

COUNCIL, 25 MARCH 2015

REPORT OF THE GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

REVISION TO THE PROCEDURE FOR THE NOMINATION AND APPOINTMENT OF HONORARY FREEMEN AND HONORARY ALDERMEN

Governance Committee at its meeting on 11 March considered revisions to the procedure for the nomination and appointment of Honorary Freemen and Honorary Aldermen and the adoption of a protocol for such matters.

1. Under the provisions of Section 249 of the Local Government Act 1972, the Council may, by resolution passed by not less than two-thirds of the councillors voting thereon at a meeting specially convened for the purpose:
 - (i) Admit to be Honorary Freemen of the Borough persons of distinction and persons who have, in the opinion of the Council, rendered eminent service to the Borough; and
 - (ii) Confer the title of Honorary Alderman upon persons who had, in the opinion of the Council, rendered eminent service to the Council as past councillors.
2. Current practice in Havering was for nominations for the appointment of honorary freeman and honorary alderman to be submitted for consideration at the annual meeting of Council. To support the nominations, details of the eminent service or the reasons for distinction for which the award was to be conferred, were required.
3. In recent years there had been an increase in the number of nominations with an annual expectation that nominations would be made. To ensure that the honour was regarded as the highest accolade a Council could award, the Administration proposed that a protocol which would amend existing procedures and which would also remove the likelihood of a nomination not achieving the requisite two-thirds majority at Council should be put in place.
4. It was proposed that in the first instance Group Leaders would attempt to reach agreement on the nomination to ensure that it would meet the requisite two-thirds majority. Once Group Leaders had discussed the matter, it would be referred to the Governance Committee which would in turn recommend to Council for its consideration the names of those individuals nominated for the award of honorary freeman or honorary alderman.

The Governance Committee accordingly recommends to Council that:

1. The protocol for the nomination and appointment of honorary freemen and honorary aldermen for the London Borough of Havering attached as Appendix A be approved.
2. That a common form for both Aldermen and Freemen be devised so that all applications could receive equal consideration.
3. That the Council's Monitoring Officer be authorised to make the necessary change to the Council's Constitution.