

Audit Committee

25th November 2016



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

Title: **Honorary Aldermen nominations**

Ward: N/a

Officer Presenting Report: Jane Johnson, Solicitor

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Recommendation

That the Audit Committee considers the nomination(s) for Honorary Aldermen, as nominated by the respective political groups, and makes a recommendation to Full Council on the appointment of new aldermen.

Summary

A report to enable the committee to consider and decide which nomination(s) 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 nominations were submitted by the party group whips, on behalf of their respective party groups.

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. 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.
5. The criteria governing the appointment of aldermen was reviewed by the Audit Committee during the 2015/16 municipal year. The Committee’s recommended criteria were approved by the Full Council on 15 March 2016, 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. This is defined as either:

- a. **Serving as a Bristol City Councillor for an aggregate total period of at least 10 years;**

or

- b. **Holding a significant position of public responsibility with Bristol City Council 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).

6. 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.
7. 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.
8. 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

9. Nominations received for the appointment of Honorary Aldermen are set out below.
10. The Liberal Democrat group has nominated former councillor Christian Martin and the Green Group has nominated former councillor Tess Green.
11. Statements/ details in support of the nominations, as supplied by the political groups are set out in Appendix A.

Other Options Considered

12. Not applicable.

Risk Assessment

13. 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

As set out in the report.

(Legal advice provided by Shahzia Daya, Interim Service Director – 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

Background Papers:

- Full Council minutes – 15 March 2016

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

Appendix A

Statement from the Liberal Democrat group in support of the nomination of Christian Martin:

“Details of Christian Martin’s service:

- Christian was Liberal Democrat Councillor for Clifton East from May 2011 to May 2015.
- Chair of Place Scrutiny 2014– 2015.
- OSMB Committee Member 2015.
- Cabot Clifton and Clifton East councillor.
- Cabot, Clifton and Clifton East Neighbourhood Partnership 2011 – 2015 (Chair of NP 2013-2014).
- Member of the Avon & Somerset Fire Authority (2011-2012, 2013-2014).
- DC Central Planning Committee, (Chair 2013 – 2014).
- The Quality of Life Scrutiny Committee.
- Sustainable Development and Transport Scrutiny Commission.
- Christian actively works with teenagers and young people mentoring them in media studies.
- Christian is a member of BAFTA – British Academy of Film & Television Arts.
- Christian is an award winning Writer, Director of screen and stage plays.
- In his time as Councillor Christian received an Honorary “Friend of Easter Garden” title for the purchase for the entire city & residents of the Easter Garden off Black Boy Hill and an Award from The Corner Club (weekly lunch club for senior members of the Clifton Community & the City) for “Outstanding Contribution to the Community”.”

Green Group name put forward for Alderwoman, November 2016

For re-consideration by Audit Committee.

If you require any further information, please contact Green Group whip, Carla Denyer:

cllr.carla.denyer@bristol.gov.uk, 07469 413306

Name	Years of Service	Significant positions held	Reasons
Tess Green	4	Party Group Leader	<p>Tess was elected in 2010 and for this year served as the sole Green councillor, taking on roles in two scrutiny commissions and a planning committee. The following year saw the formation of the first Green political group on the council with Tess as leader. She fulfilled this additional role with enthusiasm, contributing to every council meeting and steering important resolutions such as forming a Bristol Energy organisation and for the city to be a part of the national drive to expose and terminate the practice of ‘black listing’.</p> <p>Tess was also an active member of the council leaders’ group and was able to help guide key decisions such as the application for European Green Capital status and the response to the Occupy movement when they formed a camp on College Green.</p> <p>Her workload was particularly heavy during her time as leader because the Green group was small</p>

but at the time many cross-party working groups were in progress, requiring a representative from each political group. These cross-party groups spanned the gamut of council activity from care for the elderly to youth provision and included the particularly problematic Parks and Green Spaces policy and the rapidly changing Highway Maintenance approach. There was little administrative assistance and no extra financial help from the council to the small Green group at the time, and so the councillors bore the whole burden of work for the Green Group's contribution. Tess did not defend her seat in 2014 feeling that it was important to give way to younger activists. To try to change the age and gender make up of the Council was important to her as a first step towards a council that properly represented the population of the city.

Since ceasing to be a councillor she continues to serve the community actively as member or chair of various groups including the Environmental Group of the Neighbourhood Partnership.

Additional information included for re-consideration:

Tess wasn't just a group leader, she was the first ever group leader of the first ever Green group in Bristol – if that pioneering role isn't significant I don't know what is. It is for this reason that we have submitted her name for reconsideration. She was also the second longest-serving of our original nominees after Gus (he did 5 years, so elected twice, she did 4, so only elected once but served a full normal length-term). Therefore, given this decision is being taken under the old criteria where there is no minimum term for those who have held special responsibility positions, putting the dividing line of who is and is not nominated between Gus and Tess seems less intuitive to us than putting the line with Gus and Tess on one side and everyone else (who served less than 4 years) on the other.

Obviously, our group felt that all those we nominated had made significant contributions. But Tess stands out as a councillor who made exceptional contributions and who we were very surprised did not receive a nomination last time.