

MINUTE EXTRACT

Cabinet Meeting – 21 June 2018

1. Title of Item/Report

Review of Alderman Criteria

2. Record of the Decision

Consideration was given to a report on the criteria for conferring the title of Honorary Aldermen and comment on whether it was still fit for purpose.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

Following the decision of Council to review the criterion for conferring Alderman status to that set out at paragraph 6, the honour had been bestowed on 20 former Councillors.

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.

It was the view of the Panel that the length of service (12 years) was too short and that it would be more appropriate for it to be extended to 16 years.

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.

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.

RECOMMENDED to 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.