

Scheme for the enrolment of Honorary Aldermen of West Northamptonshire Council

Background

1. In accordance with the provisions of section 249 of the Local Government Act 1972, the Council may 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 of that Council, but who are not then members of the Council”.

2. In order for Council to confer the title of Honorary Alderman, a special meeting of full Council needs to be convened for this purpose and a resolution passed by not less than two thirds of the voting members present at that meeting.
3. For the purposes of this scheme “eminent services” shall mean serving as an elected member for a total of 12 years for West Northamptonshire Council and/or one of the following councils:
 - a. the former Northampton Borough Council,
 - b. the former Daventry District Council,
 - c. the former South Northamptonshire Council, or
 - d. the part of the former Northamptonshire County Council which covered the West Northamptonshire area

and meeting at least one of the following conditions:

- Holding senior political office with distinction;
- Having an exceptional record of community service and leadership.

4. In exceptional circumstances less than 12 years’ service may be considered upon the recommendation of the Leader of the Council.
5. No person who meets the above qualification criteria will automatically become an Honorary Alderman, but they may be nominated and enrolled as an Honorary Alderman in accordance with the provisions of this scheme.

Nomination and Enrolment

6. Nominations for the position of Honorary Alderman should only be made where there are exceptional cases meriting this honour.
7. Any serving West Northamptonshire Councillor can submit a nomination in writing to the Chief Executive Officer with the support of their Group Leader or the Leader of the Council.

8. Once a valid nomination has been received by the Chief Executive Officer, informal discussions will take place involving a panel of members chaired by the Chairman of the Council to establish whether there is sufficient support for the nomination. The panel of members will be the Civic Working Group, with additional attendees invited as required. The individual will also be consulted as to whether they wish to accept the offer if made.

If there is sufficient support for conferring the title of Honorary Alderman on the nominated person, a special meeting will be convened immediately prior to the next ordinary meeting of full Council for this purpose.

9. At a specially convened meeting, full Council will formally resolve to confer the honorary title and will celebrate the achievements of the recipient and make any presentation to them. The summons for this meeting will contain the proposal to award the honour including the reason.

Privileges

10. An Honorary Alderman shall be entitled to the following privileges:
 - To enjoy the courtesy title of “Alderman” and to be so addressed.
 - To be named as an Alderman on the Council website.
 - To attend, as an observer, meetings of the Council and to have a seat made available for them.
 - To receive invitations to all civic and social events to which members of the Council are invited.
 - In the event of the Council deciding to give a badge, robe or emblem to Honorary Aldermen, to wear such a badge, robe or emblem on civic occasions.
11. The Council may decide to alter, amend, supplement or withdraw the privileges set out in this scheme.
12. Honorary Aldermen shall not have the right to influence meetings of the Council or a committee of the Council or to receive any allowance or other payment under the Members' Allowance Scheme.

Withdrawal of the title and its privileges

13. The Council shall retain the competence to withdraw the title of Honorary Alderman and its privileges in particular cases.
14. Withdrawal of the title and its privileges shall be by way of a resolution passed by not less than two thirds of voting members present at a specially convened full Council meeting.

The summons for that meeting will contain a proposal to withdraw the title and its privileges including the reason.

15. Honorary positions are non-political roles. In the event of an Alderman subsequently resuming membership of the Council, they may not be addressed as Alderman or benefit from any privileges that Aldermen may be entitled to until they once more cease to be a Councillor.