

Public
Key Decision - No

HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Title/Subject Matter: **Proposed Conferment of the Titles of Honorary Alderman: Section 249 of the Local Government Act 1972.**

Meeting/Date: Extraordinary Council – 20 July 2022

Executive Portfolio: Executive Leader, Councillor S Conboy

Report by: Elections and Democratic Services Manager

Ward(s) affected: All.

Executive Summary:

In 2010 the Council resolved to introduce the titles of Honorary Alderman and Honorary Alderwoman for current and future Members of the Council who cumulatively have served a specific number of years as an elected Councillor on the District Council. The criteria upon which future Alderman / Alderwomen should be selected was revisited by the Council in April 2013 and it was agreed that the title should be awarded for 12 years cumulative service on the District Council. The Council also took the view that the title could also be awarded in other circumstances as the Council might decide.

Recommendation:

On the recommendation of the Council Programme Group and in recognition of their outstanding contribution to Huntingdonshire and their dedicated years of public service, it is

RECOMMENDED

that the Council, in sincere appreciation of distinguished public service to the District and people of Huntingdonshire and to the wards of St Neots Eatons and Sawtry resolves under Section 249 of the Local Government Act 1972 to confer the title of Honorary Alderman on former District Councillors Derek Giles and Dick Tuplin.

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 Nominations for the titles of Alderman / Alderwoman are considered after the scheduled District Council elections by the Council Programme Group. Having regard to the existing criteria, the Group nominated former District Councillors Derek Giles and Dick Tuplin as potential recipients of the title at their meeting earlier in the year. Both have subsequently indicated that they would be pleased to accept the honour.
- 1.2 Section 249 of the Local Government Act 1972 provides that -
- "a principal Council may, by a resolution passed by **not less than two thirds of the Members voting thereon at a meeting specially convened for the purpose** with notice of the object confer the title of Honorary Aldermen / Alderwomen 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 Councillors of the Council".
- 1.3 Should the Council bestow the honour of Honorary Alderman, the incumbents would enjoy the courtesy title of Alderman and may receive invitations to civic functions such as the Chair's Reception, Carol Service, etc. as the Council may from time to time decide. No other specific rights are granted with the title and no financial allowance is payable. In addition, an Honorary Alderman shall not have the right to attend meetings of the Council or a Committee or Panel of the Council other than as a member of the public.

2. PROPOSALS

- 2.1 Former District Councillor **Derek Giles** stood down as a District Councillor in May 2022 due to ill health. Derek had served eight terms of office as Ward Councillor for the former St Neots Eaton Socon Ward and latterly the St Neots Eatons Ward. He was first elected to the Council in 1991 and served until 2022, with the exception of the period 2008 to 2012. During the course of his 27 years in office Derek championed the cause of his Ward with great rigor and enthusiasm at every opportunity. In particular, he will be remembered as a tireless campaigner, seeking to address the issues of graffiti in St Neots.
- 2.2 Derek contributed to a range of Council activities, serving as a member on the Council's first Overview and Scrutiny Committees and then continuing to do so for a period of 18 years. During this time, he contributed to a number of studies and a wide range of Council activities and was the instigator of a study on the growth of Japanese Knotweed! In more recent times he was a member of the Corporate Governance and Senior Officer Committees.
- 2.3 Derek always made a positive impact at Council meetings, keeping the administration on their toes during debates on the budget and with questions about the decisions of the Cabinet and other Panels.

- 2.4 Former District Councillor **Dick Tuplin** was first elected in 1998 and retained his seat as Ward Member for Sawtry for a consecutive period of 24 years until his retirement in 2022.
- 2.5 Dick contributed to a wide range of Council activities serving a consecutive 18 years as a member of the Development Management Panel / Committee until 2022. He was highly valued for his input into some difficult planning debates during this time and his calm manner and even handedness was welcomed during a number of difficult and very lengthy meetings. Dick also represented the Council at a number of planning appeals, a non-enviable task, many might say!
- 2.6 During the course of his office Dick also served on a range of committees and panels including the Licensing and Protection, Employment and Overview and Scrutiny Panels. He was also a member of the Appeals Sub-Group and the Development Plan Policy Group. Whilst also chairing the Section 106 Advisory Group for a time.
- 2.7 Throughout his office, Dick worked hard to champion the cause of his Ward. He also represented the Council on a number of outside organisations, including the Sawtry Internal Drainage Board.

3. WHAT ACTIONS WILL BE TAKEN / IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 There are no legal or resource implications arising from this proposal. Should the Council indicate their support for the recommendation, a scroll and badge/brooch will be presented to those honoured and as discussed earlier, the recipients will be invited to civic functions such as the Chair's Reception, Carol Service, etc as the Council may from time to time decide.

4. CONSULTATION

- 4.1 Nominations for the honour were made by the cross-party Council Programme Group. The Group was authorised by the Council to consider candidates for the award on a four-yearly basis. It was the Council's view that the honour should recognise an individual's outstanding contribution to the activities of the Council and the wellbeing of the District rather than loyalty to a political party.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Minutes of the Corporate Governance Panel and Council – September 2010 and March/April 2013

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