

## **APPENDIX K**

### **APPOINTMENT OF HONORARY ALDERMEN AND ALDERWOMEN**

#### **1. Introduction**

1.1 The Local Government Act 1972 makes provision for the appointment of honorary aldermen and alderwomen [Section 249(1)] on the condition that the appointments are made, 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 legislation allows for the title to be given 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.'

1.2 The position is entirely honorary and brings no special rights, but is intended to reflect the esteem of the wider community. There is no statutory guidance or definition of "eminent services" although it is recommended that each Council should have its own criteria for the appointment.

#### **2. Proposed criteria and procedure for the appointment of honorary aldermen and alderwomen.**

2.1 The following criteria will apply to the appointment of honorary aldermen and alderwomen:

- (a) The title will 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 appointment to the title will be made in accordance with these arrangements at a Special meeting of the Council convened for the purpose on the rise of the November Full Council meeting.
- (c) Nominations may be received by the Chair 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 or alderwoman shall be formally agreed if supported by not less than two thirds of the Members present at the special Council meeting.
- (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 aldermen / alderwomen appointments at any one time.

### **3. Rights of honorary aldermen and alderwomen**

3.1 Honorary aldermen and alderwomen have no 'legal or social precedence' but it is custom and practice that they are invited to all appropriate Civic ceremonial events. This would include the Annual Council meeting, the Chairman's Civic Reception, and other events such as any future appointment of honorary aldermen/alderwomen. Honorary aldermen are entitled to wear the badge of 'Honorary Alderman or Alderwoman' at Civic events within the County. The badge can only be worn at Civic events outside the County with the prior agreement of the organisers of the event. Those elected to the Roll of Honorary Aldermen and Alderwomen are entitled to use the title of 'Honorary Alderman or Honorary Alderwoman of the County of Somerset'. Those appointed to the role have no right to receive any allowances or payments to which serving councillors are entitled.

### **4. Precedence in Civic processions:**

4.1 Honorary aldermen and alderwomen shall take precedence immediately after the chair and vice-chair of the Council. Precedence shall be according to number of years' service as a Member of Somerset County Council.

### **5. Presentation Ceremony**

5.1 The award of the title shall take place during a meeting of the Council. Those awarded the title will be presented with: 1) A 'Certificate of Conferral of the Status of Honorary Alderman or Alderwoman' which will carry the Council's Coat of Arms and the Common Seal of the Council, witnessed by the Chair and the Chief Executive. The certificate will be framed for presentation. ii) A Silver Badge of Office similar to the past Chairman's badge, incorporating the Coat of Arms on a ribbon. The lettering on the title will say 'Honorary Alderman/Alderwoman (as appropriate)'. The badge will be presented in an official presentation box. Following the presentation, the person appointed will be asked to sign the 'Roll of Honorary Aldermen and Alderwomen'

5.2 The Roll of Honorary Aldermen and Alderwomen shall be held and maintained by the Community Governance team. Included in the Roll of Honorary Aldermen and Alderwomen shall be the individual's name and title, and date of election to the Roll. A plaque listing these appointments shall be displayed in a prominent position on the Council premises, eg, in the Council's main reception area.

### **6. Death of an honorary alderman or alderwoman**

6.1 Following notification of the death of an honorary alderman or alderwoman, the County flag will be flown at half-mast over County Hall from the date of notification of death until the funeral has taken place.

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