

APPOINTMENT OF HONORARY ALDERMEN

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

A review has been carried out of the role and appointment process for Honorary Aldermen. As a result some changes are proposed to the criteria for appointment and the representative role for the Council and their role at meetings.

The Committee is asked to recommend the Council to approve the changes set out in this report and the attached protocol for inclusion in the Council's Constitution.

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The current arrangements for appointing Honorary Aldermen have been in place for over ten years. It has always been the intention to review the arrangements and this has now been carried out. The review has taken account of the comments made by some Members and an assessment of the practice in some other authorities.
- 1.2 As a result of the review, some changes have been made to the protocol set out in the Constitution. The main changes involve a reduction in the period of eligible service with the Council and its constituent authorities from 25 to a total of 16 years (i.e. four full terms) and inclusion of a provision that Aldermen should normally be Borough residents. In addition, there is now recognition that Aldermen could ask to speak at meetings, subject to agreement by the relevant Council body. This arrangement is the same as that which is currently afforded to elected Members who are not already Members of that body. At Council Meetings each Alderman will be able to speak on one agenda item at a meeting subject to the other rules of debate set out in Standing Orders.
- 1.3 Whilst Aldermen can currently be appointed to represent the Council on many outside bodies, a provision has now been included in the protocol. It is sometimes difficult to fill appointments on outside bodies and Aldermen will be able to bring knowledge and experience to many of the outside bodies.

2. NEXT STEPS

- 2.1. If the Council agrees to the changes they will be implemented from the start of 2018/19 Municipal Year.

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The Council has established criteria for the appointment of Honorary Alderman. The criteria takes account of Section 249 of the Local Government Act 1972 and local practice.

- The title 'Honorary Alderman' can be conferred on someone no longer a Member of the Council who has "in the opinion of the Council rendered eminent services to the Council".
- The Council resolution requires a two-thirds majority of those voting at a meeting specially convened for the purpose.
- Nominees should be former councillors and have not less than 16 years' service (normally this would mean re-election on at least four occasions) with the Council or its constituent authorities and should normally be a resident of the Borough.
- There should be no specific criteria for offices held with the Council.
- The Extraordinary Meeting to bestow the honour should not be on the same day as the Annual Council Meeting.
- Honorary Aldermen may attend and take part in civic events but shall not have the right to claim allowances. Whilst an Alderman does not have the right to attend meetings of the relevant bodies set out in the Council's Constitution, an Alderman may ask the relevant body to attend and address the meeting on an item of business included on the agenda. At council meetings an Alderman may ask to speak on only one item per meeting, subject to the other rules of debate set out in the Council's Procedure Rules.
- Honorary Aldermen may be selected by the Council to represent it on outside bodies to which it is asked to make nominations.