the Ceremony rather than a sit down meal, this will reduce costs and every effort will be made to keep costs to a minimum.

OTHER RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

Human Resources:

None.

Information Services:

None.

Property:

Rooms within Lancaster Town Hall will be booked in accordance with normal room booking procedures.

Open Spaces:

None.

Health and Safety:

None.

SECTION 151 OFFICER'S COMMENTS

The Section 151 Officer has been consulted and has not further comments.

MONITORING OFFICER'S COMMENTS

The Monitoring Officer has been consulted and has no further comments.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

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