

<b>Report to:</b>	<b>COUNCIL</b>
<b>Date:</b>	29 November 2016
<b>Executive Member / Reporting Officer:</b>	Councillor Kieran Quinn, Executive Leader Steven Pleasant, Chief Executive
<b>Subject:</b>	<b>HONARARY ALDERMEN &amp;ALDERWOMEN</b>
<b>Report Summary:</b>	<p>At its meeting on 6 December 2011 Council agreed that a minimum length of service of 20 years should apply as a minimum criterion for becoming an Honorary ‘Alderman’. Given the historic nature of the title it should be noted it is gender biased. Council also agreed that in addition to the length of service criterion the person must have made a significant contribution to the Council and the people it represents, this includes holding two or more of the following positions for a period of five years or more:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chair of a key Committee or a member of the Cabinet;</li> <li>• Mayor/Deputy Mayor;</li> <li>• Leading role on Council Panels/Committees e.g. Overview and Scrutiny, Planning</li> <li>• Council representative on Greater Manchester District Bodies – GM Police Authority; GM Fire Authority; Manchester Airport.</li> <li>• Regional or national bodies e.g. North West Regional Assembly, Local Government Association;</li> <li>• Voluntary or Community Organisations.</li> </ul>
<b>Recommendations:</b>	<p>(i) That a Special Meeting of Council should be held on the rise of the Annual Meeting of Council on 23 May 2017 to confer the title of Honorary Alderman/Alderwoman on those former Councillors who meet the criteria described in 2.1.</p> <p>(ii) That every four years an assessment be made to determine which former Councillors meet the criteria to become an Honorary Alderman/Alderwomen and, if required, a Special Meeting of Council be held on the day of Annual Council in that year.</p>
<b>Policy Implications:</b>	There are no policy implications.
<b>Financial Implications: (Authorised by the Section 151 Officer)</b>	Any costs associated with the conferment of the title of Honorary Alderman or Alderwoman can be met from existing budgets.
<b>Legal Implications: (Authorised by the Borough Solicitor)</b>	The Local Government Act 1972 (Section 242) permits the Council to confer the title of Honorary Alderman on persons who have rendered eminent services to the Council

**Risk Management :**

Clear criteria for selecting Honorary Aldermen and Alderwomen and clarify about their role will help alleviate any risks.

**Access to Information :**

The background papers relating to this report can be inspected by contacting Robert Landon



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## **1. BACKGROUND**

- 1.1 The Local Government Act 1972 (Section 242) permits the Council to confer the title of Honorary Alderman on persons who have rendered eminent services to the Council. The Council's criterion for this title is that former councillors with **20 years service** with the Council are eligible for consideration by the Council for the title of Honorary Alderman or Alderwoman to be conferred on them subject to meeting certain other criteria (see section 2). A resolution passed by not less than two thirds of the Members voting at a specially convened Council Meeting is required to appoint Aldermen or Alderwomen.
- 1.2 Since 2009, the Council has been able to confer the title of Honorary Alderwoman on former female councillors who meet the above criteria.
- 1.3 An Honorary Alderman or Alderwoman has the right to attend civic ceremonies and meetings of the Council, but does not have the right to vote at any such meetings, and Aldermen and Alderwomen do not receive any allowances or payments from the Council.
- 1.4 Before the Local Government Act 1972 came into force, County and Borough Councils had two categories of members - Councillors and Aldermen.
- 1.5 Although the word 'ealdorman', meaning 'a noble of high rank or authority' has its origins in Saxon times, the office of Alderman was first introduced into civic life under the Municipal Corporations Act in 1835. The aim was to try and strengthen the link between the recently reformed elected Councils and the traditions of the ancient chartered corporations. The office was also intended to secure some greater continuity of policy and personnel.
- 1.6 All Councillors are chosen by the electorate, but Aldermen were elected by their fellow councillors. In London Boroughs, Aldermen constituted one sixth of the Council and served for a term of six years, half being elected every third year. Aldermen were usually selected from amongst existing Council Members, but since the only legal requirement was that an Alderman should be qualified to be a local authority Councillor, it was often possible to give council entirely fresh members through the aldermanic system.
- 1.7 The position of Alderman was finally abolished in 1974 under the 1972 Act. In recognition of the position that Aldermen used to play in Council life Section 249 of the same Act makes provision for Councils to confer the title of Honorary Alderman on any person who, in the opinion of the Council, has rendered eminent service as a past member.
- 1.8 Under Section 249 of the Local Government Act 1972 the Council can by resolution passed by not less than two-thirds of the members at a meeting of the Council specially convened for the purpose may confer the title Honorary Alderman on persons who have, in the opinion of the Council, rendered eminent services to the Council as past members of the Council.
- 1.9 Honorary Aldermen may attend and take part in civic ceremonies.

## **2.0 THE CRITERIA FOR APPOINTMENT OF HONORARY ALDERMEN:**

- 2.1 Council has previously agreed that a minimum length of service of 20 years should apply as a minimum criterion. In addition to the length of service criterion the person must have made a significant contribution to the Council and the people it represents, this includes holding two or more of the following positions for a period of five years or more:
  - Chair of a key Committee or a member of the Cabinet;
  - Mayor/Deputy Mayor;
  - Leading role on Council Panels/Committees e.g. Overview and Scrutiny, Planning
  - Council representative on Greater Manchester District Bodies – GM Police Authority; GM Fire Authority; Manchester Airport.

- Regional or national bodies e.g. North West Regional Assembly, Local Government Association;
- Voluntary or Community Organisations.

2.1 The adoption of the above criteria is to reflect particularly long service and a commitment to the whole of the Borough through holding of positions which impact across the whole Borough.

### **3.0 RIGHTS AND DUTIES**

3.1 As the name implies the role of Honorary Alderman/Alderwoman is an honorary role with no powers or responsibilities. At Tameside Honorary Aldermen/women are invited to all significant civic events. They do not receive any support from Council staff or have access to any facilities.

#### **The role of the Honorary Alderman:**

3.2 It is proposed that going forward Honorary Alderman/Alderwomen should be invited to attend the following civic events:

- All meetings of Council;
- Mayor Making;
- Remembrance Day events;
- Mayor's Civic Ball;
- Whit Friday Brass Band Contests;
- Annual Carnivals;
- Armed Forces Day events;
- Christmas Lights Switch on ceremonies;
- St George's Day celebrations; and
- Mayoress at Home (for Honorary Alderwomen).

3.3 To assist them in performing their role it is proposed that they should receive the following on the same basis as elected members:

- Car park passed at a cost of £10 per month for all Council car parks;
- IT – provision of laptop or ipad and access to support, if required;
- Access to Members lounge and meeting rooms

### **4. CONFERRING THE TITLE**

4.1 It is proposed that a Special Meeting of Council should be held on the rise of the Annual Meeting of Council on 23 May 2017 to confer the title of Honorary Alderman/Alderwoman on those former Councillors who meet the criteria described in 2.1 above.

4.2 It is also proposed that every four years an assessment be made to determine which former Councillors meet the criteria to become an Honorary Alderman/Alderwomen and, if required, a Special Meeting of Council be held on the day of Annual Council in that year.