

HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

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

Meeting/Date: Special Council – 21st December 2016

Executive Portfolio: Executive Leader, Councillor R B Howe

Report by: Elections and Democratic Services Manager

Wards 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 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 The Hemingfords and St Neots Eynesbury resolves under Section 249 of the Local Government Act 1972 to confer the title of Honorary Alderman on former District Councillors Ian Bates and Andrew Hansard.

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1. WHAT IS THIS REPORT ABOUT/PURPOSE?

1.1 Nominations for the titles of Alderman/Woman are considered annually by the Council Programme Group. Having regard to the existing criteria, the Group nominated former District Councillors Ian Bates and Andrew Hansard as potential recipients of the title at their meeting in July 2016. 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/Alderwoman, the incumbents would enjoy the courtesy title of Alderman/Alderwoman, would be so addressed and may receive invitations to civic functions such as the Chairman's Ball, 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/Alderwoman 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 **Ian Bates** stood down as a District Councillor in May 2016, although he continues to represent The Hemingfords and Fenstanton Division on Cambridgeshire County Council. Ian was first elected to represent The Hemingford Abbots and Hilton Ward in 1996 and retained his seat in the whole District Election in 2004 when boundary changes resulted in Ian becoming Ward Councillor for The Hemingfords. During the course of his 20 consecutive years in office he championed the cause of his Ward with great vigor and enthusiasm.

2.2 Ian undertook a number of roles for the Council, most notably as Leader of the Council and Chairman of the Cabinet for six years from 2005 to May 2011. It is perhaps for his contribution in this role and his commitment to Huntingdonshire that Ian is entitled to receive the gratitude of the Council. This was during a time when there were huge demands being placed upon the Council.

2.3 Ian also served as Deputy Leader of the Council from 2001 to 2004, during which time he held the Portfolios for Housing Strategy and Waste Management and Streetscene. Prior to which he served as Chairman of the former Housing Committee and the Employment Panel. He has also chaired the Elections Panel, Huntingdonshire Strategic Partnership Board and represented the Council on a number of outside bodies.

2.4 In more recent times, Ian was a member of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Economy and Growth) and in his role as a County Council Cabinet Member maintained a strong interest in the planning and transportation matters affecting the District.

- 2.5 Former Councillor **Andrew Hansard** retired as a District Councillor in May 2016 having served 17 consecutive years as Councillor for the St Neots Eynesbury ward. Over this period Andrew contributed to a wide range of Council activities and was appointed to most Council Panels and Committees. Most notably perhaps was his work as Portfolio Holder for Resources and Policy and then Housing and Public Health. A role which he undertook for six years from 2005 until May 2011. He also held the position of Chairman of the St Neots Leisure Centre Management Committee.
- 2.6 In more recent years Andrew was elected as Chairman of the Standards Committee and the Council's Safety Advisory Group. A role which he undertook with great diligence and enthusiasm.
- 2.7 Throughout his office, Andrew worked hard to champion the cause of his Ward and represented the Council on a number of outside bodies, including the Eynesbury Neighbourhood Management Group, the St Neots Town Centre and the Little Barford Power Station Liaison Group.

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 Chairman's Ball, 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 an annual 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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