



**Report for:**  
**ACTION**

**Item Number:**  
**6**

<b>Contains Confidential or Exempt Information</b>	NO
<b>Title</b>	Honorary Aldermen and Freeman of the Borough
<b>Responsible Officer(s)</b>	Helen Harris, Director of Legal and Democratic Services
<b>Author(s)</b>	Keith Fraser, Head of Democratic Services, Tel: 0208 825 7497, email: <a href="mailto:fraserk@ealing.gov.uk">fraserk@ealing.gov.uk</a>
<b>Portfolio(s)</b>	Not applicable
<b>For Consideration By</b>	Freedom of the Borough Committee
<b>Date to be Considered</b>	22 <sup>nd</sup> November 2016
<b>Implementation Date if Not Called In</b>	Not Applicable
<b>Affected Wards</b>	None
<b>Keywords/Index</b>	Honorary Aldermen, Honorary Freeman

**Purpose of Report:**

To consider whether to propose to council to create any Honorary Alderman or Honorary Freeman in this or the next municipal year.

**1. Recommendations**

- 1.1 That the committee agree that no Honorary Aldermen be created this year.
- 1.2 That the committee consider whether they wish to make any recommendation to Council as to people whom might be bestowed with the award of Honorary Freeman and, if so, consider the arrangements to be made.
- 1.3 That the committee consider possible funding options for the ceremony referred to in 1.2 above.

## **2. Reason for Decision and Options Considered**

It has been the usual practice, though it is not obligatory, for each administration to confer some honours during the final part of their term of office. There are two honours that can be bestowed.

### **a). Honorary Aldermen**

The Council may, by a resolution passed by not less than two thirds of the members voting thereon at a meeting of the Council especially convened for the purpose with notice of the object, confer the title of Honorary Alderman on persons who have, in the opinion of the Council, rendered eminent services to the Council as past members but who are no longer councillors.

An Honorary Alderman may attend and take part in civic ceremonies but has no right, other than as a member of the public, to attend meetings of the Council or its committees or to receive any payments under the members' allowances scheme.

The Council's current policy on honorary aldermen (agreed on 17th May 2005) states that:

The person being considered for the honour should either:

- (i) have normally been elected as a councillor for Ealing Council (including its former authorities) on four or more occasions; or
- (ii) have served as deputy mayor but not be a freeman or past mayor, in order not to duplicate any higher awards.

It should be noted that this does not mean that all those who fit the criteria above will be honoured; this is merely the requirement for consideration.

### **b), Honorary Freemen**

The Council may, by a resolution passed by not less than two thirds of the members voting thereon at a meeting of the Council specially convened for the purpose giving notice of the object, admit to be Honorary Freemen of the borough persons of distinction and persons who have in the opinion of the Council rendered eminent services to the borough.

The Council's current policy, (as set out in minutes 1420/69 and 1088/90), is that:

- (i) proposals for admitting Honorary Freeman should normally be based on service to the community in at least two or three fields and not merely, for example, service to the Council.
- (ii) there should be no stipulated minimum period of service but it should generally involve some personal sacrifice of time and energy beyond mere association with a particular service.
- (iii) persons proposed should have some personal or official connections with the Borough or have rendered eminent service in connection with

the borough or from which the borough has benefited to a greater extent than other boroughs or districts.

- (iv) in exceptional circumstances consideration should be given to the admission of organisations.

**Points to consider and the way forward.**

- (i) Members are asked to consider whether to award the title of Honorary Alderman. Former Councillors eligible on length of service are Eileen Harris and Harvey Rose. Those eligible under the deputy mayor criteria are Shabhaz Ahmed and Amit Kapoor.
- (ii) Members are asked to consider whether to award the title of Honorary Freeman to any individual person or people.
- (iii) If a view is taken to make any of the awards above then nominations could be made at this meeting or it might be more appropriate to hold another meeting of the committee early in the New Year to finalise arrangements.
- (iv) The legislation does not permit either award to be given posthumously.
- (v) Note that each award needs to be bestowed through the vehicle of a Special Council meeting.  
Therefore members must take a view on the format of these meetings. In the past, on some occasions, a Special Council is held before an ordinary Council meeting, with a small reception held beforehand, at other times two Special meetings are held followed by some form of reception.
- (vi) The tangible aspect of the award needs to be considered
- (vii) In the past FOB made a recommendation to full council who then agreed to hold special meetings on another occasion. This is not necessary and FOB can make resolution a resolution directly to a Special Council meeting held for that purpose.
- (viii) In less than a year the Town Hall will be closed for refurbishment, it is suggested members would prefer to hold the ceremony in the Council Chamber; if so the most appropriate time would be June or July 2017

**3. Key Implications**

There will always be costs associated with the awards. Indicative costs are outlined and will be worked out in full for the next FOB meeting once it is clear how members wish to proceed.

Item	Basic Cost	Grander Cost	Comment
Scrolls for Freemen	£300 each	£900	Key element of cost relates to type of casket (if any) scroll is placed in
Certificates for Honorary Alderman	£20.	£100+	Difference between a nice certificate in a frame and a grander vellum based object

Item	Basic Cost	Grander Cost	Comment
<b>Reception</b>			
Pre – council Parlour event	£250	?	This assumes modest parlour event with a few guest per head @approx £5 per head
Post Special Council event – Basic reception	Simple event with drinks and snacks lasting around a couple of hours @£10 per head (+ £250 for Victoria Hall) would be around £1000 and rising		
Post Special Council event Full sit down event	Likely to be at least £20 a head and likely to require more entertainment etc. could be easily over £5000		It could be a ticketed event to help defray some costs

Through judicious management of various members' services budgets it should be possible to find funding for "basic" scrolls for up to two freemen and a reception costing no more than £1000. Should anything more lavish be required then an alternative budget source will need to be identified.

- 3.3.1 It is suggested that, in any event, the committee consider whether or not it is appropriate in the current financial climate to create any new Freemen this year.

#### **4. Financial**

- 4.1 Section 249 (6) of the Local Government Act 1972 allows the Council to spend such reasonable sums as it sees fit for the purpose of presenting an address or a casket containing an address to a person upon whom they have admitted to be an Honorary Alderman or Freeman of the Borough. Special Council meetings regarding Honorary Aldermen and Freemen of the Borough are only held once per administration.
- 4.2 There is no budget for these events. To fund these events savings will need to be identified from elsewhere within the Democratic Services budget and such

savings may have a detrimental effect on services provided to members. Costs would be reduced if the reception was held as a ticketed event.

**5. Legal**

The Council's powers regarding Honorary Aldermen and Freemen are contained in section 249 of the Local Government Act 1972.

**6. Value For Money**

Estimated costs are stated above and, it needs to be emphasised that, having regard to the fact that no budget exists for either of these events, members will need to keep expenditure to a reasonable level.

**7. Sustainability Impact Appraisal**

None.

**8. Risk Management**

None

**9. Community Safety**

None

**10. Links to the 6 Priorities for the Borough**

There are no clear links although the event will raise the profile of the civic leadership of the Council and the strong links to the community of Ealing. Any chosen Freemen will have made a major contribution to the Borough.

**11. Equalities, Human Rights and Community Cohesion**

Honorary Aldermen are drawn from ex-members of the Council and Freemen may be chosen from all sections of the community subject to the agreed criteria applying in both cases.

**12. Staffing/Workforce and Accommodation Implications:**

None.

**13. Property and Assets**

None.

**14. Consultation**

The Freedom of the Borough Committee will consider this report. If it is decided to recommend that an Honorary Aldermen Special Council meeting and/or an Honorary Freemen Special Council meeting be held an appropriate report will be made to Council.

**15. Timetable for Implementation**

Report to Freedom of Borough Committee for consideration of full programme	To arrange – February 2017?
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Recommendation if appropriate to Council for decision to be made- if necessary	4 <sup>th</sup> April 2017
Special Council meetings to install Honorary Aldermen and Freemen if appropriate	To be arranged June / July

## 16. Background Information

Previous reports to the Freedom of the Borough Committee

[http://ealing.cmis.uk.com/ealing/Committeesbefore2013/tabid/130/ctl/ViewCMIS\\_CommitteeDetails/mid/496/id/242/Default.aspx](http://ealing.cmis.uk.com/ealing/Committeesbefore2013/tabid/130/ctl/ViewCMIS_CommitteeDetails/mid/496/id/242/Default.aspx)

## Consultation

Name of Consultee	Post Held and Department	Date sent to consultee	Date received from consultee	Comments appear in report paragraph
Helen Harris	Director of Legal and Democratic Services	7/11/16	14/11/16	throughout
Ross Brown – Director Finance				
Councillor Dheer	Chair of the Freedom of the Borough Committee		-	

## **Report History**

<b>Decision type:</b>	<b>Urgency item?</b>
Non-key decision	Not applicable.