

Appointment of Honorary Aldermen – Report of the Monitoring Officer

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1. Summary

- 1.1 This report is in support of the requisitioned item on the agenda for the Extraordinary Council meeting on 29th November 2017 proposing the appointment of Honorary Aldermen.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 **This report provides background information on the policy agreed by Council in July 2017 on the appointment of Honorary Aldermen and Alderwomen and is to note.**

3. Background

- 3.1 Council is reminded that in July 2017 it agreed a policy providing for the appointment of Honorary Aldermen and Alderwomen by the Council. Such appointments are provided for by the Local Government Act 1972 [Section 249(1)]. They have to be confirmed, by a resolution at a 'special full council meeting convened specifically for the purpose, and passed by not less than two thirds of the members present and voting in favour'. The title can be awarded to 'persons who have, in the opinion of the Council, rendered Eminent Services to the Council as past members of that Council but who are not then members of the Council.'
- 3.2 The appointment of Honorary Alderman/Alderwoman is an entirely honorary position, bringing no special rights, but is intended to reflect the esteem of the wider community. Each Council is encouraged to have its own criteria for these appointments as the legislation doesn't provide any definitions.
- 3.3 At the July meeting the Council agreed the following criteria and procedure for these appointments (as summarised):
- (a) The title can be conferred on any past elected member who has, in the opinion of the Council, rendered eminent service to the Council and the local community but who is no longer a serving councillor or is politically active.
 - (b) Nominations for Honorary Aldermen/Alderwomen must be made at a Special meeting of the Council convened for the purpose.
 - (c) Nominations may be received by the Chairman of the Council from any member of the Council with the support of their Group Leader and must be received in time to be brought before the Special Council meeting in

the form of a requisitioned item in accordance with the Council's procedural rules. The Leader of the Council shall move the requisitioned item which shall be seconded where possible by the leader of the main opposition group. The nomination to appoint an Honorary Alderman/Alderwoman shall be formally agreed if supported by not less than two thirds of the Members present.

(d) Nominees must have a minimum period of 12 years past service as a Councillor of the County Council.

(e) There shall be no more than twelve County Council Honorary Alderman/Alderwoman appointments at any one time.

3.4 Rights of Honorary Aldermen/Alderwomen

As a reminder these appointments have no 'legal or social precedence' but as a matter of custom and practice those appointed are invited to all appropriate Civic ceremonial events. Those elected to the Roll of Honorary Alderman/Alderwoman are entitled to use the title of 'Honorary Alderman/Honorary Alderwoman of the County of Somerset. Those appointed have no right to receive any allowances or payments.

3.5 Following the July Council meeting discussions with the group leaders resulted in names being put forward for appointment as set out in the requisitioned item. The requisitioned item has been withheld from publication as it contains exempt information in the form of the names of the individuals proposed.

3.6 If the Council confirms the above appointments today then the appointees will be invited to a presentation ceremony to be at the start of the 21st February 2018 Full Council meeting. Those awarded the title will be presented with: 1) A 'Certificate of Conferral of the Status of Honorary Alderman/Alderwoman' 2) A Badge of Office presented in an official presentation box. Following the presentation, those appointed will be asked to sign the 'Roll of Honorary Aldermen/Alderwomen'.

4. **Implications**

4.1 **Legal & Risk:**

Appointment of Honorary Aldermen/Alderwomen: None

4.2 **Equalities, sustainability and community safety implications:**

There are no direct equalities implications arising from any of the proposals in this report. There are also no sustainability or community safety implications.

4.3 **Financial Implications:**

Appointment of Honorary Aldermen/Alderwomen:

The direct costs are estimated to be in the region of £1000 - £2000. It is expected that these costs can be contained within the existing members' budget.

5. **Background papers**

5.1 None