Policy G3 – Honorary Freeman of the Shire of Murray

1. Policy Intention

To guide the nomination, selection and award of the prestigious ceremonial title to a person designated as “Honorary Freeman of the Shire of Murray”.

2. Policy

Council may, subject to the eligibility and selection criteria detailed, by absolute majority decision decide to confer the title of “Honorary Freeman of the Shire of Murray” on any person who has rendered exceptional service to the Shire of Murray (Shire) community.

This prestigious honour will not be awarded regularly, but only on rare and exceptional occasions.

The award is in title only – no financial benefit is attached to the award. Recipients are however invited to significant events that are sponsored by the Shire.

3. Eligibility

The process for nominating and selecting a person and awarding this title is as follows:

- any person residing, or that has resided in the district, past Council Members and employees can be nominated;
- a current Council member or employee cannot be nominated for the award;
- in recognition of the standing of this award a maximum of five living persons only may hold the title of “Honorary Freeman of the Shire of Murray” at any one time; and
- the honour shall not be awarded posthumously.

4. Selection Criteria

Nominees will be judged on their record of service to the Murray community on the basis of the following criteria:

- nominees must have lived in, worked or served the Shire for a significant number of years (20 years or more);
- level of commitment to their field(s) of activity;
- outstanding personal leadership qualities and personal integrity;
- benefits to the community of the Shire, to the State of Western Australia or to the nation resulting from the nominee’s work; and
- special achievements of the nominee.

5. Nomination Process

To preserve the integrity and importance of bestowing the honour of “Honorary Freeman of the Shire of Murray” upon any individual, the following procedure shall be adopted:

- nomination for an “Honorary Freeman of the Shire” clearly outlining in chronological order the history of community service and achievements of the nominated person, must be made in writing to the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) in the strictest confidence, without the nominee’s knowledge;
- on receipt of the nomination the CEO will circulate a copy of the nomination and any supporting information to all Council Members for initial consideration;
- Council Members shall have reasonable time, being no less than two weeks, to consider the proposal;
- if a Council Member expresses an objection to the nomination, they must give their reasons for the objection in writing to the CEO within the prescribed time frame;
- a nomination must be supported in writing by at least one third of Council Members;
- Council Members who do not formally respond in writing will be presumed not to object to the proposal;
- if the nomination is sufficiently supported, the CEO will subject a confidential report to Council;
- the nominee’s name and identifying information will be maintained as “confidential” in all meeting papers;
- the recommendation to Council will include a clause requiring confidentiality of the report be maintained until the title is conferred upon the nominee at a formal Council function; and
- the decision of Council to adopt the CEO’s recommendation requires an absolute majority decision.

It is imperative that confidentiality is maintained throughout the nomination process. The standing of the Shire and the individual concerned should not be brought into disrepute or embarrassment in any way.

6. Awarding the Title

Once Council has accepted the nomination, the nominee shall be contacted by the CEO on a confidential basis to determine whether the award will be accepted. Should a nominee decline to accept the award, all Council Members will be informed and the matter will lapse.

Conferral of the title shall be carried out at a formal Council function. The CEO, in consultation with the Shire President, will decide the occasion and format of the conferral ceremony. The Governor of Western Australia, the Premier and the Opposition Leader shall be included on the list of distinguished invited guests.

A certificate of “Honorary Freeman of the Shire of Murray”, signed under the Common Seal by the Shire President and CEO, will be presented to the recipient.

A suitable media statement shall be prepared for release on behalf of the Shire President.

A framed photograph of the “Honorary Freeman of the Shire of Murray” will be hung in the Shire’s Administration Building. Upon the passing of a Freeman, this photograph will be removed and offered to the next of kin.

7. Entitlements

The Honorary Freeman and their partner shall be invited to all formal civic functions conducted by the Shire.

8. Personal Conduct

An “Honorary Freeman of the Shire of Murray” shall display high standards of the personal conduct and behaviour at all times and shall not bring the Shire into disrepute.

Council reserves the right to cancel the honour in the event that the holder is convicted of a serious criminal offence or brings the Shire into disrepute. This decision shall be made by absolute majority.

Policy Detail		
Responsible Directorate	Office of the CEO	
Responsible Department	Governance	
Responsible Officer	Manager Governance	
Next Policy Review / Schedule	2027 (3-yearly)	
Council Adoption	**Date / Resolution**	23 November 2017 (OCM17/278)
Amendment Record	**Date / Resolution**	23 June 2022 (OCM22/070)
		19 December 2024 (OCM24/159)