

## GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

8 January 2020

**Subject Heading:**

**The procedure for the nomination and appointment of Honorary Freeman and Honorary Alderman**

**Report Author and contact details:**

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**Policy context:**

Council's Constitution

**Financial summary:**

None arising from this report

### SUMMARY

At the previous meeting of the committee, Members expressed an interest in understanding the procedure for the nomination and appointment of honorary freemen and honorary aldermen. This report sets out the procedure and the legal framework upon which the procedure is based.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

That the committee notes the report and, if required, recommends to Full Council any amendment to the protocol on the nomination and appointment of Honorary Freeman and Honorary Aldermen for the London Borough of Havering

### REPORT DETAIL

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 Freeman 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 have, in the opinion of the Council, rendered eminent service to the Council as part councillors.
- 2. Prior to 2015, the procedure in Havering was for nominations for the appointment of honorary freemen and honorary aldermen 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 is to be conferred, were required.
- 3. In the years leading up to 2015 there had been an increase in the number of nominations with an annual expectation that nominations would be made. To ensure that the honour maintained its status as the highest accolade the Council could award, Members approved a protocol which sought to reduce the likelihood of a nomination not achieving the requisite two-thirds majority at Council (attached as Appendix A).
- 4. The protocol stipulates that in the first instance Group Leaders will attempt to reach agreement on the nomination to ensure that it would meet the requisite two-thirds majority. Once Group Leaders have discussed the matter, it will be referred to the Governance Committee which will in-turn recommend to Full Council for its consideration the names of those individuals nominated for the award of honorary freeman or honorary alderman.
- 5. Since the protocol was introduced there have been no further awards for honorary freeman or honorary alderman.
- 6. The protocol references the Mayor's civic awards as a suitable alternative to the award of freeman or alderman. The issuing of a Mayoral civic award is solely at the discretion of the Mayor. Over the course of the year in office the Mayor will meet individuals or Groups who he/she consider to be deserving of an award for outstanding service to the Havering community. The Mayoral Civic Awards ceremony usually takes place in April.
- 7. Consideration of nominations is conducted at the annual meeting of Full Council usually held in May. It is therefore necessary for Governance Committee to make its recommendations at its March meeting, with Group Leaders meeting to consider applications received earlier in the year.

<b>IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS</b>
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**Financial implications and risks:**

There are no financial impacts arising the report. The appointment of "honorary freeman/alderman" does not create any financial implications as they are the award of titles only.

**Legal implications and risks:**

Section 249 of the Local Government Act 1972 states the statutory position in respect of the conferment of award for the position of honorary freeman and honorary alderman. It is for Council to determine the procedures it shall follow for the nomination of persons for such awards.

**Human Resources Implications and risks:**

There are no HR implications arising from this report.

**Equalities implications and risks:**

There are none arising from this report.

<b>BACKGROUND PAPERS</b>
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None