

Council

A meeting of Council was held on Wednesday, 21st January, 2009.

Present: The Worshipful the Mayor (Cllr John Fletcher), Cllr Mrs Lynne Apedaile, Cllr Jim Beall, Cllr Mrs Jennie Beaumont, Cllr Phillip Broughton, Cllr Mrs Ann Cains, Cllr Dick Cains, Cllr Julia Cherrett, Cllr David Coleman, Cllr Robert Cook, Cllr Mrs Eileen Craggs, Cllr Alex Cunningham, Cllr Ian Dalgarno, Cllr Ken Dixon, Cllr Mick Eddy, Cllr Mrs Suzanne Fletcher, Cllr Maurice Frankland, Cllr Robert Gibson, Cllr David Harrington, Cllr Mohammed Javed, Cllr Paul Kirton, Cllr Terry Laing, Cllr Colin Leckonby, Cllr Alan Lewis, Cllr Ken Lupton, Cllr Mrs Ann McCoy, Cllr Mrs Kath Nelson, Cllr Steve Nelson, Cllr Mrs Liz Nesbitt, Cllr Bill Noble, Cllr Mrs Jean O'Donnell, Cllr Maurice Perry, Cllr Mrs Maureen Rigg, Cllr Roy Rix, Cllr Fred Salt, Cllr Andrew Sherris, Cllr Michael Smith, Cllr Mick Stoker, Cllr Steve Walmsley, Cllr Mrs Sylvia Walmsley, Cllr Mrs Mary Womphrey, Cllr Mick Womphrey, Cllr Bill Woodhead and Cllr Barry Woodhouse.

Officers: H Dean (CE); D E Bond, P K Bell (LD); M Robinson (DNS); J Danks (R); J Humphreys (CESC).

Also in attendance: Mr F W Hayes (Chairman of the Standards Committee).

Apologies: Cllr Hilary Aggio, Cllr Paul Baker, Cllr Aidan Cockerill, Cllr Jackie Earl, Cllr Kevin Faulks, Cllr John Gardner, Cllr Barbara Inman, Cllr Tina Large, Cllr Andrew Larkin, Cllr Lee Narroway, Cllr Ross Patterson and Cllr Allison Trainer.

C Declarations of Interest

262/08

There were no interests declared.

C Appointments Panel (Heads of Service) Minutes

263/08

Moved by Councillor Lupton, seconded by Councillor Gibson and RESOLVED that the minutes of the Appointments Panel (Heads of Service) held on 11th December 2008 (Minute APP 43/08 - APP 46/08) be confirmed or received as appropriate.

C Appointment of Chief Executive

264/08

Consideration was given to a report that sought approval to the appointment of the Head of Paid Service.

At its meeting on the 14th August, Cabinet gave their approval to the establishment of an Appointment Panel in respect of the post of Head of Paid Service. The post of Head of Paid Service was subsequently advertised in September 2008 in a range of publications. Twenty two applications were received. A long listing meeting was held on 28th October and fourteen candidates underwent a technical interview to determine their levels of experience. A shortlist of four candidates was subsequently drawn up. The selection process took place over two days during which time all members were given the opportunity to participate in the process, either as a member of a politically balanced panel or through attendance at an evening buffet. On the second day, the Appointment Panel interviewed the applicants and selected Neil Schneider as the candidate whom they wished to recommend for appointment.

All Members of the Council congratulated Neil Schneider on his appointment.

RESOLVED that Neil Schneider currently Acting Interim Chief Executive be appointed to the post of Head of Paid Service (Chief Executive Officer) with effect from 22nd January 2009.

C **Proposal to Confer the Honour of Freedom of the Borough to The Rifles**
265/08

Consideration was given to a report on a proposal to grant the Freedom of the Borough to The Rifles

Members considered a request made by The Rifles to exercise the Freedom of the Town at an opportune date during their Regimental programme for 2009 and 2010. This in practice would probably mean a Regimental march through the streets with bayonets fixed, drums beating and colours flying.

The Mayor had received correspondence from the Rifles Durham Office informing him of the reorganisation of the Army and that The Light Infantry were now part of a new Regiment, The Rifles. They hoped that Stockton would wish to continue with its strong association with its Local Infantry Regiment and that The Rifles would like to be requested to exercise the Freedom of the town at an opportune date during their Regimental programme for 2009 and 2010.

The Light Infantry were granted Freedom of The Borough of Stockton in 1977, minute reference no 39. The Light Infantry had become part of a new Regiment as of 1 February 2007. They had merged with three other Regiments - the Devon and Dorset Light Infantry, the Royal Gloucester, Berkshire and Wiltshire Light Infantry and the Royal Green Jackets to become a new Regiment - The Rifles. The Rifles would be the largest Infantry Regiment in the British Army.

A large proportion of The Rifles were from the North East and a fair number from Stockton. There were 5 regular Battalions in the Commando, Light, Mechanised and Armoured Infantry roles. There was also 2 Territorial Army Battalions with additional Companies in Bishop Auckland and Shrewsbury. The Regiment had served in Iraq and, at the time of the letter, were preparing for operations in Afghanistan.

Section 249(5) of the Local Government Act 1972, allowed the Council of a district having the status of a city, borough or royal borough, 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 freeman of the city, borough or royal borough persons of distinction and persons who had, in the opinion of the Council, rendered eminent services to the city, borough or royal borough.

RESOLVED that:-

1. The Freedom of the Borough of Stockton be conferred upon The Rifles following the merger of the Light Infantry, the Devon and Dorset Light Infantry, the Royal Gloucester, Berkshire and Wiltshire Light Infantry and the Royal Green Jackets.

2. The Rifles name be placed on the Roll of Honorary Freeman of the Borough.
3. The Rifles be presented with a sealed and illuminated copy of the Resolution at an appropriate occasion.
4. The Rifles be requested to exercise the Freedom of the Town at an opportune date during their Regimental programme for 2009 and 2010, with the suggestion that the Freedom is linked to an existing appropriate event if possible, for example Remembrance Sunday.