

Sir Chris Hoy to be offered Freedom of the City of Edinburgh



The City of Edinburgh Council this morning unanimously agreed to offer Olympic cyclist, Sir Chris Hoy, the Freedom of the City of Edinburgh.

After the meeting Council Leader Andrew Burns said to The Reporter:-“I am absolutely delighted that my colleagues here have unanimously agreed to offer what is a very significant honour to Sir Chris Hoy. There are only a few people alive who still hold the honour such as Her Majesty the Queen, Prince Philip, Nelson Mandela, Aung San Suu Kyi and Sir Sean Connery. We have already spoken to Sir Chris’s representatives, and want to get this underway just as soon as possible, although we understand that he is enormously busy!”

This will add to Hoy’s six gold and one silver Olympic medals, the award of MBE, his knighthood, the Edinburgh award which was bestowed upon him in 2009 and all other sporting titles such as winning the World Championship title eleven times.

The Council website explains what the honour means:-”

This honorary award is granted rarely to individuals who have distinguished themselves through their work or efforts, or to recognise the respect and high esteem in which they are held by the people of the City of Edinburgh.

Freedom of the City is the most prestigious honour bestowed by the City of Edinburgh Council.”

The motion presented today read as follows:-

The motion about Sir Chris reads:

By Councillor Cardownie – Sir Chris Hoy – Freedom of the City

“The City of Edinburgh Council resolves to confer the Freedom of the City on Sir Chris Hoy, in recognition of his success in becoming Great Britain ‘s greatest Olympian at the London 2012 Olympic Games. Sir Chris is already a recipient of the Edinburgh Award, which honours outstanding individuals who have made a positive impact on the city and gained national and international recognition for Edinburgh , but his further success at this year’s Olympic Games is deserving of the most prestigious honour that the city can bestow. The Council instructs the Chief Executive to report back.”

A further motion from Councillor Donald Wilson/Councillor Deidre Brock reads:

Council:

- *congratulates all members of Team GB on their achievements at the London 2012 Olympic Games – the best British Olympic performance in over a century*
- *also recognises the contribution of the volunteers, coaches, officials, friends and families who have all played a part in the success of Team GB*
- *further notes that the Paralympic Games will commence in London on 29 August 2012 and extends its best wishes to all members of the GB Paralympics team*
- *agrees to hold a civic reception, to acknowledge and honour the collective 2012 Olympic achievements of all participants connected with Edinburgh who contributed to this success.*

Council further:

- *notes the high public profile this success has given to sport and the enormous amount of public good will it has generated*
- *and therefore, calls for a report that outlines ways of capitalising on the Olympic feel-good factor to promote greater participation in sport and, in particular optimising the participation and performance of Edinburgh-based athletes in the 2014 Commonwealth Games*

The Lord Provost Donald Wilson also made clear that there are plans to recognise other Olympic and Paralympic athletes in some way by holding a celebratory event.

A separate motion to establish the Sir Chris Hoy Cycle Network was also passed with an amendment from the Council Executive. The main thrust of the amendment was to lay down a statement that there are some logistical challenges to overcome such a proposal, and that this will now be remitted to the council's transport committee for further consideration along with input from cycling groups, Spokes and Pedal on Parliament and other interested parties. The Reporter asked Councillor Booth if the only place that is suitable in the whole city is Leith Walk. He replied:-"There is a real opportunity to do this in Leith. There is going to be substantial resurfacing of Leith Walk anyway."

What do you think? Are there any other roads or streets where such a cycle network could be established?