

Item No. 2.1	Classification: Open	Date: 8 July 2015	Meeting Name: Council Assembly (Extra-ordinary Meeting)
Report title:		Honorary Alderman/Alderwoman Nominations	
Ward(s) or groups affected:		All	
From:		Head of Community Engagement	

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That the proposed recipients for the title of Honorary Alderman/Alderwoman as set out in the closed report be agreed.
2. That officers write to all nominees to seek confirmation that the named individuals would wish to accept the title.
3. That constitutional steering panel recommends the following additional criteria for conferment of the title of Honorary Alderman/Alderwoman to council assembly for approval:

That on a case by case basis where exceptional circumstances apply, the title may be conferred on former councillors who fall outside of criteria a) to c) [see paragraph 7 below].

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

4. Section 249(1) of the Local Government Act 1972 allows the council to confer the title of "Honorary Alderman" on persons who have in the opinion of the council rendered eminent services to the council as past members but who are not current members. The Act was amended in 2009 to include the title of "Honorary Alderwoman".
5. Such conferment must be agreed by the council by resolution passed by not less than two thirds of the members present at a meeting, specially convened for that purpose.
6. The council has power under Section 249(6) to spend a reasonable sum as it considers fit for the purpose of presenting an address to such Honorary Alderman/Alderwoman.
7. The criteria for conferment of the title of Honorary Alderman/Alderwoman is as follows:
 - a) That nominations recognise service to the council and nominees must have served on the council for at least two full terms before being considered for the title;
 - b) That the award not be conferred automatically on councillors upon retirement from the council;
 - c) That Past Mayors and Freepersons should not be included in nominations;

In accordance with council assembly procedure rule 5.2 the criteria used to consider conferring the title of Honorary Alderman/Alderwoman is approved by the council.

8. On 11 February 2015, constitutional steering panel considered a proposal that each nomination should be dealt with on a case by case basis. The panel endorsed this

approach, and also asked officer to take into consideration the cost implications in respect of gowns, certificates etc. In line with this approach the following additional criteria is recommended to council assembly for approval:

- d) That on a case by case basis where exceptional circumstances apply, the title may be conferred on former councillors who fall outside of criteria a) to c) above.
- 9. Under the council's constitution the constitutional steering panel shall consider the nominations and make recommendations to council assembly for the purpose of honouring or conferring the title of Honorary Alderman/Alderwoman.
- 10. Honorary positions were last conferred after the 2010 election. The nominees were agreed by an extra-ordinary council assembly meeting on 1 December 2010.

KEY ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

- 11. If council assembly agrees to confer the honour a ceremony for presentation of the title of Honorary Alderman/Alderwoman on former councillors is arranged. It is proposed that the ceremony to confer the title be held in conjunction with the 50th anniversary ceremony on Saturday 24 October 2015 at Southwark Cathedral.
- 12. Should council assembly agree to confer the title, all nominees will be written to ask whether they would wish to accept the title.
- 13. The office of Honorary Alderman/Alderwoman does not convey with it any legal rights or responsibilities other than a ceremonial role at civic functions. They may attend and take part in civic ceremonies as the council decides but shall not, as such, have the right to attend meetings of the council or receive any allowances or other payments.
- 14. Should an Honorary Alderman/Alderwoman wish to stand again as a member of the council then, if he or she were elected, they would no longer be eligible to be addressed by the title or to attend or take part in any civic ceremonies of the council as an alderman.

Resource implications

- 15. Honorary alderman ceremonies occur once every four years and can be managed within existing staff and financial resources. A certificate will be presented to each Alderman/Alderwoman to commemorate the occasion.

Legal implications

- 16. Legal issues are outlined in the body of the report.

Community impact statement

- 17. This report has little direct impact but should be seen as recognition of the contribution of elected members to community representation and cohesion as well as the promotion of civic pride and responsibility.

REASONS FOR URGENCY

- 18. Under its procedure rules, council assembly needs to hold an extra-ordinary meeting to agree to confer the title of Honorary Aldermen/Alderwomen, after which the awards can be presented to the agreed recipients. Given the date of the awards ceremony in

October, the nominations need to be considered by an extra-ordinary meeting of council assembly on 8 July 2015 (at the rise of the ordinary meeting).

REASONS FOR LATENESS

19. The report was not available at the time of agenda despatch due to need to complete preliminary work on identifying the nominees.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Background Papers	Held At	Contact
Southwark constitution	On line	Lesley John, Constitutional Team Tel: 020 7525 7228

AUDIT TRAIL

Lead Officer	Stephen Douglass, Head of Community Engagement	
Report Author	Michael Cleere, Civic Engagement Manager Ian Millichap, Constitutional Manager	
Version	Final	
Dated	2 July 2015	
Key Decision?	No	
CONSULTATION WITH OTHER OFFICERS / DIRECTORATES / CABINET MEMBER		
Officer Title	Comments Sought	Comments included
Director of Legal Services	No	Incorporated in the report
Strategic Director of Finance and Corporate Services	No	No
Cabinet Member	No	No
Date final report sent to Constitutional Team		3 July 2015