

Annual Council

7th December 2021



Report of: The Audit Committee

Title: Revised criteria for the appointment of Honorary Aldermen/women

Ward: Citywide

Recommendation

That Full Council considers and approves the revised criteria set out in paragraph 8 governing the appointment of Honorary Aldermen/women.

Summary

The Value and Ethics Sub Committee of the Audit Committee has reviewed the criteria for the appointment of Honorary Aldermen/women. The Sub Committee has recommended revised guidance to be applied in respect of future nominations. This requires Full Council approval.



Context

1. Under section 249 of the Local Government Act 1972, the Council may confer the title of Honorary Alderman/woman upon former members of the Council who, in the opinion of the Council have rendered “eminent service” to the Council as a past member of the authority or a predecessor authority.
2. The resolution to confer the title must be passed by a majority of at least two-thirds of members present at a specially convened Full Council meeting.
3. An Honorary Alderman/woman may attend and take part in such civic ceremonies as the Council may from time to time decide. They are not entitled to receive any members’ allowances or other payments of allowances, expenses etc. Honorary Aldermen/women 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 can attend/observe Council meetings (they have no vote at Council meetings).
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. The Full Council is responsible for approving the policy and criteria governing the appointment of Honorary Aldermen/women. The Values and Ethics Sub-Committee of the Audit Committee is responsible for ensuring that all nominations meet these criteria, as part of its role in ensuring ethical standards and probity within the City Council.

Revision of criteria for the appointment of Honorary Aldermen/women

6. The Values and Ethics Sub Committee reviewed the criteria for the appointment of Honorary Aldermen/women on 23rd November 2021.
7. The current criteria governing the appointment of Aldermen was approved by Full Council on 17th January 2017. Details 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.

Proposal

8. That the criteria be amended 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 (including Avon County 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 or Avon County Councillor for an aggregate period of at least 10 years, with at least one term served as a Bristol City Councillor.

Consultation

9. The proposed amendment was put forward by Members of the Values and Ethics Sub

Committee at their meeting on 27th July 2021 that *‘a long and distinguished period of public service’* should include service as an Avon County Councillor. This was considered by Party Group Leaders at their meeting on 18th October 2021.

Other Options Considered

10. None required.

Risk Assessment

11. None required.

Legal and Resource Implications

Legal

As set out in the report.

Financial

(a) Revenue

Not applicable.

(b) Capital

Not applicable.

Land/Property

Not applicable.

Human Resources

Not applicable.

Appendices:

Appendix 1 – Criteria governing the appointment of Aldermen

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985

Background Papers:

Values and Ethics Sub Committee minutes 27th July 2021 and 23rd November 2021.