

CABINET ITEM COVERING SHEET PROFORMA

AGENDA ITEM

REPORT TO CABINET

21 JUNE 2018

**REPORT OF SENIOR
MANAGEMENT TEAM**

COUNCIL DECISION/CABINET DECISION

Leader of the Council – Councillor Bob Cook

REVIEW OF ALDERMAN CRITERIA

1. Summary

The report invites Cabinet to consider the current criteria for conferring the title of Honorary Aldermen and comment on whether it is still fit for purpose.

2. Recommendations

Recommended to Cabinet/Council that:-

1. The appropriate length of service held by a former councillor in order to qualify for consideration as a nominee for Alderman status be extended from 12 years to 16 years.
2. Nominations put forward take into account factors such as the nominees previous attendance at Council/Committee meetings and/or contribution the individual had made to the Council.

3. Reasons for the Recommendation(s)/Decision(s)

To determine whether the current criteria for conferring the title of Honorary Aldermen is still fit for purpose.

4. Members' Interests

Members (including co-opted Members) should consider whether they have a personal interest in any item, as defined in **paragraphs 9 and 11** of the Council's code of conduct and, if so, declare the existence and nature of that interest in accordance with and/or taking account of **paragraphs 12 - 17** of the code.

Where a Member regards him/herself as having a personal interest, as described in **paragraph 16** of the code, in any business of the Council he/she must then, **in accordance with paragraph 18** of the code, consider whether that interest is one which a member of the public, with knowledge of the relevant facts, would reasonably regard as so significant that it is likely to prejudice the Member's judgement of the public interest and the business:-

- affects the members financial position or the financial position of a person or body described in **paragraph 17** of the code, or

- relates to the determining of any approval, consent, licence, permission or registration in relation to the member or any person or body described in **paragraph 17** of the code.

A Member with a personal interest, as described in **paragraph 18** of the code, may attend the meeting but must not take part in the consideration and voting upon the relevant item of business. However, a member with such an interest may make representations, answer questions or give evidence relating to that business before the business is considered or voted on, provided the public are also allowed to attend the meeting for the same purpose whether under a statutory right or otherwise (**paragraph 19** of the code)

Members may participate in any discussion and vote on a matter in which they have an interest, as described in **paragraph 18** of the code, where that interest relates to functions of the Council detailed in **paragraph 20** of the code.

Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

It is a criminal offence for a member to participate in any discussion or vote on a matter in which he/she has a disclosable pecuniary interest (and where an appropriate dispensation has not been granted) **paragraph 21** of the code.

Members are required to comply with any procedural rule adopted by the Council which requires a member to leave the meeting room whilst the meeting is discussing a matter in which that member has a disclosable pecuniary interest (**paragraph 22** of the code)

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SUMMARY

The report invites Cabinet to consider the current criteria for conferring the title of Honorary Aldermen and comment on whether it is still fit for purpose.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommended to Cabinet/Council that:-

1. The appropriate length of service held by a former councillor in order to qualify for consideration as a nominee for Alderman status should be extended from 12 years to 16 years.
2. Nominations put forward take into account factors such as the nominees previous attendance at Council/Committee meetings and/or contribution the individual had made to the Council.

BACKGROUND

- 1 The criteria for conferring the title of Honorary Aldermen was last reviewed by Council in November 2013 (Min C75/13 refers) following proposals submitted by the Members Advisory Panel (MAP) which specifically addressed whether the criteria in place at that time was appropriate.
- 2 In accordance with the Local Government Act 1972, for the title to be conferred, not less than two thirds of Members voting must agree at a council meeting specially convened for the purpose of doing so.
- 3 The criteria in place prior to 2013 was that when considering whether it was appropriate to confer the title of Alderman on a former Councillor, their 'reckonable service' as a councillor should be taken into account.
- 4 Reckonable service for the purpose of conferring this title had been established as being at least 20 years; or alternatively 15 years with relevant Councils including holding a senior office over a long period. It had also been practice not to count service with the former Cleveland County Council where that service was contemporaneous with service with Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council or its predecessor authorities.

- 5 At the time of the last review in 2013, MAP were specifically asked:-
- if the 20 year period (without holding a senior office) should be changed.
 - whether 15 years (including holding a senior office) was appropriate over a long period.
 - if senior office should be defined e.g. holding an office which attracts a special responsibility allowance.
 - whether a long period for holding such an office should also be defined e.g. 8 years.
- 6 MAP subsequently agreed that the criteria should be revised and Cabinet/Council ultimately agreed their recommendations as follows:-
- That any Councillor who had an appropriate length of service, whether or not including holding a senior office with the Council, should qualify for consideration.
 - That an appropriate length of service should be **12 years**, which equated to three election terms, and that this should be the only criterion taken into consideration.

DETAIL

7. Following the decision of Council to review the criterion for conferring Alderman status to that set out at paragraph 6, the honour has been bestowed on 20 former councillors as follows, with service ranging from 12 years to 32 years:-
- March 14 2018: Peter Mallinson
 - December 20 2017: Stephen Smailes
 - March 9 2016: Marjorie Galloway (MBE) and Keith Leonard
 - 4. October 28 2015: Jeremy Atkinson, Alex Cunningham.
 - July 22 2015: Lynne Apedaile, Richard Cains, David Coleman, Maurice Frankland, Robert Gibson (O.B.E), Colin Leckonby, Kenneth Lupton, William Noble, Maureen Rigg, Fred Salt, Andrew Sherris, Steve Walmsley, Mary Womphrey, Michael Womphrey.
8. MAP at its meeting held on 4th May 2018, were invited to consider the criteria once again and determine whether it was still fit for purpose.
9. It was the view of the Panel that the current length of service (12 years) was too short and that it would be more appropriate for it to be extended to 16 years.
10. MAP were also keen to ensure that any nominations put forward by groups were merited and took into account factors such as the nominees previous attendance at Council/Committee meetings and/or contribution they had made to the Council. It would therefore be incumbent upon political groups nominating to ensure that their nominations merited consideration based on these factors prior to submission.
11. MAP therefore recommended to Cabinet/Council that the appropriate length of service held by a former councillor in order to qualify for consideration as a nominee for Alderman status should be extended from 12 years to 16 years.

COMMUNITY IMPACT IMPLICATIONS

12. There are no Community Impact implications arising from this report.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

13. None specifically arising from this report.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

14. The existing criteria is in place to assist application of the relevant legislation contained within the Local Government Act 1972 that provides for the title to be conferred, provided not less than two thirds of Members voting agreeing at a Council meeting specially conferred for the purpose of doing so.

RISK ASSESSMENT

15. Low risk.

COUNCIL PLAN POLICY PRINCIPLES AND PRIORITIES

16. Developing strong and healthy communities

CONSULTATION INCLUDING WARD/COUNCILLORS

17. Via the Members Advisory Panel.

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Education related? No

Background Papers N/A

Ward(s) and Ward Councillors: All

Property

None