

City of Greater Geraldton Council Policy

4.3 CIVIC CEREMONIES

SUSTAINABILITY THEME

Leadership

OBJECTIVES

To provide a process which governs ceremonial functions, by which Council can formally recognise outstanding contributions, achievements and meritorious service to the community of the City of Greater Geraldton.

POLICY STATEMENT

City of Greater Geraldton will conduct various civic functions and ceremonies from time to time, as the need arises. This policy provides guidance on the nomination and approval process applicable to particular civic honours, functions and award ceremonies.

POLICY DETAILS

1. Honorary Freeman of the City of Greater Geraldton

Council may bestow the honorary title of Freeman of the City upon a person for their contribution and dedication to the community on a continuous basis for greater than 15 years, in an outstanding and meritorious manner. This prestigious honour will not be awarded regularly but only on rare and exceptional occasions.

Nomination Criteria

The title of the Freeman of the City may be conferred on any person:

- 1.1. Whose exceptional service to the community is a matter of public record; and
- 1.2. Who has identifiable and long-standing connections with the community in the City of Greater Geraldton or its former entities; and
- 1.3. Whose personal endeavours have benefited the community in an outstanding and meritorious manner that stands above contributions of most other persons in assisting in both the advancement of the City's strategic direction and the provision of benefits for the greater community.

Entitlements

- 1.4. Any person upon whom the title Honorary Freeman of the City has been conferred may designate him / herself "Honorary Freeman of the City of Greater Geraldton".
- 1.5. The recipient shall be presented with a special badge which identifies them as Freeman of the City along with a plaque and certificate to commemorate receiving the award.
- 1.6. Any Honorary Freeman of the City shall be invited to all subsequent formal civic functions conducted by the City.

Limitations on Holders of Award

- 1.7. To avoid any potential perception of bias, the title of “Honorary Freeman of the City of Greater Geraldton” shall not be bestowed on any person currently employed or holding the office of Councillor at the City.
- 1.8. Previous employees / officers of the City or its former entities while not excluded under the nominated criteria, merit based consideration would not take into account their time and service to the community as a paid employee of the City or its former entities.
- 1.9. In recognition of the standing of this award, a maximum of 10 living persons only may hold the title “Honorary Freeman of the City of Greater Geraldton”, at any one time.

Nomination Procedure

To preserve the integrity and importance of bestowing the honour of “Honorary Freeman of the City of Greater Geraldton” upon an individual, the following procedure shall be adopted:

- 1.10. Nominations for an “Honorary Freeman of the City of Greater Geraldton” clearly outlining in chronological order the history of community service of the person being nominated, must be made in writing to the Chief Executive Officer in the strictest confidence.
- 1.11. Any resident or elector of the City may make a nomination, but it must be sponsored by an elected member and supported in writing by at least three elected members.
- 1.12. A nominee must not be made aware of their nomination.
- 1.13. On receipt of the nomination, the Chief Executive Officer will circulate the nomination to elected members for consideration on a strictly confidential basis.
- 1.14. Elected members shall have reasonable time, being no less than two weeks, to consider the proposal.
- 1.15. If an elected member expresses an objection to the nomination that elected member must give their reasons for the objection in writing to the Chief Executive Officer within the prescribed timeframe. Elected members who do not formerly respond in writing will be presumed not to object to the proposal.
- 1.16. Any nominations received will be validated and the finding presented at a meeting of Council behind closed doors, with recommendation to approve / not approve a nominee for the award.
- 1.17. The Chief Executive Officer will submit a confidential report to a meeting of Council with details of the nomination, including any objections raised, for determination by Council behind closed doors. Any decision to support the nomination shall be resolved by an absolute majority of Council.
- 1.18. The nominee’s name and identifying information will be maintained as ‘confidential’ in all meeting papers.
- 1.19. In the event Council supports the nomination, prior to any announcement, the Chief Executive Officer shall make personal contact with the nominee to confirm their acceptance of the honour.
- 1.20. Should the nomination be supported and accepted the award shall be presented to the nominee at a civic function.

2. Keys to the City

The granting of the Key to the City is a symbolic presentation, which represents the highest honour that a city can confer on an individual or an organisation.

The tradition of using a key dates back to medieval times, when many cities were enclosed within walled fortifications. The key symbolised the political relationship between a city and the King / Queen or ruler of the land on which the city was located. When that ruler visited the city for the first time after assuming power, the authorities would formally greet him / her at the gates and hand over a key to signify that the city was now under his / her control. The key would then be returned by the ruler to the city authorities to acknowledge that he / she intended to respect the political authority of those who administered the city.

The Keys to the City of Greater Geraldton is traditionally presented by the Mayor at a civic ceremony to acknowledge the contribution of an individual or organisation in furthering the ideals of the City, or to recognise outstanding achievement in sport or humanitarian work at an international level.

- 2.1. Keys to the City will be awarded to an individual or organisation in furthering the ideals of the City of Greater Geraldton, or to recognise outstanding achievement in sport or humanitarian work at an international level.
- 2.2. Individuals or organisations may apply to the City of Greater Geraldton to receive Keys to the City, or alternatively Council may grant Keys to the City without an application.
- 2.3. Granting of Keys to the City is to be determined by absolute majority of Council.
- 2.4. All applications must be formalised on the Keys to the City form by the applicant forwarding the form, marked attention to the Chief Executive Officer. This form needs to be received 8 weeks before the date of the event.
- 2.5. A civic function may be granted in conjunction with a Keys to the City event. The Mayor, in conjunction with the Chief Executive Officer, shall have discretion to approve whether a civic function is to be held, in accordance with the Council's adopted budget.
- 2.6. The Mayor, in conjunction with the Chief Executive Officer, shall determine the date, time, location and invitation list for a civic function.
- 2.7. The applicant will be advised of the outcome after the Council resolution within 5 working days. If approved, the applicant will be notified of the particulars of the function.
- 2.8. An appropriate certificate with a gift symbolising the event may be given.

3. Freedom of Entry

Freedom of Entry to the City of Greater Geraldton is a ceremonial honour, which became popular during the nineteenth century and draws some inspiration from medieval history. A military or civilian unit accorded this privilege is granted the right of entry to the City "with bayonets fixed, colours flying and drums beating".

This award is restricted to Australian military and civilian units that have, through their command, a significant attachment to the City of Greater Geraldton. It is conferred in recognition of their achievement while on active service or overseas duty or as a mark of respect and gratitude for their efforts in the defence of Australia. Freedom of Entry to the City of Greater Geraldton is celebrated with a parade of the unit through the streets.

- 3.1. Freedom of Entry is restricted to Australian military and civilian units which have, through their command, a significant attachment to the City of Greater Geraldton.
- 3.2. Individuals or organisations may apply to the City of Greater Geraldton to receive Freedom of Entry, or alternatively Council may grant Freedom of Entry without an application.

- 3.3. Granting of Freedom of Entry to the City is to be determined by absolute majority of Council.
- 3.4. All applications must be formalised on the Freedom of Entry form by the applicant forwarding the form, marked attention to the Chief Executive Officer. This form needs to be received 8 weeks before the date of the event.
- 3.5. A civic function may be granted in conjunction with a Freedom of Entry event. The Mayor, in conjunction with the Chief Executive Officer, shall have discretion to approve whether a civic function is to be held, in accordance with the Council's adopted budget.
- 3.6. The Mayor, in conjunction with the Chief Executive Officer, shall determine the date, time, location and invitation list for a civic function.
- 3.7. The applicant will be advised of the outcome after the Council resolution within 5 working days. If approved, the applicant will be notified of the particulars of the function.
- 3.8. An appropriate certificate with a gift symbolising the event may be given.

4. Community Citizen of the Year Awards Selection

The Australia Day Council of Western Australia provides the guidelines for the Community Citizen of the Year awards. These awards celebrate the positive contribution of our citizens who are worthy of the community's attention. The Community Citizen of the Year awards are administered by the City of Greater Geraldton as a joint initiative between the City and Auspire – the Australia Day Council of Western Australia.

The Community Citizen of the Year awards foster, recognise and celebrate significant contributions to community in the City of Greater Geraldton in the locations of Geraldton and Mullewa in the any/all of the following categories:

- Community Citizen of the Year (over 16 years)
 - Young Community Citizen of the Year (16-30 years)
 - Senior Community Citizen of the Year (65 years or over)
 - Active Citizenship Award (community group or event)
- 4.1. Award recipients will be people and groups who have made a noteworthy contribution during the current year, or given outstanding service to the local community over a number of years through active involvement.
 - 4.2. The City of Greater Geraldton invites nominations for the awards from community groups and private citizens.
 - 4.3. Nominations will close on 31 October annually.
 - 4.4. Nomination forms are to have a nominator as well as another person to support the nomination.
 - 4.5. The selection panel is to be comprised of at least three Council Members, with City Officers providing administrative support.
 - 4.6. The nominees for an individual award will be judged according to the following criteria;
 - 4.6.1. Made a significant contribution to the local community.
 - 4.6.2. Demonstrated leadership on a community issue resulting in the enhancement of community life.
 - 4.6.3. Established a significant initiative which has brought about positive change and added value to community life.
 - 4.6.4. Demonstrated inspiring qualities as a role model for the community.

- 4.7. The nominees for a group/event award must meet any or all of the following criteria;
 - 4.7.1. Group/event that creates community engagement.
 - 4.7.2. Group/event that creates initiatives for new employment.
 - 4.7.3. Created significant initiative that brought positive change.
- 4.8. Nominees must meet the following eligibility criteria:
 - 4.8.1. Nominees should reside or work principally within the City of Greater Geraldton.
 - 4.8.2. Awards may be granted posthumously in recognition of recent achievements.
 - 4.8.3. Groups of people or couples will be considered under the criteria for a community group.
 - 4.8.4. A person cannot receive the same award twice but may be considered for another award.
 - 4.8.5. Unsuccessful nominees may be nominated in future years.
 - 4.8.6. Self-nominations are not eligible.
 - 4.8.7. Sitting members of State, Federal and Local Government are not eligible.
 - 4.8.8. Individuals must be at least 16 years of age at the time of receiving the award except under exceptional contribution.
 - 4.8.9. Individuals can be recognised in one category only.
- 4.9. Awards will be presented at the Annual Australia Day celebrations.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Director Corporate Services is responsible for implementing this Policy (Section 1-3).

The Manager Community and Cultural Development is responsible for implementing this Policy (Section 4).

WORKPLACE INFORMATION

Local Government Act 1995

Community Citizen of the Year Awards ([Citizenship Awards | Australia Day Council of WA](#))

Council Policy 4.2 Code of Conduct for Council Members, Committee Members and Candidates

Operational Policy 054 – Employee Code of Conduct

POLICY ADMINISTRATION

Directorate		Officer	Review Cycle	Next Due
Office of the CEO		Director Corporate Services	Biennial	2026
Version	Decision Reference	Synopsis		
5.	CSXXX XX/XX/2024	Scheduled Policy Review		