

**Agenda Item No:** 15  
**Report To:** Council  
**Date of Meeting:** 20<sup>th</sup> July 2023  
**Report Title:** Conferment of the title of Honorary Aldermen  
**Report Author & Job Title:** Danny Sheppard  
Member Services Manager  
**Portfolio Holder:** Cllr. Ovenden  
**Portfolio Holder for:** The Leader and Portfolio Holder for Prosperity and Resource



**Summary:** Following approval of the Honorary Alderman Scheme by Council in February 2019, and the Council's first intake of Honorary Aldermen in October 2019, the Scheme has now been operating successfully for nearly four years.

This report seeks approval from Council of the recommended nominations for the conferment of the title of Honorary Alderman, from the group of Councillors who stepped down or were not returned in the May 2023 Local Elections.

**Key Decision:** NO

**Significantly Affected Wards:** Not applicable

**Recommendations:** **The Council is recommended to:-**

**Agree that the nominees as listed in the exempt Appendix to the report be conferred with the title of Honorary Alderman of Ashford Borough Council in accordance with Section 249 of the Local Government Act 1972.**

**Policy Overview:** Not applicable

**Financial Implications:** The Portfolio Holder has made it clear that whilst this is an important recognition for long service of previously elected Members, the costs must be reasonable in all the circumstances.

The bulk of the initial set up costs was borne in 2019 including robes, regalia and the Honorary Alderman Board in the Council Chamber. The purchase of the appropriate Honorary Aldermen Badges for this year is estimated to be between £2000 and £2200 and has been included within operational budgets. In addition to this there would be the cost of hosting a small reception immediately following the

award which is considered could be contained within the Mayoral entertainment budget for Civic events.

**Legal Implications**

The establishment of an Honorary Alderman Scheme is in accordance with Section 249 of the Local Government Act 1972.

**Equalities Impact Assessment**

Not Required because the criteria for bestowing the awards are equally applicable to all elected Members.

**Exempt from Publication:**

The appendix is not for publication by virtue of Paragraph 1 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 and the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in discussing the information.

**Background Papers:**

None

**Contact:**

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## Report Title: Conferment of the title of Honorary Aldermen

### Introduction and Background

1. Members will recall that the establishment of an Honorary Alderman Scheme was approved at Council on 21<sup>st</sup> February 2019. As reported at the time, the Local Government Act of 1972 allows for a Council to confer the title Honorary Alderman on persons who have, in the opinion of the Council, rendered eminent services to the Council. This Scheme has been adopted by Ashford Borough to recognise and award Past Members that have demonstrated long term and dedicated service to this Council.
2. The Council agreed that eligible Past Members would need to have achieved certain criteria during their service as Councillor. In summary, a nominee will need to have served at least twelve years or three terms as Councillor of Ashford Borough. In addition, all eligible Past Members should have a good attendance record at Council and at their various Committee meetings. Furthermore, all responsibilities undertaken by nominees as representatives of their Ward and their wider participation in outside organisations will be considered.
3. The adopted scheme provides for Honorary Alderman to be invited by the Council to attend various civic events from time to time. The names of individuals awarded the title will also be included on a dedicated Honours Board which will be placed in the Council Chamber.

### Nominations

4. The Civic Honours and Awards Board met on 11<sup>th</sup> July 2023 to consider and recommend the nominees for the title of Honorary Alderman to Full Council. The Board comprises of the following members;
  - Jo James OBE, Chief Executive of the Kent Invicta Chamber of Commerce.
  - Christine Drury, South East Regional Chair and Vice Chair of Campaign to Protect Rural England.
  - Cllr Noel Ovenden, Leader of the Council.
  - Tracey Kerly, Chief Executive of Ashford Borough Council.
5. All eligible Past Members were put forward as potential nominees to the Civic Honours and Awards Board. The outcome of this meeting is presented in the exempt Appendix to this report, listing the names of the recommended nominees to receive the Honorary Alderman title. Subject to the Council agreeing to the suggested list of former Members, their names will reproduced in the minutes of the meeting.

6. The exempt Appendix also contains a short summary of each nominee's service to the Borough. Prior to this Extraordinary Meeting, all nominees have been contacted to ascertain that they wish to accept the title of Honorary Alderman.
7. Members should be reminded that the recommendations for the title of Honorary Alderman should be passed as a Council Resolution and receive support of not less than two thirds of the Members at the meeting. Therefore, all Members are asked to consider the nominees compiled in the exempt report.
8. Subject to approval of the suggested nominations arrangements will be made to hold a special Ceremony that confers the title of Honorary Alderman to the awarded nominees. The ceremony has been planned to take place following the conclusion of the Full Council meeting on 19<sup>th</sup> October 2023. We will also present each Honorary Alderman with a heraldic badge to symbolise their achievement.

## **Portfolio Holder's Views**

9. The Portfolio Holder is the Leader of the Council and he fully supports the recommendations of the Civic Honours and Awards Board.

**Recommendations: The Council is recommended to:-**

**Agree that the nominees as listed in the exempt Appendix to the report be conferred with the title of Honorary Alderman of Ashford Borough in accordance with Section 249 of the Local Government Act 1972.**

## **Contact and Email**

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