

HONORARY ALDERMEN

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To re-consider the proposal to confer the title of Honorary Aldermen on former Members of the District Council who had rendered eminent service.

2. SUMMARY OF BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Members will recall that at the Council Meeting held on 21 February 2012 the recommendation of the Regulatory and Licensing Committee that the appointment of Honorary Aldermen be agreed and the implications be noted and accepted was referred back so that this matter could be considered further in more detail. A copy of the original report is attached.
- 2.2 Set out below are a number of issues that were raised so that they can be considered.
- 2.3 Section 249 of the Local Government Act 1972 gives a power to confer the title of Honorary Aldermen on persons "who have in the opinion of the Council rendered eminent service to the Council".
- 2.4 The phrase "eminent service" is not defined in legislation and it is considered that this enables a Council to determine nominations made on their own individual merits. The word eminent itself relates to outstanding or prominent and in this context could be considered that any service given would be likened to more than what usually would be expected.
- 2.5 The length of service of an individual Member could be taken into account as one factor. If for instance a period of 16 years was agreed this would relate to four terms of office but would exclude anyone who has done less service than that amount.
- 2.6 Any service rendered should not be limited to formal roles within the District Council by being the Chairman of the Council or any of its Committees. Some Members who could have given eminent service would not have held such roles but would have done a considerable amount of work for their constituents.

- 2.7 The number of living Honorary Aldermen could be restricted but to do so a number needs to be set. By being prescriptive on such numbers the danger is that former Members having given eminent service may be excluded.
- 2.8 Any nominations for the position of Honorary Aldermen should be sent to the Chief Executive but the method by which they are determined needs to be considered. It has been suggested that a group of five Members could consider such applications and if that was agreed it is suggested that those Members be from Regulatory and Licensing Committee and consist of four Conservative and one Labour Member.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 There are no additional financial implications to those referred to in the report considered by the Committee on 8 February 2012.

4. RECOMMENDATION

- 4.1 That the Committee determine if specific criteria should be adopted to the appointment of Honorary Aldermen and if that is the case what such criteria should be.