

Protocol re Honorary Aldermen and Alderwomen

1. Background

- (a) Section 249 of the Local Government Act 1972 gives principal councils the power to confer the title of 'Honorary Alderman' or 'Honorary Alderwoman' 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 no longer Members of the Council. The Act does not specify how eminent services are defined, and this is left as a matter of local interpretation.
- (b) The Act also provides that in order to confer the title of Honorary Alderman/Alderwoman on an ex-Member, a meeting of the whole Council needs to be convened specifically for this purpose and the resolution passed by not less than two thirds of the voting Members present at that meeting.
- (c) The Local Government (Structural Changes) (Transitional Arrangements) (No.2) Regulations 2008 provide for the continuation of the conferment of Honorary Alderman/Alderwoman status from legacy councils to a new authority. Section 32 of these Regulations specifically set out this provision. To this end, Honorary Aldermen/Alderwomen from the seven legacy North Yorkshire district/borough councils became Aldermen/Alderwomen for North Yorkshire with effect from 1 April 2023.

2. Process for Nomination

- (a) After an election in an election year, the Monitoring Officer will check who is no longer a Member and has met the criteria set out in this Protocol.
- (b) Group Leaders will be informed of who is eligible and proposals made to the Standards and Governance Committee.
- (c) A report will then be presented to full Council to consider conferring the Honorary Alderman/Alderwoman status.
- (d) Formal election to the Roll of Honorary Aldermen/Alderwomen shall be by resolution of the Council, passed by not less than two thirds of those Members present and voting thereon at a meeting of the Council specifically convened for that purpose.

3. Criteria

- (a) A person shall be deemed eligible to be enrolled as an Honorary Alderman/Alderwoman provided that the person has served as a Member of the Council (and any of the seven legacy North Yorkshire district/borough councils prior to the establishment of the Council on 1 April 2023) for at least 20 years in total.
- (b) Honorary Alderman/Alderwoman is an apolitical role so individuals should not hold political office.

- (c) For the purposes of this Protocol, the term “eminent service” is left undefined to allow flexibility when determining nominations.

4. Term of Office

- (a) All Honorary Aldermen/Alderwomen shall be lifetime appointments subject to the withdrawal of Title/Rights as set out below.

5. Rights and Privileges

- (a) An Honorary Alderman/Alderwoman is entitled to the following rights and privileges:

- To be presented with an Honorary Aldermen/Alderwomen badge.
- To receive the link to the electronic version of the full Council summons and agenda.

(Given the capacity issues with full Council meetings, and the current number of Honorary Aldermen/Alderwomen, no guarantee of attendance at Council meetings can be provided).

6. Withdrawal of Title/Right

- (a) If an existing Honorary Alderman/Alderwoman stands for election and is not elected, they shall continue in the role. If they are elected to the Council as a Member, the title and rights of Alderman/Alderwoman shall be suspended from the individual for such time as they are a serving Member.
- (b) The Council may, in any other particular case, withdraw the title of Honorary Alderman/Alderwoman and the attached rights and privileges. Such withdrawal of the title shall be by way of formal motion to a meeting of the full Council, (the summons to which contains special notice that such withdrawal is proposed and the reason therefore, subject to any exempt information) and subsequent resolution of the Council passed by not less than two thirds of the Members present and voting thereon at the meeting of the Council. On the passing of such resolution, the Monitoring Officer shall delete the name of the person concerned from the Roll of Honorary Aldermen/Alderwomen and advise that person accordingly.

7. Application of this Protocol

- (a) This Protocol shall apply to all Honorary Aldermen/Alderwomen of the Council; that is those Aldermen/Alderwomen who have continued from the legacy Councils (paragraph 3 of this Protocol refers) and Aldermen/Alderwomen appointed by North Yorkshire Council.