

Constitution Committee

Date of Meeting: 21 November 2019

Report Title: Appointment and Rights and Privileges of Honorary Aldermen

Senior Officer: Jan Bakewell, Director of Governance and Compliance

1. Report Summary

1.1. This report informs the Committee of those former Members of the Council, who have the requisite service, in order for Council to consider their appointment to the position of Honorary Aldermen. This report also discusses the rights and privileges of both Honorary Aldermen and Freemen.

2. Recommendations

2.1. That the former Members of Cheshire East Council, named in paragraph 3.5 of the report, be offered the position of Honorary Aldermen.

2.2. That a Special Meeting of Council be held immediately before the Regular meeting of Council on 20 February 2020 to appoint new Honorary Aldermen.

2.3. That free tickets to the Royal Cheshire Show and RHS Show at Tatton be no longer offered to Honorary Aldermen and Freemen.

3. Background

3.1 The Local Government Act 1972 confers to Council the power to appoint Honorary Freemen and Aldermen. This must take place at a Special meeting of Council.

3.2 Special Council meetings have been held, on two occasions in the past, to appoint Honorary Aldermen, following Council elections. The first of these meetings was held at the Lyceum Theatre, Crewe in 2011; this was a “stand-alone” meeting. On the second occasion, the meeting was held at Tatton in 2016, immediately following that year’s Mayor Making.

3.3 Council policy, agreed in 2010, states that, to be appointed as an Honorary Aldermen, former Councillors must have served for a minimum of twelve years (not necessary consecutively), with Cheshire East or a predecessor authority. Those former Members who stood-down, or who lost their seats in May, and who were first elected to the Shadow Authority in 2008, only have eleven years

Cheshire East service. To be appointed as an Honorary Aldermen, they would need to have served on one of the predecessor authorities.

- 3.4 A small number of Members who stood down or lost their seats in May 2019 had been appointed to the position of Honorary Alderman by a predecessor authority prior to the creation of Cheshire East, or by Cheshire East. These former Members are now automatically Cheshire East Honorary Aldermen. The former Members in question are:

Mr Ainsley Arnold
Mrs Mo Grant
Mr Derek Hough

- 3.5 There are a number of former Members who left the Authority in May 2019 following the elections, who have served for twelve or more years; they qualify to be appointed as Honorary Aldermen; the former Members are:

Mrs Rhoda Bailey
Mr Gary Barton
Mr Gordon Baxendale
Mr Derek Bebbington
Mr Harold Davenport
Mrs Hilda Gaddum
Mr Simon McGrory
Mr Jamie Macrae
Mr Rod Menlove
Mrs Gill Merry
Mr Barry Moran
Mr Howard Murray

Mr Michael Parsons
Mr George Walton

- 3.6 Council, at its meeting in October 2019, resolved that the Constitution Committee should review issues relating to the Mayoralty. It will be some months before the outcome of this review is known. As the format of Annual Council could change as a result of this review, it would not appear appropriate to recommend, at the present time, that a Special meeting of Council be held immediately after that meeting. This report therefore recommends that such a meeting be held in February 2020, immediately before that month's Council meeting.
- 3.7 The rights and privileges of both Honorary Freeman and Honorary Aldermen are identical. These were agreed by Council some years ago, and include an invitation being given to them to civic events (of which there are very few) and an offer of two free tickets each year for the Royal Cheshire Show and the RHS Show at Tatton.
- 3.8 In both 2018 and 2019 Group Leaders, recognising the constraints on public expenditure, decided that it would be inappropriate for Members to receive free Show tickets, even though by resolution of Council they, along with Honorary

Aldermen and Freemen were entitled to them. When Honorary Freemen and Aldermen were contacted during the early part of 2019 in order to enquire whether they wanted tickets for the Shows, they were informed that the practice was being reviewed and 2019 could be the last year they were offered. The cost of providing tickets in 2019 was £987.

- 3.9 The Committee is asked to review the practice of offering free Show tickets to Honorary Aldermen and Freemen. It is recommended that the practice be discontinued.

4. Implications of the Recommendations

4.1. Legal Implications

4.1.1. There are no direct legal implications.

4.2. Finance Implications

4.2.1. A small financial saving will be made if the practice of offering free Show tickets is discontinued. .

4.3. Policy Implications

4.3.1. There are no short term policy financial implications.

4.4. Equality Implications

4.4.1. There are no equality implications.

4.5. Human Resources Implications

4.5.1. There are no HR implications.

4.6. Risk Management Implications

4.6.1. There are no risk management implications.

4.7. Rural Communities Implications

4.7.1. There are no implications for rural communities.

4.8. Implications for Children & Young People / Cared for Children

4.8.1. There are no implications for children and young people or cared for children.

4.9. Public Health Implications

4.9.1. There are no implications for public health.

4.10. Climate Change Implications

4.10.1. There are no climate change implications.

5. Ward Members Affected

5.1. No individual Ward members are affected.

6. Access to Information

6.1. There are no supporting documents.

7. Contact Information

7.1. Any questions relating to this report should be directed to the following officer:

Name: Martin Smith

Job Title: Registration and Civic Services Manager

Email: martin.r.smith@cheshireeast.gov.uk