

Audit Committee

24th March 2017



Report of: Shahzia Daya, Service Director – Legal and Democratic Services

Title: **Honorary Aldermen nomination**

Ward: N/a

Report author: Nancy Rollason Service Manager (People) and Interim Deputy Monitoring Officer

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Recommendation

That the Audit Committee considers the nomination for Honorary Alderman, as nominated by the respective political group, and makes a recommendation to Full Council on the appointment of a new Alderman.

Summary

A report to enable the committee to consider and decide whether the nomination should be recommended to Full Council for approval.

The significant issues in the report are:

As set out in the report and the appendix to the report.



Policy

1. This report is submitted in accordance with the Council’s policy on the arrangements to be followed in respect of the granting of alderman status to former members of the Council.

Consultation

2. The nomination was submitted by the party group whip, on behalf of their party group.

Context

3. Section 249 of the Local Government Act 1972 empowers the Full Council, by a resolution passed by not less than two-thirds of the members voting at a meeting specially convened for the purpose, to confer the title of Honorary Alderman on a person who has, in the Council’s opinion, rendered eminent services to the Council as a past member.
4. The Act does not define “eminent service” to the Council and it is therefore at the discretion of individual councils to determine what this might constitute for their individual authority. A number of councils have developed criteria designed to ensure a consistency of approach whilst at the same time allowing the flexibility to recognise what might constitute “eminent service” to the Council in all its many forms.
5. Full Council is responsible for approving the policy and criteria governing the appointment of Honorary Aldermen/women.
6. Full Council has delegated to the Audit Committee, in its role of monitoring and ensuring ethical standards and probity within the Council, consideration of nominations made for the conferring of the title “Honorary Alderman” and “Honorary Alderwoman” and to make recommendations to Full Council on those nominations. The Audit committee should consider whether the nominations meet the criteria as set out below and make recommendations accordingly.
7. The criteria governing the appointment of aldermen was reviewed by the Audit Committee on the 23rd September 2016 and the committee’s recommended criteria were approved by the Full Council on 17th January 2017, and are as follows:

An individual will be eligible for nomination and appointment to the role of Honorary Alderman/woman provided that he/she is no longer a serving councillor with Bristol City Council and has provided eminent service to the Council throughout a long and distinguished period of public service by:

a. Serving for a minimum period of two electoral terms as a Bristol City councillor (i.e. having been elected twice as a councillor).

AND

b. Holding a significant position of public responsibility with Bristol City Council, for a minimum period of one calendar year or one municipal year, as either:

- Lord Mayor;

- **Elected Mayor;**
- **Deputy or Assistant Mayor;**
- **Leader of the Council;**
- **Executive Member;**
- **Any other position attracting the payment of a Special**

Responsibility Allowance under the Council's approved members allowance scheme (excluding attendance at the Appeals Committee).

OR

c. Long Service as a Bristol City Councillor for an aggregate period of at least 10 years

- 8.** An Honorary Alderman may attend and take part in such civic ceremonies as the Council may from time to time decide. Aldermen are not entitled to receive any member allowances or other payments of allowances, expenses etc. Whilst a person who is a serving city councillor cannot be made an Honorary Alderman, the Act does appear to envisage that a person on whom this honour has been conferred may subsequently be re-elected as a councillor. In these circumstances, the Act specially provides that no Honorary Alderman shall, whilst serving as a city councillor, be entitled to be addressed as Alderman or to attend or take part in any civic ceremonies of the Council as an Alderman.
- 9.** Honorary aldermen substitute for the Lord Mayor or Deputy Lord Mayor on a relatively infrequent basis. They are also invited to all major civic events, church services and Council meetings. They have no other formal role. Honorary aldermen may, from time to time, be nominated to serve as the Council's representative on specific outside bodies.
- 10.** The Council has agreed that the Honorary Aldermen's Association should be supported but that no support should be provided for aldermen on an individual basis.

Proposal

- 11.** The Nomination received for the appointment of Honorary Aldermen is set out below.
- 12.** The Labour group has nominated former councillor Ron Stone
- 13.** Statements/ details in support of the nominations, as supplied by the political groups are set out in Appendix A.

Other Options Considered

- 14.** Not applicable.

Risk Assessment

15. Not applicable.

Public Sector Equality Duties

Before making a decision, section 149 Equality Act 2010 requires that each decision-maker considers the need to promote equality for persons with the following “protected characteristics”: age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation. Each decision-maker must, therefore, have due regard to the need to:

- i) Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited under the Equality Act 2010.
- ii) Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not share it. This involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to --
 - remove or minimise disadvantage suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic;
 - take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of people who do not share it (in relation to disabled people, this includes, in particular, steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities);
 - encourage persons who share a protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.
- iii) Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not share it. This involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to –
 - tackle prejudice; and
 - promote understanding.

Legal and Resource Implications

Legal

This is a nomination for a posthumous award. Although the Local Government Act 1972 does not refer to posthumous awards, it does not prohibit such an award being made. The Committee may therefore consider the nomination.

**(Legal advice provided by Nancy Rollason, Service Manager and Interim Monitoring Officer
Legal & Democratic Services)**

Financial / Land / Human Resources

Not applicable.

Appendices:

Appendix A - Statements/ details in support of the Honorary Aldermen nominations, as supplied by the respective political groups.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985

Appendix A - Statements/ details in support of the Honorary Aldermen nominations, as supplied by the political groups.

Statement from the Labour group in support of the nomination of Ron Stone:

Councillor Ron Stone deceased

Ron Stone was first elected for St George West in 1985 (Avon County Council), re-elected in 1989 and 1993. In 1995 he won the ward again for Bristol City Council, and continuously served that community for over thirty years.

Main Roles

Acting Group Leader for a brief period in 2012.
Deputy Group Leader 2012-14
Chair of Licensing for many years until 2015
Labour Lead on Licensing 2010-15
Chair of the Neighbourhood Committee
Chair of St George Neighbourhood Partnership
Shadow Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods and Housing
Chair for St George Neighbourhood Partnership.

Some of Ron's achievements include:

- Introducing the CCTV camera network for public safety in Bristol.
- The refurbishment and rebuild of Summerhill Schools
- Delivered a new play area in the park, by working with our local schools to change Council policy
- Saving St George School Building for Cultural and Community use
- Had St George Community Association Building built by Avon County Council
- Provided Meadow Vale Community Association with their current building
- Set Up the City wide Street Tree Forum, and won a new budget for those of £100,000 every year.
- He was also made an honorary Sikh in recognition of his contribution to the religious community in St George.

He also regularly helped residents with School Admission problems, housing applications, Council Tax demands etc, providing a 24/7 service to those who needed his help. For example, he helped an elderly person with her urgent home maintenance issue during the early hours of the morning.

Membership of council commissions and committees

During his time in office, Ron sat on commissions and committees across all council services. However, please see details of his membership in recent years below.

2014-15

Chair of Licensing

2013-14

Member of Call-In Sub-Committee
Member of Licensing Policy Scrutiny Board
Member of Public Safety and Protection Committee
Chair of Licensing

2012-13

Member of Quality of Life Scrutiny Commission
Member of Joint West of England Scrutiny Committee
Member of Licensing Policy Scrutiny Board
Chair of Licensing

2011-12

Member of Quality of Life Scrutiny Commission
Member of Licensing Policy Scrutiny Board
Member of Select Committee on Enforcement of Council's Tenancy Contacts
Chair of Licensing

2010-11

Labour Lead on Quality of Life Scrutiny Commission
Member of Select Committee on Enforcement of Council's Tenancy Contacts
Member of Licensing Policy Scrutiny Board
Labour Lead on Licensing
Member of Downs Committee

2009-10

Labour Lead on Quality of Life Scrutiny Commission
Chair of Public Safety & Protection Committee
Labour Lead on Licensing Committee

Membership of Outside bodies

Bristol in Bloom and University of Bristol Court.

In recent years (back to 2009) he also sat on the Avon Fire Authority, Downs Committee and Forest of Avon.

General Comments

As a man of great integrity, Ron will be remembered as a steadfast campaigner dedicated to furthering social justice and equality in Bristol and beyond.