

Ward: All Worthing Wards

Appointment of Honorary Alderman or Alderwoman under Section 249 (1) of the Local Government Act 1972

Report by the Director for Communities

1.0 Summary

- 1.1 To consider conferring the title of Honorary Alderman of the Borough on two former Mayors who have retired from the Council.
- 1.2 To consider a request for the conferment of the title of Honorary Alderman/Alderwoman of the Borough on a former councillor of the Borough.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 It is the tradition of Worthing Borough Council that when a former Mayor retires from the Council as an elected representative (a Councillor), they be recommended for appointment as Honorary Alderman / Alderwoman of the Borough.
- 2.2 There are two former Mayors of the Council who did not stand for election at the Borough elections in May 2016.
- 2.3 Section 249 (1) of the Local Government Act, 1972, provides the following criteria for honorary Alderman / honorary Alderwoman, namely:

“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.”
- 2.4 Councils can decide their own criteria or tradition for the conferment of the honorary title. Honorary Aldermen/Alderwomen are invited to attend the Remembrance Sunday Service in Worthing and the Annual Council meeting when the new Mayor is elected.
- 2.5 The Council posthumously conferred the title of Honorary Alderman to Reg Green in June 2012 for his services to the Borough.

- 2.6 In December 2013 the Council approved criteria for the appointment of eminent former Councillors who had not served as Mayor, this is attached as Annex A.

3.0 Proposals

- 3.1 To consider and recommend to Council the following retired Councillors and former Mayors of the Borough for the honorary title of Alderman of the Borough of Worthing:

Michael Donin - Mayoral Year - 2015-16

First elected in May 2006 for Durrington, re elected in May 2008 and May 2012

Vic Walker - Mayoral Year - 2014-15

First elected in May 2012 for Broadwater

- 3.2 To consider the request of Councillors Smytherman and Wye, against the adopted criteria, for the honorary title to be conferred on the following former Councillor for her services to the Borough of Worthing:

Norah Fisher

First elected in May 2008, re elected in May 2012 for Tarring Ward

- 3.3 The supporting request is attached as Annex B.
- 3.4 Balancing the requested against the adopted criteria, the Committee is invited to agree that the evidence presented meets criteria (A), (C) and (D) 2. Regarding criteria (B), the Committee is invited to consider that ill health prevented the former councillor standing in May 2016 for the Tarring Ward, had she been able to seek election then it is highly likely she would have been returned again for a further 4 years.
- 3.5 Members are invited to use their discretion to interpret criteria (B) alongside criteria (D) 2 which identifies that the Council may use its discretion in certain cases where the person recommended for this conferment meets the spirit of the criteria.
- 3.6 The Special Council for the conferment of the Honorary Titles will be on Tuesday 20 December directly after the ordinary council meeting on the same night.

4.0 Legal

- 4.1 The power to appoint Honorary Alderman is contained within Section 249 of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended:
- 4.2 '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 alderman 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'

- 4.3 Each Council can decide its own criteria or tradition for the appointment, the criteria for Worthing Borough Council, approved on December 2013 and attached as Annex A.

5.0 Financial implications

- 5.1 It is customary to present a Scroll commemorating the conferment and to hold a small reception, to celebrate the granting of Honorary Aldermanship after the Special Council Meeting; expenditure would be contained within the existing budget for Council refreshments.

6.0 Recommendation

- 6.1 The committee is invited to consider the granting of the Honorary aldermanship of the Borough of Worthing to the former Mayors of the Borough:

Michael Donin
Vic Walker

If the committee so determines, then to make the following recommendation to Worthing Borough Council:

That a special meeting of the Council be arranged under section 249(1) of the Local Government Act for the specific purpose of conferring the title of 'Honorary Alderman' to Michael Donin and Vic Walker.

- 6.2 To consider the information in paragraphs 3.2 and 3.3 and determine whether to grant the title of Honorary Alderman/Alderwoman to Norah Fisher, making any necessary recommendation to Council.

Local Government Act 1972

Background Papers:

Various public documents for the May 2016 Borough elections

Mayoral Records

Email from Councillor Smytherman dated 18 April 2016

Minutes of the Joint Governance and Audit Committee - June 2012, September 2013, November 2013. Full Council December 2013.

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Schedule of Other Matters

1.0 Council Priority

1.1 This report does not support any particular Council Priority

2.0 Specific Action Plans

2.1 This report does not support any particular Action Plan although it is customary to confer the Honorary Title to past Mayors on their retirement from the Council

3.0 Sustainability Issues

3.1 Matter considered no matters arising

4.0 Equality Issues

4.1 All former Mayors who have retired from the office of borough councillor are considered for the conferment of the honorary title 'Alderman/Alderwoman'

4.2 Equality issues relating to former councillors of the borough have been discussed by the Council and formal criteria has been adopted, attached to the report as Annex A.

5.0 Community Safety Issues (Section 17)

5.1 Matter considered and no matters arising

6.0 Human Rights Issues

6.1 Matter considered no matters arising

7.0 Reputation

7.1 The reputation of the Borough Council's tradition of honouring past Mayors' would be questioned if a past Mayor was not considered for conferment of this honorary title.

8.0 Consultations

8.1 The Leader was consulted on this report as the matter falls within his portfolio. The Joint Chairman of the Committee were advised of the contents of the report. Councillors Smytherman and Wye were also consulted to confirm information in their request.

9.0 Risk Assessment

9.1 The risk is of reputation of the Borough Council as outlined at 7.0.

10.0 Health & Safety Issues

10.1 Matter considered, no matters arising

11.0 Procurement Strategy

11.1 Matter considered, no matters arising

12.0 Partnership Working

12.1 Matter considered, no matters arising

Annex A

Criteria for 'eminent service' in the appointment of Honorary Alderman or Honorary Alderwoman

Definition of 'Eminent' - well-known, renowned, important, distinguished, famous, celebrated, prominent, outstanding, reputed (Thesaurus).

When considering the conferment of the title 'Honorary Alderman' or 'Honorary Alderwoman' on a past member of the Council who was not a past Mayor, then each of the following four criteria should apply:

Past Councillor:

(A) No longer serving on the Council:

1. Must have made a conscious decision to retire from the position of councillor on the council rather than resign from the position or be defeated at an election.
2. In circumstances of resignation or defeat at an election, 4 (four) years should elapse before consideration for conferment of the honour.

And:

(B) Service on the Council:

1. The nominee should have served more than 12 years on Worthing Borough Council, being at least 3 consecutive election wins for the same ward

And:

(C) Community representative:

1. Should have known record of eminent – special service to the Borough that can be demonstrated by their public service on the Council and by their service to the residents of Worthing through their social role in charity or non-remunerated work in the community or in a special interest role

And:

(D) Either:

1. Held a position on the council in one of the following categories for at least 6 years:
 - a. Leader of the Council
 - b. Cabinet member
 - c. Chairman of a Committee
 - d. A group leader(6 years is chosen as it covers a period of time covering at least two election cycles)

Or:

2. The Council acknowledges that there is likely to be an occasion when a recommendation for this honour does not meet the criteria it has adopted. In these circumstances the nomination should be supported by at least two representatives from two different parties in the Council chamber at the time of the nomination. In making the nomination to the Proper Officer of the Council, a supporting statement from these two representatives showing how the nominee meets the spirit of the four criteria should be presented.

Version1 - September 2013

Adopted December 2013

Annex B

Request to be submitted here when finalised (still to have some bits put in)

Request for the conferment of the Honorary Alderman/Woman on Norah Fisher

Norah Fisher was born in Brighton, living in Worthing for a number of years. Norah pursued her career in London before moving to the former London and Edinburgh Insurance Company in Broadwater.

First elected to the Borough Council in May 2008 for the Tarring Ward. Norah served on Regulatory Committees - Planning and Licensing as well as Overview and Scrutiny. Norah's ill health (rheumatoid arthritis) prevented her standing for election in May this year - to her dismay.

Norah is passionate about supporting and providing more facilities for younger people in Worthing. Using her position as vice-chairman of the Brighton and Hove Albion Disabled supporters Group she assists with the running of away trips and improving facilities at the Club's home group

Norah was a school governor at Thomas a Becket First and Middle Schools; a current Director of Worthing Dial-a Ride Southern Services Ltd and Secretary of the Worthing Access and Mobility Group. Through this Group she has brought about changes to improve public access to buildings, challenged safety of taxis for Worthing's disabled users

In 2013 Councillor Smytherman invited Norah to be his Mayoress for his Mayoral Year; accompanied by Herbie her assistance dog they were often seen in Worthing out and about on official duties. Dedicated to her role, Norah was regularly seen speeding through the town at night from engagements, Herbie at her side; attending 402 duties until ill health necessitated enforced hospitalisation. Norah was an active member on the Mayor's charity team and had a key role as hostess for the Mayor.

On attending the Royal Garden Party Norah and Herbie (granted Honorary Mayor's Cadet status) were both introduced to HM The Queen, Herbie receiving a regal 'pat'.

Norah's ward duties in Tarring have involved her in the yearly Picnic in the Park which she is actively chairs the organisational committee; the new event of Carols in the Park and the new organisation of Friends of Tarring Park - of which Norah is the President. Norah regularly attends Tarring Forum meetings and despite not being an elected member continues to support residents and their needs.

Norah was an exemplary ambassador for the Borough when serving for the Council and remains a community leader in Tarring.

Councillor Bob Smytherman, proposer

Councillor Tom Wye, supporter