



Chester-le-Street
District Council

Report to:	Special Council
Date of Meeting:	19 March 2009
Report from:	Head of Legal and Democratic Services
Title of Report:	Appointment of 'Honorary Aldermen'
Agenda Item Number:	

1. Purpose and Summary

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to consider nominations for the appointment by this Council of 'honorary aldermen' (informally referred to throughout this report as honorary aldermen and honorary alderwomen) and, if appropriate, to confer the honorary title of 'honorary alderman' (with those honoured accordingly being known as Alderman or Alderwoman).

2. Consultation

- 2.1 Full Council received a report at its January 2009 Meeting about the honorary title and agreed a protocol. The leaders of the political groups have been consulted.

3. Transition Plan and People and Place Priority

- 3.1 The extended rights to appoint honorary aldermen and honorary alderwomen from among serving councillors of a council to be abolished has been specifically given by a statutory instrument dealing with transitional arrangements (described in that legislation as 'honorary aldermen'). It came into effect on 28 November 2008. The law has been enacted for a purpose and it provides for continuity in terms of local links to the locality albeit at a purely ceremonial level.

4. Implications

4.1 Financial Implications and Value for Money Statement

No allowances are payable to honorary aldermen and honorary alderwomen.

4.2 Local Government Reorganisation Issues

Any honorary aldermen or honorary alderwomen appointed by the Council will by operation of law become 'honorary aldermen' of Durham County Council on and from 1 April 2009.

4.3 Legal

The Council has power under Section 249 of the Local Government Act 1972 as amended by Regulation 32 of The Local Government (Structural Changes) (Transitional Arrangements) (No.2) Regulations 2008 to appoint 'honorary aldermen' from past or serving members of the Council who in the opinion of the Council have rendered 'eminent services' to the Council. The passing of a resolution to confer the title of 'honorary alderman' 'by not less than two-thirds of the members voting thereon' at the meeting

4.4 Personnel

None

4.5 Other Services

None

4.6 Diversity

The service contribution of individuals nominated is taken into account on merit in accordance with the sole legal criterion.

4.7 Risk

None

4.8 Crime and Disorder

None

4.9 Data Quality

Every care has been taken in the development of this report to ensure that the information and data used in its preparation are accurate, timely, consistent and comprehensive. The council's Data Quality Policy has been complied with in producing this report.

4.10 Other Implications

None

5. Background , Position Statement and Option Appraisal

5.1 Section 249 of the Local Government Act 1972 as amended permits the Council by a two-thirds majority to resolve that the honorary title of alderman be conferred on particular past or serving members of the Council.

5.2 The legal term 'aldermen' or 'alderman' applies to men and women.

5.3 As stated earlier, I shall, however, informally refer to honorary aldermen and honorary alderwomen throughout this report as such terms are used in modern parlance by the Government, even if such descriptions are not reflected in the legislation itself.

5.4 To confer such a title, the sole legal criterion of having rendered 'eminent services to the council' must, in the opinion of the Council, be satisfied.

5.5 'Eminent services' connotes making a positive difference or impact over and above the carrying out of mere normal council duties to a basic or acceptable standard i.e. being 'distinguished' for proper reasons and in the service to the council.

5.6 There is therefore *no minimum number* and there is *no maximum number* of Aldermen and Alderwomen which is or can be laid down by the Council.

5.7 The Council has received a number of nominations at the time of writing this report and an up to date list will be circulated in the Appendix to this Report.

6. Recommendation

6.1 That the Council passes the following resolution: 'That, in the opinion of the Council, those named in the Appendix to this Report having rendered eminent services to the Council as past or serving members of the Council be hereby conferred with the 'honorary title of alderman' pursuant to section 249 of the Local Government Act 1972 as amended'

7. Background Papers/ Documents referred to

7.1 None

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