

By: Gary Cooke – Cabinet Member for Corporate & Democratic Services  
Peter Sass – Head of Democratic Services

To: County Council – 12 December 2013

Subject: Appointment of Honorary Aldermen

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## **Introduction**

(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.

## **Nominations**

(3) The following nominations have been made for this Honorary Award in 2013:

**Mr Chris Capon, MBE**  
**Mr Leslie Christie**  
**Mr Bill Hayton**  
**Mr Richard King**  
**Mr Peter Lake**  
**Mr John London**  
**Mr John Muckle**  
**Dr Felicity Simpson**

(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 8 nominations for the award of Honorary Alderman of Kent County Council, as described overleaf.

## Biographies for Honorary Aldermen 2013

### **Mr Chris Capon, MBE**

Mr Christopher John Capon (Chris) was elected to the County Council in 1977 as the Conservative Member for Hythe.

He is a retired Postman. As a Postman he had the opportunity to spend three months in the USA and Canada studying the postal system.

Mr Capon served as a Town and District Councillor. He was a Hythe Town Councillor from 1967 to 2007 and Mayor of Hythe in 1972-74. He was a Shepway District Councillor from 1974 to 2002 and served as a Vice Chairman in 1990/91. He served as Chairman of Kent County Council in 2002/03 and as Vice Chairman in 2011/02. He was awarded an MBE in the Queen's birthday honours list in 2012 for services to Local Government and the Community in Hythe.

He was a Speaker of Cinque Ports in 1973 – 1974, a Member of the Panel Industrial Tribunals in 1974 – 1977 and Churchill Award Winner in 1971. He is a Governor at St Augustine's RC Primary School and the Hythe Bay School. He was Chair of Shepway's Youth Advisory Group and a Trustee of Hythe County Youth Club. He was Chair of KCC Shepway Local Board and Trustee of Age Concern Hythe.

He served on the following committees: Adult Social Care & Public Health Policy Overview & Scrutiny Committee (Chair), Communities Cabinet Committee, Hythe Neighbourhood Forum (Chair), Children Families and Education – Resources & Operations POC (Chair), Policy Overview Co-ordinating Committee, Regulation Committee, School Organisation Advisory Board and Scrutiny Board.

### **Mr Les Christie**

Mr Christie was elected to the County Council in April 1994 as the Labour Member for Northfleet. He served from 1994-2001 and was re-elected in 2005 until 2013. He was Leader of the Labour Group 2009 – 2011. He served on the following committees: Education Cabinet Committee, Northfleet & Gravesend West Neighbourhood Forum, Select Committee – Apprenticeships, Select Committee – Dementia, Social Care and Public Health Scrutiny Committee and the Standards Committee. He was also a KCC representative on the Kent and Medway Fire and Rescue Authority.

He is a retired Trade Union General Secretary having previously worked as a Civil Servant for Customs & Excise and the Department of Health and Social Security (1956 – 1973), Trade Union Office (1973-1985), General Secretary (1985 – 1993) and the General Council TUC (1988 – 1993).

He is a member of Public and Commercial Services and the GMB Trade Unions, West Malling Golf Club, the Labour Party, the RSPB, the Ramblers, Friends of Palestine and Friends of Cuba.

### **Mr Bill Hayton**

Mr Hayton was elected to the County Council in May 1997 as the Conservative Member for Broadstairs South (now known as Broadstairs and Sir Moses Montefiore) until 2013. He was Vice Chairman of KCC in 2009/10 and Chairman 2010/11. He served on the following committees: Libraries & Community Services Board, School

Organisation Sub Committee (Vice Chairman), Case Sub Committee, Adult Education Group, Environment, Highways & Waste Cabinet Committee, Planning Applications Committee, Regulation Committee. Thanet Local Board (Chairman). He was also a KCC representative on the Kent and Medway Fire and Rescue Authority and the Kent Police Authority.

He is a member of Thanet District Council and Broadstairs & St Peters Town Council for the Bradstowe ward.

His interests are local government and politics, museums and historical activities and ball sports. He is a member of the South Thanet Conservative Association and Probus Club of Ramsgate.

### **Mr Richard King**

Mr King was elected to the County Council in 1997 as Conservative Member for Ashford Rural West until 2013. He served on the following committees: Cabinet Scrutiny Committee, Planning Applications Committee (Chairman), Ashford Local Board, Central Ashford Neighbourhood Forum, and the Kent Flood Risk Management Committee (Chairman). He was Vice Chairman of Kent County Council 2011/12 and Chairman 2012/13.

He is a retired Broadcasting Executive with the Independent Broadcasting Authority from 1981 – 1991. He was a Director of both the Kent and Maidstone Chambers of Commerce and Chairman of Maidstone Enterprise Agency and Maidstone Business Point. He has had other experiences in business management, haulage and public transport industry, travel and estate agency. He lists his interests as environment and the countryside, walking, travel, vintage cars, model railways, amateur dramatics and village life.

### **Mr Peter Lake**

Mr Lake was elected to the County Council in 1993 as the Conservative Member for Sevenoaks South until 2013. He served on the following committees: Adult Social Services Policy Overview Committee (Chairman), Governance & Audit Committee, Policy Overview Co-ordinating Committee, Corporate Parenting Panel, Social Care & Public Health Cabinet Committee, Sevenoaks Local Board and Sevenoaks Locality Board. He served as Vice Chairman of the County Council in 2007/08 and Chairman in 2008/09.

Mr Lake has previously served as a Sevenoaks District Councillor, serving as Vice Chairman of the Environment Health Committee and Chairman of the Licensing Committee. He was appointed to the Tunbridge Wells Community Health Council and became Vice-Chairman of the Maternity and Child Care Committee. He also served on the Board of the West Kent NHS and Social Care Trust as a non-executive Director.

He joined the Army as a Private Soldier in the Royal West Kent Regiment and whilst at the Royal Military Academy in Sandhurst he studied Sociology and engaged in a major review of the Prison Service. He was commissioned into the Royal Armoured Corps and served as a Troop Commander. Later he joined the Stock Exchange and rose to become Chief Executive of an International Stock Broking firm. He is a Fellow of the Financial Securities Institute (FSI).

He lists his interests as music, sailing, skiing, golf and extreme sports.

### **Mr John London**

Mr London was elected to the County Council in 1997 as Conservative Member for Sevenoaks Central until 2013. He served on the following committees: Standards Committee, Sevenoaks Joint Transport Committee, Sevenoaks Youth Advisory Group, Electoral & Boundary Review Committee (Vice Chairman), Planning Applications Committee, Sevenoaks Local Board, and the Superannuation Fund Committee. He was Vice Chairman of Kent County Council 2004/5 and Chairman 2005/6. He also served as a KCC representative on the Kent and Medway Fire and Rescue Authority and the Kent and Medway Joint Police Appointments Committee.

He is a retired Banker and Bill Broker and served as a Company Secretary to a charity in Woolwich. He was a member of Sevenoaks Urban District Council (1959-62, 1963-74) and was Chairman of Sevenoaks Council in 1970-71. He served as a Sevenoaks Town Councillor for Town Ward from 1974 and has been Mayor of Sevenoaks three times (1974/75, 1988/89 and 2000/01). He was Chairman of Sevenoaks and District Mental Health Association (1962-70) and Chairman of the Sevenoaks District Scout Council 1971-87.

His interests are dinghy sailing, swimming and gardening.

### **Mr John Muckle**

Mr Muckle was elected to the County Council in 1988 as Labour Member for Dartford North. He served on the following committees: Planning Applications Committee, Highways Advisory Board, Environment and Regeneration POC, Superannuation Fund Committee, Joint Transport Board and the Kent Transport Board.

He is currently a Dartford Borough Councillor. He was a former Leader of Dartford Borough Council and he was Mayor of Dartford in 1973/74.

He is a retired Local Government Housing Officer in a London Borough having first begun his career in engineering.

### **Dr Felicity Simpson**

Dr Simpson was elected to the County Council as a Conservative Member for Maidstone Rural North in 1989 until 2001. She served on the following committees: Education and Libraries Committee, Case Sub-Committee, Libraries and Community Services Board, Education and Libraries Scrutiny Board. She was also a KCC representative on the Kent and Medway Fire and Rescue Authority.

She lists her interests are Pony Club events, attending race meetings, horses and cats and is a member of Friends of Youth Clubs UK, North Downs Rail Concern, Friends of Maidstone Museum, Kent County Cricket Club, British Horse Society and the British Driving Society.

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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

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

## FOR DECISION

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### 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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