

**REPORT OF THE COUNCIL BUSINESS MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE**

**FREEDOM OF THE CITY – ROYAL MARINES**

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**A. PURPOSE**

1. To consider a request to confer on the Royal Marines the privilege of having the right to march through the City.

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**B. BACKGROUND**

2. Since the Second World War the privilege of “honouring the City by marching through its streets with drums beating, bands playing, colours flying and bayonets fixed” has been conferred on the following eleven recipients: Royal Warwickshire Regiment, the 268<sup>th</sup> (Warwickshire) Regiment Royal Artillery TA, the 35<sup>th</sup> (South Midland) Signal Regiment, Royal Corps of Signals, the Royal Regiment of Fusiliers, HMS Birmingham, the Queen’s Own Hussars (known as the Queen’s Royal Hussars), HMS Forward (Royal Naval Reserve), the West Midlands Regiment, the 202 (Midlands Field Hospital (V)), the 26<sup>th</sup> Regiment Royal Artillery and HMS Daring, the 23<sup>rd</sup> Special Air Service Regiment (TA), The Birmingham County Royal British Legion, The Guards Division and The Rifles.
3. In every case the conferment of the privilege has been in recognition of some close association between the Regiment (or other section of the Armed Forces) and the City of Birmingham, either by name and/or by the fact that a significant number of Birmingham residents have served in it.
4. The exercise of the privilege has normally been timed to coincide with significant anniversaries and such like. Whenever it is exercised, there are costs to the Council in terms of road closures, erecting grandstands, stewarding and catering..

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**C. REQUEST THAT THE ROYAL MARINES BE HONOURED**

5. The Royal Marines trace their origins back to 1664 and the Second Anglo-Dutch War; the Birmingham Detachment was formed in 1957.
6. The Royal Marines have extremely strong ties with Birmingham; from Birmingham born Sergeant Norman Finch, awarded the Victoria Cross in 1918 after the raid on Zeebrugge; through to Lance Corporal Matthew Croucher being awarded the George Cross after his tour in Afghanistan in 2008. Matthew Croucher is a member of the Birmingham Detachment of Royal Marines Reserve, as was Marine

Jonathan Crookes, the first Royal Marine reservist to be killed in action in Afghanistan in 2010.

7. The Royal Marines participate in the City's Remembrance Day Service each year providing a marching contingent and providing displays at the City's Armed Forces Day celebrations, the Lord Mayors show along with other events such as Birmingham Celebrates Sport.
8. The Birmingham Detachment also involves itself in numerous charitable events in Birmingham including abseiling down the Hyatt Hotel and conducting a 'death slide' from the roof of Baskerville House in Royal British Legion and the Poppy Appeal, as well as performances at numerous Help for Heroes events, Troop Aid and others in the city. During the celebrations of the Royal Marines 350<sup>th</sup> Anniversary in 2014 the Lord Mayor greeted the final leg of the Midlands 1664 Challenge charity run at the Council House which raised thousands of pounds for charity.
9. The Birmingham Detachment also engages in outreach work with underrepresented ethnic minority groups and women suffering domestic violence in addition to youth groups, cadets and local businesses.
10. 2018 will be a significant moment for the City to cement and formalize its relationship with the Royal Marines, being the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the award of the Victoria Cross to Sergeant Norman Finch, Royal Marines.
11. Council Business Management Committee is recommending that the privilege of having the right to march through the City be conferred on the Royal Marines. On this occasion associated cost can be met from Lord Mayor's Office events budget.

### **MOTION**

- A. That the Lord Mayor and Citizens of the City of Birmingham being deeply conscious and appreciative of the close relationship of our people with the Royal Marines, are desirous of recognising, perpetuating and fostering still further the bonds of friendship and goodwill which has resulted therefrom by conferring by this resolution the Freedom of Entry into the City upon the Royal Marines and the right in perpetuity on all occasions of honouring The City of Birmingham by exercising the privilege of marching through the streets of the City with drums beating, bands playing, colours flying and bayonets fixed on all ceremonial occasions.
  - B. That the City Solicitor be authorised to attach the common seal to the Freedom of the City Scroll.
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