

By: Alex King – Deputy Leader
Peter Sass – Head of Democratic Services

To: County Council – 15 December 2011

Subject: Appointment of Honorary Aldermen

(1) At its meeting on 30 April 2009, the County Council resolved to utilise the power contained in Section 249 of the Local Government Act 1972, to confer the award of Honorary Alderman to recognise the eminent services of some of its distinguished former Members (see previous report at **Appendix 1**). There is no statutory definition of “eminent services” but the County Council agreed that the award should only be made to former Members who had served at least 12 years and had rendered eminent services in terms of the individual’s contribution to the activities of the County Council and the well-being of the County of Kent.

(2) It is proposed that Honorary Aldermen should be invited to attend relevant civic and ceremonial events, including the Annual Meeting of the Council and the Chairman’s Civic Reception. The names of those individuals awarded the status of Honorary Alderman will also be included on the wooden honours board in the Council Chamber.

(3) The following nominations are made for this Honorary Award in 2011:

- (i) **Christopher John Campbell Brown** was elected to Kent County Council as the Liberal Member and Liberal Leader for Maidstone North East in 1981 and he left in 1993. He was a Member of the Policy and Resources Committee and the Police Authority.
- (ii) **Charles George Findlay** was elected to Kent County Council as the Conservative Member for Ashford Rural East in 1997 and left in 2009. He served on the Adult Social Services and the Corporate Policy Overview Committees, the Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee, the Highway Advisory Board, the Ashford Local Board and was the Chairman of the Governance and Audit Committee.
- (iii) **Ivor Thomas Noel Jones, DL** was elected as the Labour Member for Dartford South West in 1993 until 1997 and 2001 until 2009. He served on the Children’s Champions Board and the Regulation Committee as the Opposition Spokesman and was a Member of Dartford Local Board, the Children, Families and Education Policy Overview Committee, the Local Children’s Services Partnership Sub-Committee and the Gypsy and Traveller Advisory Board. He is a retired Deputy Lieutenant of Kent.
- (iv) **Ronald (Ronnie) Scott Norman** was the Conservative Member for Sevenoaks Rural No 1 Electoral Division from 1977 to 1985 and for Sevenoaks North Electoral Division from 1985 to 2005. He was Chairman of the Personnel Group and the General Purposes Sub-Committee and served as a Member on the Property Supplies and Services Group, the Social Services Committee, the Education Committee, the Policy and

Resources Committee, the Selection Group, the Further Education Sub-Committee and on the Police Authority.

- (v) **John Palmer** was elected as the Conservative Member for Elham Valley in 1981 leaving in 2005. He served as Chairman on the Complaints Sub-Committee and on the Development Planning and Transport Committee, the Education Committee, the Economic Development and Tourism Sub-Committee, the Finance and General Purpose Sub-Committee, the Schools Sub-Committee and the Further Education Sub-Committee. He was Chairman of the Police Authority.
- (vi) **Terence (Terry) Edward Pears** was elected to the County Council in 1989 and served the residents of Canterbury North and the people of Kent as the Conservative Member for 12 years until 2001. He served on the Policy and Resources Committee, the Arts, Libraries and Sports Committee, the Social Services Committee and the Personnel Group and as the Spokesman on the Property Group.
- (vii) **Lady Pender, DL (Julia)** was elected to the County Council in 1981 and served as the Conservative Member for Sandwich until 1997. She was Chairman of the Adoption Agency Sub-Committee, the Community Services Sub-Committee and the Social Services Committee. She served on the Emergency Committee, the Fire and Public Protection Committee, the Policy and Resources Committee, the Police Authority and the Probation Board. Lady Pender is a serving Deputy Lieutenant of Kent, a Kent Ambassador, Honorary President of the Kent Association for Disabled People and President of Fairbridge Kent, KCA and East Kent National Trust.
- (viii) **Christopher (Kit) Thornton** was elected to Kent County Council in 1993 as the Conservative Member for Sevenoaks West and served until 2005. He served on the Education Committee, the Case Sub-Committee, the Special Education Needs Sub-Committee, the Inter Committee Group on Early Years Provision, the Planning Sub-Committee and the Social Services Committee. He was also Conservative Spokesman on the Finance and General Purposes Sub-Committee. He was Vice Chairman of the County Council from 1999 to 2000 and Chairman of the Council from 2000 to 2001.

(4) Members are reminded that, in accordance with Section 249 of the Local Government Act 1972, the nominees for Honorary Aldermen have to receive the support of not less than two thirds of the Members voting thereon at a special meeting of the County Council convened for the purpose.

Recommendation

(5) The County Council is invited to consider the eight nominations for the award of Honorary Alderman of Kent County Council, as described above.

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By: Alex King – Deputy Leader
Geoff Wild – Director of Law and Governance

To: County Council – 30 April 2009

Subject: Appointment of Honorary Aldermen

Classification: Unrestricted

Summary: This report invites the County Council to approve the procedure and criteria to appoint Honorary Aldermen.

FOR DECISION

Background

1) At a meeting of the Selection and Member Services Committee on 8 October 2008, consideration was given to a proposal to allow the County Council to bestow an Office of Dignity upon individuals. The Committee was advised that the only statutory Office of Dignity that can be awarded by an English County Council is that of Honorary Alderman. The Committee was advised that, under Section 249 of the Local Government Act 1972 “a principal Council may, by a resolution passed by not less than two thirds of the Members voting thereon at a meeting of the Council specially convened for the purpose with notice of the object, 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.”

Criteria for the Award

2) At its meeting on 23 January 2009, the Committee was advised that there is no statutory guidance on the definition of “eminent services”, although it is recommended that each Council should develop its own criteria. Accordingly, the following criteria are recommended to the County Council for approval:

- The title may be conferred on persons who have, in the opinion of the Council, rendered eminent services to the Council as past Members, but who are no longer serving Members;
- There shall be no specific definition of “eminent services”, it being left to the discretion of the Council at the time to assess and recognise any individual’s contribution to the activities of the Council and the wellbeing of the county of Kent;
- Nominees would normally require a minimum period of 12 years past service as a Member of the Council;

- In accordance with Section 249 of the 1972 Act, nominees would have to receive the support of not less than two-thirds of the Members voting thereon at a special Council meeting convened for the purpose;
- Nominations can be made by any Group Leader. However, before proceeding, officers and Members should, via the party groups, establish whether or not the nomination would be likely to receive sufficient support to proceed;
- Honorary Aldermen should be invited to attend relevant civic and ceremonial events, including the Annual Council meeting, the Chairman's Civic Reception, and any future appointment of Honorary Aldermen; and
- The status of Honorary Alderman carries no special right to attend or address meetings of the Council or its Committees or to receive any allowances or payments to which serving Members are entitled. However, at the discretion of the Chairman, a nominee for Honorary Alderman may (if present) be invited to respond to the vote conferring that status.

3) Should the County Council agree both the principle of awarding the status of Honorary Alderman and the criteria suggested by the Selection and Member Services Committee listed above, it is suggested that a meeting of the County Council be arranged after the County Council elections in June, in consultation with the Chairman of the County Council, to determine the nominations made by any Group Leader as to the award of the status of Honorary Alderman. It is also proposed that the names of Honorary Alderman would appear on a suitable wooden board in the Council Chamber, as already exists for Chairmen and Vice Chairmen of the County Council.

Recommendation

4) Members are invited to approve the criteria for appointing Honorary Aldermen of the Council (as set out in paragraph 2) above.

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