

Public
Key Decision - No

HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

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

Meeting/Date: Extraordinary Council – 26 March 2025.

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 Group Leaders and in recognition of their outstanding contribution to Huntingdonshire and 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 to the former wards of Gransden and the Offords and the current wards of Great Paxton, Sawtry and Great Staughton, resolves under Section 249 of the Local Government Act 1972 to confer the title of Honorary Alderman on former District Councillors Richard West and Darren Tysoe.

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 Nominations for the titles of Alderman / Alderwoman are usually considered after the scheduled District Council elections by the Council Programme Group. However, following the resignation of former District Councillor Richard West in 2024 and having regards to the eligibility criteria, Group Leaders agreed to nominate Richard as a potential recipient of the title. Richard has indicated that he would be pleased to accept the honour.

Former Councillor Darren Tysoe did not seek re-election at the scheduled District Council elections in 2022, and it has recently been drawn to the District Council's attention that he also met the eligibility criteria. Group Leaders have also agreed to belatedly nominate Darren as a potential recipient. Darren has also indicated that he would be pleased to accept.

- 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 **Richard West** stood down as a District Councillor in March 2024. Richard was first elected in 2006 to represent the former Gransden and the Offords Ward and later represented the Great Paxton Ward. During the course of his 18 years in office Richard championed the cause of his Wards with great rigor and enthusiasm at every opportunity and should be commended for his dedication and commitment to serving his constituents.
- 2.2 During his four and half terms of office Richard contributed to a range of Council activities and undertook a number of key roles for the Council. He has served as a member of nearly every Council Committee and Panel, to which he contributed to all with his usual wit and intelligence. He has also sat on a number of Advisory Groups and also represented the Council on a range of Outside Bodies, most recently the Huntingdon and South

Cambridgeshire Local Representatives Group for East West Rail and Fact Community Transport.

- 2.3 In terms of notable roles upon the Council, Richard served 8 years as Vice Chairman and then Chairman of the Employment Committee (formerly the Employment Panel). A role which he took on with great diligence and compassion. He continued as member of this Committee until his resignation earlier this year. As Chairman of the Hinchingsbrooke Country Park Joint Group from 2015 to 2022, Richard also took a keen interest in developments and initiatives at the Country Park and would champion these whenever he had the opportunity.
- 2.3 Richard always made a positive impact at Council meetings, not least when he was appointed Chairman in May 2017, a role which he undertook for two years having previously been Vice-Chairman. Richard understood the seriousness of this role which he undertook with great enthusiasm and diligence.
- 2.4 Former District Councillor **Darren Tysoe** was first elected in 2010 as Ward Councillor for Sawtry, he held this seat until 2018 when he was elected as Ward Member for Great Staughton serving 12 consecutive years as a District Councillor until he stood down in 2022.
- 2.5 Perhaps most significantly Darren was a Member of the District Council's Cabinet from 2011 to December 2016 holding the Portfolios of Environment, Environment and Operations, Customer Services and finally Operational Resources. He was an advocate of his portfolio areas with great passion and had a keen interest in Council IT.
- 2.6 In the latter years Darren took on the Chair of the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Panels, a role which he had also undertaken briefly at the start of his Council career. He served as Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Performance and Customers) from 2017-18 and then the Customers and Partnerships Panel from 2020-22. Other notable roles during this period include Vice-Chairman of the Corporate Governance Panel in 2017. He also served on the Council's Development Management Panel and Employment Panel during his tenure.
- 2.7 Darren represented the District Council on a number of Outside Bodies. Specific mention should perhaps be made of his role on Alconbury and Ellington and Sawtry Internal Drainage Boards, the Local Water Forum, Huntingdonshire Flood Forum and Recycling in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough.

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 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 Council's Group Leaders. It is 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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