Full Council 8\textsuperscript{th} December 2011

Conferring Freedom of Entry to the Borough – Royal Anglian Regiment

SYNOPSIS BOX
For Full Council to confirm arrangements for the award of Freedom of Entry to the Borough to the Royal Anglian Regiment

1. Relevant Background Details

The Royal Anglian Regiment is the regiment of the nine counties of East Anglia and the East Midlands. It was formed in 1964 from the Regiments of the East Anglian Brigade, which themselves had been formed through a series of amalgamations of the former County Regiments between 1958-60.

The Regiment has undergone a number of changes since its formation. Eventually the four Regular Battalions were amalgamated into two, the 1\textsuperscript{st} and 2\textsuperscript{nd}, with the 3\textsuperscript{rd} Battalion (Territorial Army) being created in 2006.

The Regimental Headquarters is located in Bury St. Edmunds, Suffolk.

2. Report

At Full Council on 13\textsuperscript{th} October 2011 Members indicated that they were minded to award the Royal Anglian Regiment “Freedom of Entry” to the Borough in recognition of the service given by men and women, many of them from this locality, on behalf of the local community. This was supported across the Council Chamber.

Under s.249 (5) of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) a Borough may admit “persons of distinction and persons who have in the opinion of the Council, rendered eminent services to the borough” as Honorary Freeman.

A resolution passed by not less than two-thirds of the members voting at a specially convened meeting is required to admit the Honorary Freeman but this does not confer rights upon them.

In some cases, the freedom resolution is passed at a special meeting of the Council and the formal presentation takes place at a special ceremony later.

Associated with the “Freedom of the Borough” is the "Freedom of Entry" which has been granted by a number of Boroughs to service units which have rendered conspicuous service and which are closely associated with the respective Borough.

The “Freedom” is to march through the streets of the Borough with bayonets fixed, drums beating and Colours flying. Whilst no city or borough would be entitled to prevent units of the Armed Forces from marching in the town (except the City of London) it is a practice that is now generally accepted as a means of honouring those men and women from a service unit.

The Regiment and its predecessors have been granted many Honorary Freedoms from across East Anglia and the East Midlands. Within Northamptonshire Freedom of Entry has been granted in Northampton & Wellingborough; Kettering have recently indicated their wish to honour the Regiment.
3. **Options to be considered (if any)**

There are a number of different aspects to be taken into consideration when organising the event. These include:

- Formal Council Meeting & Resolution
- Civic Service
- Parade
- Formal presentation of the Freedom Scroll

A small working group, chaired by the Mayor, will be established to co-ordinate the event.

Initial contact with the Regiment through the Regimental Secretary has been made.

4. **Issues to be taken into account:**

**Policy Priorities**

The Council has always played a role in supporting and highlighting the invaluable role played by the men and women within the Armed Forces.

**Financial**

At this time the actual cost of the event is unquantified, but a number of different costs will need to be addressed. These include:

- Scroll
- Presentation Casket
- PA Equipment & exterior staging
- Catering & refreshments

**Legal**

The Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) makes provision for the Authority to bestow the “Freedom of Entry” to the Borough on a service unit.

**Human Rights**

None specific to this report.

**Equalities**

None specific to this report.

**Sustainability**

None specific to this report.

**Community Safety**

Any parade through the town is likely to require road closure consent. Appropriate discussions with the Police would also be held.

5. **Conclusion**

Members are requested to confirm that they wish the Mayor and officers to progress arrangements for this matter.

6. **Recommendation**

i) Full Council agree to progress with inviting the Royal Anglian Regiment to accept the Freedom of Entry to the Borough;
ii) note that a working group under the chairmanship of the Mayor will be organised to co-ordinate the event; and

iii) that One Corby Policy Committee receives a report requesting the creation of a budget to fund all ancillary costs.

Background Papers
Civic Ceremonial – P Millward
British Army Website

External Consultations
Royal Anglian Regiment

List of Appendices
None

Officer to Contact
Paul Goult (Democratic Services Manager) ext 4013