

To: Annual Council
Date: 19 May 2021
Report of: Head of Law and Governance
Title of Report: Nominations for the position of Honorary Alderman or Honorary Alderwoman

Summary and recommendations	
Purpose of report:	Council is asked to agree to hold a special meeting to confer the title of Honorary Alderwoman on Christine Simm and Honorary Alderman on Craig Simmons and John Tanner
Cabinet Member:	Councillor Susan Brown, Leader of the Council
Legislation:	Local Government Act 1972 (Section 249)
Recommendation: That Council resolves to:	
1. Agree to convene a special meeting to be held at a later date to confer the title of Honorary Alderwoman on Christine Simm and Honorary Alderman on Craig Simmons and John Tanner.	

Appendices
None

Introduction and background

- Council has the power under Section 249 of the Local Government Act 1972 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 not then members of the Council".
- Such titles can only be conferred at a meeting of Council specially convened for that purpose where not less than two thirds of voting members present vote in favour of the resolution.
- At its meeting on 23 April 2018 Council adopted a Scheme for the Enrolment of Honorary Aldermen and Honorary Alderwomen of Oxford City Council.
- At a special meeting held on 26 November 2018 Council resolved to confer the title of Honorary Alderman on Bob Price and Jean Fooks and Honorary Alderwoman on Gill Sanders.

Eminent service

5. The Council's Scheme states that "eminent service" shall mean serving as a member of Oxford City Council for a total of 12 years and meeting at least one of the following conditions:
 - Holding senior political office and/or serving as Lord Mayor with distinction;
 - Having an exceptional record of community service and leadership.
6. The Scheme also states that in exceptional circumstances less than 12 years' service may be considered upon the recommendation of the Leader of the Council.
7. No person who meets the above qualification criteria will automatically become an Honorary Alderman or Honorary Alderwoman, but they may be nominated and enrolled in accordance with the Council's Scheme.

Nominations process

8. Any serving Oxford City Councillor can submit a nomination in writing to the Monitoring Officer with the support of their Group Leader or the Leader of the Council.
9. Once a valid nomination has been received by the Monitoring Officer, informal discussions will take place involving Group Leaders to establish whether there is sufficient support for the nomination. If there is sufficient support for conferring the title of Honorary Alderman or Honorary Alderwoman on the nominated person, full Council will be asked at its next normal meeting to agree to convene a special meeting for this purpose.

Nomination of Christine Simm, Craig Simmons and John Tanner

10. On 04 May 2021 the Leader of the Council nominated outgoing councillors Christine Simm for the title of Honorary Alderwoman and Craig Simmons and John Tanner for the title of Honorary Alderman.
11. These nominations are valid under the Council's Scheme. The length of service and positions held by those nominated are detailed below:

Christine Simm: 15 years' service as a councillor. Has held the position of Cabinet Member and served as Deputy Lord Mayor (in 2017/18).

Craig Simmons: 17 years' service as a councillor. Has held the position of Leader of the Green Group and served as Lord Mayor (2019/20) and Deputy Lord Mayor (2014/15).

John Tanner: 31 years' service as a councillor. Has held the position of Leader of the Council (Oct 1998 to May 2000) and Cabinet Member and served as Lord Mayor (2007/8) and Deputy Lord Mayor (2002/03).

12. Following discussions with Group Leaders the Monitoring Officer is satisfied that there is sufficient support to recommend that Council agrees to convene a special meeting to confer the title of Honorary Alderman/woman on those nominated.
13. If agreed, the date of the special meeting will be set by the Chief Executive in consultation with Group Leaders. Special meetings can only deal with the business they have been called for but may hear public addresses if the Lord Mayor agrees.

Privileges

14. Under the Council's Scheme an Honorary Alderman or Honorary Alderwoman shall be entitled to the following privileges:
- To enjoy the courtesy title of "Alderman" or "Alderwoman" and to be so addressed.
 - To be named as an Alderman/woman on the Council website.
 - To attend, as an observer, meetings of the Council and to have a seat made available for them.
 - To receive invitations to all civic and social events to which members of the Council are invited.
 - To walk in civic procession in a position immediately behind the Lord Mayor, Deputy Lord Mayor and Sheriff of Oxford and immediately ahead of other serving members of the Council.
 - In the event of the Council deciding to give a badge, robe or emblem to Honorary Aldermen and Honorary Alderwomen, to wear such a badge, robe or emblem on civic occasions.
15. In the event that an Honorary Alderman or Honorary Alderwoman subsequently resumes membership of the Council, they may not be addressed as Alderman or Alderwoman or benefit from any privileges that Aldermen and Alderwomen may be entitled to until they once more cease to be a Councillor.

Financial implications

16. The costs of convening a special meeting of Council and providing any gifts to newly enrolled Honorary Aldermen and Alderwomen can be met from existing budgets.

Legal issues

17. The legal power to confer the title of Honorary Alderman or Honorary Alderwoman under S249 of the Local Government Act 1972 is described within the report.

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Background Papers: None

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