

APPOINTMENT OF HONORARY ALDERMAN

Head of Service/Contact: Amardip Healy, Chief Legal Officer
Urgent Decision?(yes/no) No
If yes, reason urgent decision required:
Annexes/Appendices (attached): None
Other available papers (not attached): None

Report summary

The report invites the Committee to consider conferring the title of Honorary Alderman on former Councillor Jean Steer in recognition of her eminent services to the Borough.

Recommendation (s)

The Committee is asked:

- (1) that the Council places on record its deep appreciation of the eminent services to the Council rendered by former Councillor Jean Steer, and**
- (2) that a Special Meeting of the Council be convened immediately following Full Council on the 10 December 2019, at which members will be recommended to confer the title of Honorary Alderman**

1 Implications for the Council's Key Priorities, Service Plans and Sustainable Community Strategy

1.1 Not applicable.

2 Background

2.1 Section 249 of the Local Government Act 1972 allows Local Authorities to appoint both Honorary Freeman and Honorary Aldermen. The criterion for appointment as Freeman is that an individual should be a "person of distinction" and have "rendered eminent service to the place or area". The criterion for appointment as an Alderman is that an individual "should have rendered eminent service to the Council as [a] past Member of that

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Council". There is no bar on an individual being both an Honorary Freeman and an Honorary Alderman.

- 2.2 The Local Government Act specifies that both Honorary Freemen and Honorary Aldermen must be appointed at a Special Meeting of Council, with the appointment being endorsed by a two thirds majority of those Members in attendance at the meeting.
- 2.3 Honorary Aldermen have no 'legal or social precedence' but it is custom and practice that they are invited to all Civic ceremonial events. The Aldermen have no right to attend meetings of the Council or its committees beyond those of the public, but the Council has recognised their attendance and allowing them to sit within the Chamber. The Aldermen status does not carry with it any allowances or payments to which serving councillors are entitled.

3 Proposals

- 3.1 It is customary for the Council in the first year of a new municipal term to consider the possibility of the award of honours to Councillors who have given long and distinguished service and who have usually held the office of Mayor of the Borough.
- 3.2 A nomination for former Councillor Jean Steer has been received by the Council's Chief Executive.
- 3.3 Former Councillor Jean Steer served as an Epsom and Ewell Borough Councillor for 24 years, from May 1995 to May 2019 and was Mayor of the Borough 2007-2008, and Deputy Mayor 2008-2009.

4 Financial and Manpower Implications

- 4.1 There are costs of preparing the traditional scrolls and a photographer for the ceremony. It is also customary for the Council to cover the cost of any hospitality provided for the newly elected Alderman and a select number of guests.
- 4.2 **Chief Finance Officer's comments:** The £4,000 of additional costs associated with the election of a new Alderman can be funded from within the 2019/20 civic expenses budget.

5 Legal Implications (including implications for matters relating to equality)

- 5.1 The formal decision to confer the status of Honorary Alderman must be ratified by a Special Meeting of the Council.
- 5.2 **Monitoring Officer's comments:** none arising from the contents of this report.

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6 Sustainability Policy and Community Safety Implications

6.1 Not applicable.

7 Partnerships

7.1 Not applicable.

8 Risk Assessment

8.1 There are no risks associated with this report.

9 Conclusion and Recommendations

9.1 The Committee to consider conferring the title of Honorary Alderman on former Councillor Jean Steer in recognition of her eminent services to the Borough, and agrees to a Special Meeting to be requested.

Ward(s) affected: (All Wards);