



ADUR & WORTHING
COUNCILS

Ward(s) Affected: None

Conferment of Honorary Aldermen

Report by the Director Digital and Sustainability

Executive Summary

1. Purpose

- 1.1. To consider conferring the title of Honorary Alderman of the Borough of Worthing on former Mayor Lionel Harman who has retired from the Council.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1. That the Joint Audit & Governance Committee recommend that Worthing Borough Council confer the title of Honorary Alderman to former Mayor, Lionel Harman
- 2.2. That the Joint Audit & Governance Committee agrees 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 1972 for the specific purpose of conferring the title of Honorary Alderman to Lionel Harman.

3. Context

3.1. At the meeting of Worthing Borough Council on 18th July 2023 a Motion was passed on the following terms:-

- Make no further appointments under the Council's Honorary Alderman/Alderwoman scheme and therefore ask officers to remove this scheme from its constitution;
- Allow existing holders of this title to continue to use it if they so wish, but not provide any special recognition or treatment for them that is not offered to other former members of the council;
- Those councillors who are currently eligible for Alderman/Alderwoman status can receive it at the end of their term of office should they choose to do so. After this there will be no further conferment of the title.

3.2. The recommendations within this Report are therefore made pursuant to the Motion that was approved by Full Council and the final bullet point at 3.1 above.

3.3. Section 249(1) of the Local Government Act 1972 provides the following criteria for conferring the Honorary titles of Alderman and 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.”

3.4. Full Council has previously determined its own criteria for the conferment of the honorary title. The previously approved criteria is attached at Appendix A.

3.5. The appointments are honorary in nature so the persons appointed to the office do not carry out Council duties or have a vote.

3.6. Honorary Alderwomen / Aldermen may attend and take part in civic ceremonies as the council may from time to time decide, but shall not have the right to attend meetings of the council or a committee of the council (including a joint committee upon which they are represented),

or to receive any allowances or payments under section 173 to 176 of the Local Government Act 1972.

3.7. Group Leaders have been consulted on the contents of this report.

4. Issues for consideration

4.1. The Joint Audit & Governance Committee is invited to consider conferring the title of Honorary Aldermen for the Borough of Worthing to former Councillor Lionel Harman who retired from the Council in May 2023 on the terms set out in this report.

4.2. Councillor Lionel Harman represented the Castle ward from May 2015 to May 2023 and was Mayor of Worthing from 2020-2022.

5. Financial Implications

5.1. It is customary to present a scroll commemorating the conferment, expenditure for which would be contained within the existing budget.

6. Legal Implications

6.1. The power to appoint Honorary Alderman is contained within Section 249 of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended.

6.2. 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.

6.3. Each Council can decide its own criteria or tradition for the appointment. The Council's agreed criteria for appointment is set out in Appendix A.

Local Government Act 1972

Background Papers:

None.

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Sustainability & Risk Assessment

1. Economic

Matter considered, no matters arising.

2. Social

2.1 Social Value

Matter considered, no matters arising.

2.2 Equality Issues

All former Mayors who are no longer members of the Borough Council are considered for conferment of the honorary title 'Alderman/Alderwoman'.

2.3 Community Safety Issues (Section 17)

Matter considered, no matters arising.

2.4 Human Rights Issues

Matter considered, no matters arising.

3. Environmental

Matter considered, no matters arising.

4. Governance

Matter considered, no matters arising

Criteria for 'eminent service' in the appointment of Honorary Aldermen or Honorary Alderwomen

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

Nominations for conferment of Honorary Alderman or Honorary Alderwoman will be considered by the Joint Audit & Governance Committee and Council at the next available meetings when an application is made by a political group leader along with reasons why it is felt that the criteria have been met.

When considering the conferment of the title Honorary Alderman or Honorary Alderwoman on a past member of the Council, then each of the following four criteria should apply:

1. Past Councillor:

(A) No longer serving on the Council:

- (i) 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.
- (ii) In circumstances of resignation or defeat at an election, 4 years should elapse before consideration for conferment of the honour.

And:

2. Service on the Council:

- (i) The nominee should have served more than 12 years on Worthing Borough Council, being at least 3 consecutive election wins.

And:

3. Community representative:

- (i) Should have a known record of eminent and 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:

4. Either:

(i) 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. Chair of the Council or a Committee
- d. A political group leader

(6 years is chosen as it covers a period of time covering at least two election cycles)

Or:

(ii) 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 three representatives from two different political groups in the Council chamber at the time of the nomination. In making the nomination, a supporting statement should be presented by these three representatives showing how the nominee meets the four criteria.