

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

To: County Council – 11 December 2014

Subject: Appointment of Honorary Aldermen

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 2014:

Mr Bryan Cope;
Mr Mark Fittock;
Mr Tom Mason;
Dr Tony Robinson; and
Mr Roland Tolputt

(4) Appendix 2 to this report sets out some biographical details about each of the nominees.

(5) 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

(6) The County Council is invited to consider Mr Bryan Cope, Mr Mark Fittock, Mr Tom Mason, Dr Tony Robinson and Mr Roland Tolputt for the award of Honorary Alderman of Kent County Council, as described.

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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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Nominations for Honorary Alderman 2014

Bryan Cope

Bryan Cope was elected to the County Council in May 1997 as the Conservative Member for Dover West. He was a Company Director and had experience as the Managing Director of the family company for over 40 years (Faversham Linen Services). He served as a District Councillor and a School Governor, was Chair of Governors at Priory Fields Primary School and South Kent College. He served on the Kent and Medway Fire and Rescue Authority since its inception in December 1997 and was Chairman from June 2005 - 2013. He served on the Cabinet Scrutiny Committee, Corporate Policy Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Governance & Audit Committee, Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee, Scrutiny Committee, Joint Appointments Committee – Kent Police Authority and the Kent and Essex Sea Fisheries & Conservation Authority.

He is a former President of the Dover Rowing Club and a Trustee (and former Commodore) of the Royal Cinque Ports Yacht Club.

Mark Fittock

Mark John Fittock was elected to the County Council in May 1997 as the Labour Member for Swanley. Until 2009 he served on the Policy & Resources Committee, Social Services Committee, Vice-Chairman of Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee, Gypsy & Traveller Advisory Board and the Superannuation Fund Committee. He was a Councillor at Sevenoaks District Council and Swanley Town Council.

Before he retired he was in Government Service. Mark also has experience in managing hostels for single homeless people.

He is a member of Swanley Action Partnership, Crockenhill & Eynsford Footpath Society, the Elgar Society and a member of the Management Team of Swanley Citizens Advice Bureau.

He lists his interests as hiking, sailing and playing jazz.

Mr Tom Mason

Mr Tom Mason was elected to Kent County Council in 1977 and served until 1989 as a Conservative member for Rochester No 3 Division (Medway North West).

He has represented Frindsbury Extra on Strood Rural District Council, Rochester Upon Medway City Council, Medway Unitary Council and Frindsbury Extra Parish Council since 1969 until to date.

He has served as Vice Chairman of the Kent and Medway Fire and Rescue Authority since 1999.

He has been a member of the Chatham Historic Dockyard Trust and the Rochester Bridge Trust.

Prior to retiring Tom served with the Royal Air Force and on the P&O shipping Company Passenger Liners.

Dr T R Robinson

Dr Robinson was elected to the County Council in May 1997 as the Conservative Member for Tonbridge West. He served on the Early Years & Childcare Joint Board, Dartford, Gravesend & Swanley Adoption Panel, Kent Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee which he chaired when it was first established, Policy & Resources Committee, Social Services Committee.

He retired in April 1997 as a Medical Practitioner and was a member of the Kent Local Medical Committee. He was Chairman of Tonbridge & Malling Conservative Association and Chairman of the Local Government Advisory Committee. He was also a School Governor at The Judd School, the Weald of Kent School, Longmead Primary School and Cage Green Primary School.

He lists his interests as all forms of sport, gardening, travel and family life.

Mr Roland Tolputt

Mr Tolputt was elected to the County Council in June 2001 as Conservative Member for Folkestone South. He served on Children Families & Education – Vulnerable Children & Partnerships Policy Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Communities Policy Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Governance & Audit Committee, Governor Appointments Panel, Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Kent and Medway Fire & Rescue Authority, PHSE Children's Health Select Committee and the Shepway Joint Transportation Board which he chaired.

He is a retired School Bursar and Clerk to the Governors. Prior to this he was a Senior Operations and Administration Manager at the Midland Bank where he was responsible for recruitment, staffing, internal audit profitability and premises issues as well as Account Manager for large corporate accounts including local authorities. He is an Associate of the Chartered Institute of Bankers.

He is a member of the Folkestone Local History Society and a sidesman at Holy Trinity Church, Folkestone. He is a Trustee of the Folkestone Youth Project (The Shed) and a Member of Go! Folkestone Action Group, The Harbour Ward Residents Association, Guildhall North Residents Association and the Folkestone Book Festival. He was a Governor of Christ Church C of E Primary School, St Peter's Church of England School and The Harvey Grammar School.