

East Herts Council Report

Council

Date of meeting: Wednesday 1 March 2023

Report by: Councillor Geoffrey Williamson, Chairman of the Member Constitution Review Group

Report title: Honorary Alderman Policy

Ward(s) affected: (All Wards);

Summary - To approve the Protocol for the Appointment of Honorary Alderman as proposed by the Member Constitution Review Group.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR COUNCIL:

a) To approve the Protocol for the Appointment of Honorary Alderman.

1.0 Proposal(s)

1.1 To approve the Protocol for the Appointment of Honorary Alderman.

2.0 Background

2.1 [Section 249 of the Local Government Act 1972](#) states that the Council “may confer the title of Honorary Alderman on any person who, in the opinion of the Council, has rendered

eminent services to the Council as a past member of the Council”.

- 2.2 Although the criteria for appointing Honorary Alderman is not contained in the Constitution, it was felt appropriate that the Member Constitution Review Group should consider the current arrangements for conferring the title of Honorary Alderman to previous councillors. The current arrangements can be found [here](#).
- 2.3 The Local Government Act 1972 does not specify a qualifying term limit to be nominated for the award and it is for the council to set a time limit they feel is appropriate. The current qualifying term limit is five full terms of office.
- 2.4 The Member Constitution Review Group has proposed a change to the term limit to reduce it to two full terms of office/eight years of service on East Hertfordshire District Council. The Group felt that five full terms was a high threshold, and a Member could have rendered eminent service to the council in a shorter time period that was deserved of recognition.
- 2.5 The protocol for conferring the title of Honorary Alderman is attached at Appendix A. The Leader of the Council, in consultation with the Chairman, will recommend to Council the award of Honorary Alderman to a previous Member of the authority who meets the criteria. Any Member may approach the Leader with a nomination for consideration. Any person nominated must meet the following criteria:

- a) Has made significant contribution to public life
- b) Has given notable service on behalf of the Council, which has enhanced the reputation of Councillors and the Council itself
- c) Has rendered a minimum of eight years' service/two full terms of office as a Member of East Hertfordshire District Council
- d) Is no longer an elected Member

2.6 The award of Honorary Alderman shall take place during an extraordinary meeting of the Council, called for this specific purpose. The resolution needs to be passed by not less than two thirds of the Members present.

3.0 Reason(s)

3.1 Legislation states that the Council may confer the title of Honorary Alderman to previous Members who have rendered eminent services to the Council. It is for the council to determine any further criteria for the award.

3.2 The reduction in the term limit for nomination means that more Members who might have made a valuable and eminent contribution to the council and the community will be eligible for the title of Honorary Alderman.

4.0 Options

4.1 To not approve the proposed protocol would mean the existing arrangements would stay in place and nominations for the title of Honorary Alderman would need to have served five full terms.

5.0 Risks

5.1 None

6.0 Implications/Consultations

Community Safety

No

Data Protection

No

Equalities

No

Environmental Sustainability

No

Financial

No

Health and Safety

No

Human Resources

No

Human Rights

No

Legal

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Specific Wards

No

7.0 Background papers, appendices and other relevant material

7.1 Protocol of the Appointment of Honorary Alderman

Contact Member Councillor Geoffrey Williamson – Chairman of the Member Constitution Review Group

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