

ITEM

ITEM

Executive – 8 November 2007

HONORARY ALDERMEN

Report of the Head of Corporate Services

Statutory Powers: Local Government Act 1972: Section 249

Financial Implications: None directly arising from this report.

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to seek approval for the criteria and procedure to appoint Honorary Aldermen.

RECOMMENDATION

- 1. That Council be RECOMMENDED to approve the criteria for appointing Honorary Aldermen of the Council;**
- 2. That, subject to Council approval of the criteria, Group Leaders be invited to make nominations to appoint Honorary Aldermen of the Council, prior to the arrangement of a Special Council meeting specifically convened for this purpose.**

Introduction

1. Under Section 249 of the Local Government Act 1972, “a principal council may, by a resolution passed by not less than two-thirds of the Members voting thereon at a meeting of the Council specially convened for the purpose with notice of the object, confer the title of Honorary Aldermen on 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.”
2. There is no statutory guidance or definition of “eminent services”, although it is recommended that each Council should have its own criteria for an appointment.

Criteria for Honorary Aldermen

3. The proposed criteria for conferring the title Honorary Aldermen are recommended as follows:
 - (a) the title may be conferred on persons who have, in the opinion of the Council, rendered “eminent services” to the Council as past Members, but who are no longer serving Members;
 - (b) there shall be no specific definition of ‘eminent services’, it being left to the discretion of the Council at the time to assess and recognise any individual’s contribution to the activities of the Council and the wellbeing of the district of the South Hams;

- (c) Nominees would normally require a minimum period of 12 years past service as a Member of the Council;

Procedure

4. In accordance with s. 249 of the 1972 Act, nominees would have to receive the support of not less than two-thirds of the Members voting thereon at a Special Council meeting convened for the purpose. It is suggested that nominations can be made by any Group Leader. However, before proceeding, officers and Members would, via the party groups, establish whether or not the nomination would be likely to receive sufficient support to proceed.

Rights of Honorary Aldermen

5. Whilst having no “legal or social precedence” in the community, it is custom and practice for Honorary Aldermen to be invited to Civic ceremonial events. This would be the Annual Council meeting, the Chairman’s Civic Reception, and other events such as any future appointment of Honorary Aldermen.
6. The status of Honorary Alderman carries no special right to attend or address meetings of the Council or its committees or to receive any allowances or payments to which serving Members are entitled. However, at the discretion of the Chairman, a nominee for Honorary Alderman may (if present) be invited to respond to the vote conferring that status.

Conclusion

7. Members are asked if they wish to recommend to Council that the criteria for appointing Honorary Aldermen of the Council be approved. Subject to approval of the criteria, nominations will be sought and agreed with Group Leaders prior to the arrangement of a Special Council meeting.

Darryl White
Member Support Services Manager

Executive
8 November 2007

Delyth Jenkins-Evans
Principal Solicitor

Kevin Williams
Head of Corporate Services

Background Papers:

None