

## **Committee: Standards and General Purposes**

**Date: 3 November 2016**

Wards: All

### **Subject: Motion from Council regarding Honorary Freeman of the Borough Andy Murray**

Lead officer: Chris Lee, Director, Environment and Regeneration

Lead member: Councillor Nick Draper, Cabinet Member for Community and Culture

Contact officer: Paul Evans, Assistant Director Corporate Governance

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#### **Recommendations:**

- A. Consider and discuss the options available to commemorate the recent achievements of Honorary Freeman of the Borough Andy Murray.
  - B. Ask officers to bring back a full report to a future meeting on any preferred option identified.
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#### **1 PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

- 1.1. Following the motion agreed at Council on 14 September 2016, the Committee are asked to consider the options available to commemorate the sporting achievements of Honorary Freeman of the Borough Andy Murray, and to decide which option, if any, they would like officers to investigate further.
- 1.2. This report sets out the current policy and legal and financial implications of naming a street or other facility after Andy Murray.

#### **2 DETAILS**

- 2.1. At the meeting of 14 September, Council unanimously agreed the following motion:  
*"This Council congratulates Honorary Freeman of the Borough, Mr Andy Murray, on:*
  - *winning a second Gentlemen's Singles title at the Wimbledon Championships held here in Merton during June and July 2016; and*
  - *becoming the first male tennis player to win two gold medals in singles when, at the recent Olympic Games in Rio de Janeiro, he retained the Olympic singles title he won in London in 2012.*

*This Council therefore requests that the Mayor write to Andy Murray conveying the Council's congratulations on the impressive feats he has achieved this summer.*

*This council recognises the importance of acknowledging the achievements of our Olympians and Paralympians and congratulates Merton resident Corinne Hall on successfully piloting Lora Turnham to their gold medal in the Tandem Pursuit cycling event in the Rio velodrome.*

*This Council therefore further requests that the Mayor write to Corrinne Hall conveying the Council's congratulations on her impressive achievement.*

*Furthermore, just as the borough marked local success at the London Olympic and Paralympic Games in 2012 with the introduction of the Sophie Hosking Challenge*

*Cup, this Council asks the Standards and General Purposes Committee to consider at its next meeting how best to ensure Andy Murray's recent achievements are permanently remembered by future generations e.g. through the naming of a sporting facility or street after him, and to make subsequent recommendations to Full Council where appropriate".*

### 3 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

3.1. There are a number of alternatives that a local authority can consider as a means of recognising and rewarding achievements by individuals and/or groups. It is important that the reward fits the achievements of those to be honoured and that any such reward can be afforded within appropriate budgets at the time of such an award being given.

#### 3.2. Table 1 – Options for Recognising and Rewarding Achievements

	Option	Pros	Cons
1	Award Honorary Title – Freeman, etc.	Relatively easy to implement once a decision is taken and providing an existing event is used to do the presentation the costs can be contained	If such awards are easily achieved or are issued to those who have not achieved some form of greatness then the award can be considered less 'valuable'
2	Name an asset in their name. Eg Street; Building; Monument;	The name stays for a long time and is etched in people's memories	Buildings / monuments may be difficult to find, as they are no longer named by their location. In years to come, they may need to be renamed if locals no longer remember the person behind the name – this is common with Leisure Centres. Naming Buildings and streets has best practice guidance (detailed later in this report) which would discourage this as a methodology of honouring people.
3	Install an asset in their honour. Eg Clock, public art; monument;	The asset is there for all to see and benefit from – be it a clock; sculpture; seat; etc.  It is likely that in the fullness of time the AELTC will install and unveil a bronze statue of Andy Murray on their grounds as they have	Similar concerns to the building and street naming. Also not all local people will be keen to spend public money on such a structure especially if they do not like it

		done this with all previous British Winners	
4	Hold a commemorative event in their name. Eg AFC Wimbledon Celebration	Is a one off occasion and can be set at a time that is appropriate for those being honoured to attend	Timing is essential and the person(s) being honoured need to be available and of a character where this would be something they would welcome
5	Establish awards, activities, events, competitions that bear their name. Eg Sophie Hoskins – BMX Awards	Can be nice to establish the first time around, although all of these awards, activities and events come at a cost both in terms of the event and costs of the organiser	Can become costly and time consuming and beyond the moment in time can fall rather flat and weaken the entries etc – previous borough Tennis and Bowls tournaments have been victims of this with lack of participants
6	Special citation – signed and sealed by locally dignitaries – presented at awards Eg long service awards for staff; community awards;	Relatively easy to implement once a decision is taken and providing an existing event is used to do the presentation the costs can be contained. Could add into other award giving occasions or do at a Full Council meeting	If such awards are easily achieved or are issued to those who have not achieved some form of greatness then the award can be considered less ‘valuable’
7	Recording their name and achievements in a key location as a remembrance of their achievements. Eg Hall of Fame	This could be by a physical asset or could be a Hall of Fame held on the website.	Maintaining this – be it engraved on a monument, wall or suchlike or electronically would require resources as would the original setting up
8	Provide a financial reward / gift for the person(s) to be honoured	Could be a specially designed Merton gift of glass, silver, etc. Once procured replica versions could be issued as needed. Nice to have and a record could be held linked to a ‘hall of fame’	Cost to produce and event to award, but could be tied in with other events

- 3.3. This list is not exhaustive rather it is a selection of options for consideration and a means by which others may establish their own alternatives that they wish to bring forward.

#### **4 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN OR PROPOSED**

- 4.1. In the first instance, the consultation for this is with those elected members on the Standards and General Purposes Committee and it is expected that once ideas and options have been fully considered and rationalised, those elected members will consult with their colleagues across the elected members to gauge their views and support for any eventual proposal to be brought forward.
- 4.2. Should the Standards and General Purposes Committee decide to establish a wider policy on this subject then it would be prudent to consult the public on this matter.

#### **5 TIMETABLE**

##### **5.1. Table 2 – Implementation Plan**

<b>When</b>	<b>What</b>	<b>Who</b>	<b>Outcome</b>
16 Sept '16	Congratulation letters sent from Mayor to Andy Murray and Corinne Hall	Mayor of Merton	Letters received by honoured individuals
03 Nov '16	Report to Standards and General Purposes Committee	Assistant Director Corporate Governance	Committee identify and select preferred options for further information
Nov '16	Explore and expand on detail of options selected	Officers	Report to Standards and General Purposes Committee
9 March 2017	Report to Standards and General Purposes Committee	Assistant Director Corporate Governance	Committee to determine preference option for honouring Andy Murray
12 April 2017	Report to Council (if appropriate)		Move to implementation

#### **6 FINANCIAL, RESOURCE AND PROPERTY IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1. Whatever options are taken forwarded consideration needs to be given to both the human and financial resources available to the council to implement the options.
- 6.2. Should it be decided that new assets and resources are something that the Standards and General Purposes Committee wishes to explore it would also be important that due consideration is given to location and the communities within those areas.
- 6.3. Naming property, be that buildings or streets is covered, in part, under the Legal and Statutory paragraphs of this report, however there are some examples to

consider as to whether or not this is an appropriate option for Merton to progress at this time.

- 6.3.1. When naming a leisure centre after a Gold Medal winning athlete this can cause problems both immediately after the naming and in the future. The David Hemery Leisure Centre is where? It does not exist anymore as people could not find their local leisure centre and as time passed new generations did not know who the centre was named after or why. The centre is now named after the town it is based in. This helps considerably for customers and local people visiting as well as those searching for it using technology and it is important for marketing purposes.
- 6.3.2. When naming buildings, structures and streets after people or companies there are risks that the person or company could at a later stage be identified / prosecuted for anti-social and/or criminal matters such as child protection issues and for companies they may be identified / prosecuted for investment, employment, manufacturing scandals, etc. Both of these then cause reputational risks to those organisations who have called, 'in good faith', for the original naming to be put in place. Within the Borough there has been an example where this has taken place and the Buildings affected had to have its name changed at a cost to the Council
- 6.4. When naming and numbering a street or building there is some best practice guidance provided by GeoPlace. GeoPlace is a Limited Liability Partnership jointly owned by the Local Government Association (LGA) and Ordnance Survey, which was set up as a result of a government call for a standard index of addresses to bring together existing creators and suppliers of addressing data to one central place to build a single, definitive address database known as the NLPG (National Land and Property Gazetteer). They have created a series of Data Entry Conventions (DEC) and Best Practice for Street Naming & Numbering documents to ensure there is consistency of approach and good practice is followed.
- 6.5 Merton must adhere to best practice at all times, but this this has to be contained within a Street Naming and Numbering Policy. Merton has recently produced its policy in draft format and that will now go through the council's due processes for adoption.
- 6.6 GeoPlace's most recent best practice guidance published in September 2016 advises:  
***"The use of the name of a living person. (This is not recommended)."***<sup>(1)</sup>
- 6.7 The Council has historically agreed to allow a number of buildings within the Plough Lane Development to be named after former Wimbledon Football Club players / managers, but in agreeing to this, it was limited to the surnames only e.g Bassett House named after Harry Bassett, one of the managers who is still alive. Therefore, an option might be to name a building or street using the surname only of 'Murray'.
- 6.8 Should the council choose to proceed with the re-naming/naming of a street after a person then they would need to follow a legally binding due process. This would require 66% of the residents to approve the change and would come at a cost to the council as would any potential compensation claims from residents should their street name be changed. There would also be costs involved with infrastructure changes such as new street signs, updating databases, etc. This requirement is negated if the building / street to be named is new.

- 6.9 Should the street be a new one then the developer or land owner would put forward their proposals and these would be considered against the council's policy, best Practice and the Emergency Services requirements. The Fire Brigade issue their own requirements, which includes 'no duplication of an existing name or similar name within a two-mile radius.
- 6.10 Murray Road already exists in Merton. It is situated close to the south of Wimbledon Common. There are no records readily available as to when it was named this or who or what it may have been named after. What is evident is that the street was in place as far back as 1940's and likely to be some time before that.

## **7 LEGAL AND STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1. The Legal Acts that refer to Street Naming & Numbering are:
- Public Health Acts Amendment Act 1907 (Section 21)
  - Public Health Act 1925 (Sections 17, 18 and 19)
  - Town Improvement Clauses Act 1847 (Sections 64 and 65)
  - London Building Acts Amendment Act 1939 (Section 2)
- 7.2. Nothing is mentioned in these Acts about naming buildings and streets after living people. The Acts provide the legislative framework to ensure a due process is followed when naming, re-naming and numbering buildings and streets.
- 7.3. Local authorities are legally able to determine their own policies regarding the naming of buildings and streets after living people. Most local authorities produce policies that are based on best practice guidance. Merton has produced a draft policy for Street Naming and Numbering, which also follows this convention including the current best practice guidance from GeoPlace, which recommends that buildings and streets should not be named after living people. This policy is in a draft format and has yet to go through the council's due processes for adoption.
- 7.4. Should the council decide to proceed with the re-naming of a street it there is a legally binding due process that must be followed, the council must:
- write to all affected residents
  - display notification of their intention at the beginning and end of the street in a prominent position
  - give the residents 21 days (or 28 days depending on which Act you use) to object to the notification
  - respond in writing to all of the objections (Experience has shown that there will be a number of these)
  - wait a further 28 days before implementing the change
  - street nameplates are changed

## **8 HUMAN RIGHTS, EQUALITIES AND COMMUNITY COHESION IMPLICATIONS**

- 8.1. Depending on the preferred option finally selected will impact differently on Human Rights, Equalities and Community Cohesion ranging from no impact to some impact should street be renamed which could impact on the residents of that street.
- 8.2. In considering which of the preferred options are to be taken forward, members are advised to also consider what Human Rights, Equalities and Community

Cohesion impacts might be forthcoming and whether those would be positive or negative for those likely to be affected.

**9 CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS**

9.1. None.

**10 RISK MANAGEMENT AND HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS**

10.1. Depending on the preferred option finally selected there could be financial and reputational risks both now and in the future.

10.2. There are no health and safety implications.

**11 APPENDICES – THE FOLLOWING DOCUMENTS ARE TO BE PUBLISHED WITH THIS REPORT AND FORM PART OF THE REPORT**

None

**12 BACKGROUND PAPERS**

None

**13 REFERENCES**

(1) GeoPlace - Data Entry Conventions (DEC) and Best Practice for Street Naming & Numbering, September 2016 – Page 27 Section 4.1.2.14 Bulletpoint 6

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