

PUBLIC

Agenda Item No.8 (h)

DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

COUNCIL

13th September 2017

Report of the Director of Legal Services

Recognition of Former Councillors – Honorary Aldermen and Alderwomen

1. Purpose of the Report

To consider introducing arrangements which will enable the Council to formally recognise valuable service provided to the Council by former Councillors.

2. Information and Analysis

The recent County Council elections have seen a number of County Councillors who have provided valuable service to the Council step down from public office. With this in mind, the Council is invited to consider recognising such service by way of appointing Honorary Aldermen and Honorary Alderwomen. Such a process is in operation in a number of other authorities including Nottinghamshire.

Section 249 of the Local Government Act 1972 enables a principal council to confer the title of honorary aldermen or honorary alderwomen on persons who have in the opinion of the council rendered eminent service as past members. Eminent service is not defined within the Act but is left to the discretion of the authority. It is proposed that to qualify for this title, a former member must have provided outstanding or exceptional service to the Council and community over a significant period of time.

To confer the honorary title, the Council must pass a resolution by not less than two-thirds of the Members present at a meeting specially convened for the purpose.

Honorary Aldermen and Alderwomen would enjoy particular privileges such as being invited to take part in civic services and being nominated to sit on outside bodies where a serving Elected Member is not required. An Honorary Alderman or Alderwoman would also be entitled to attend

meetings of the Council and be allocated a seat in the Council Chamber. The names of Aldermen and Alderwomen would be included on a Roll of Honorary Aldermen and Alderwomen held by the Monitoring Officer.

An Honorary Alderman or Alderwoman would not have any right to participate in meetings of the Council or its committees beyond that of a member of the public or to claim any allowances payable under the Members' Allowances Scheme.

Any person to be nominated for appointment as an Honorary Alderman would have to be proposed by a serving Group Leader and seconded by at least one other Councillor. Any nomination would be put to the Monitoring Officer in writing. The Monitoring Officer would then report to Council to invite the Council to consider the nomination in principle. If the nomination was approved in principle by the Council, the appointment would be made at a specially convened Council meeting which would be held immediately after an ordinary Council meeting. The nomination and appointment process would be followed no more than once a year.

Upon being appointed Honorary Alderman or Alderwoman, the former Councillor would be presented with an engraved badge of office.

If any Honorary Alderman or Alderwoman was subsequently elected as a Member of the Council, their role as Honorary Alderman or woman would cease with immediate effect. The title of Honorary Alderman or Alderwoman may be withdrawn by the Council or an Honorary Alderman or Alderwoman may resign at any time.

Paragraph 2.4, page 59 of the Constitution ('Matters for Council') would be amended by adding 'Conferring the title of Alderman or Alderwoman'.

The proposal was considered by Standards Committee on 19th July 2017 and was commended to the Council.

3. Legal and Human Rights Considerations

As described in the report.

In addition, the proposals detailed require a change to the Council's Constitution and so require approval by the Council following consideration by the Standards Committee.

4. Financial Considerations

There will be an initial cost of £300 for producing the badge of office. Each badge will thereafter cost in the region of £60.00. The cost can be met from the Chair's fund.

5. Other Considerations

In preparing this report, the relevance of the following factors have also been considered: prevention of crime and disorder, equality and diversity, human resources, environmental, health, property and transport considerations.

6. Background Papers

File held by the Director of Legal Services.

7. Officer Recommendation

That the Council:

1. approves and adopts the proposal to appoint Aldermen and Alderwomen; and
2. approves the purchase of engraved badges of office.
3. adopts the proposed addition to the Council's functions within the Constitution.

**JOHN MCELVANEY
DIRECTOR OF LEGAL SERVICES
AND MONITORING OFFICER**