



Protocol for the award of Honorary Awards

Introduction

1. For the purposes of this protocol, the term “Honorary Award(s)” shall include:
 - a. the Honorary Freedom of the Borough; and / or
 - b. the award of Honorary Alderman/Alderwoman status.
2. The Council can bestow Honorary Awards in recognition of distinguished contribution to civic life.

What are the Honorary Awards?

Freedom of the Borough

3. The Freedom of the Borough is the highest award that the Council can award to an individual or corporate body.
4. The award of the Freedom of the Borough does not convey with it any legal rights or responsibilities, other than a ceremonial role at civic functions. The award dates back to the Middle Ages when freemen had commercial privileges and a route into a position of power in a town or city.

Alderman/woman

5. This is an honorary title intended to recognise eminent service of past members of the Council
6. An alderman / alderwoman may attend and take part in such civic ceremonies as the Council may from time to time decide, but shall not have the right:
 - a. to attend meetings of the Council or a committee of the Council; or
 - b. to receive any such allowances or other payments.
7. The award does not confer any powers to take decisions on Council business.
8. No alderman or alderwoman shall (in the event of subsequent re-election), while serving as a member of the council, be entitled to be addressed as

alderman or alderwoman or to attend or take part in any civic ceremonies of the council as an alderman or alderwoman.

On what basis are the Honorary Awards bestowed?

9. The Freedom of the Borough may be awarded to:
 - a. persons of distinction, and
 - b. persons who have, in the opinion of the Council, rendered eminent services to the Borough.
10. The title of aldermen / alderwoman may be awarded to 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.

Legal basis

11. The power to award Honorary Awards is contained in Section 249 of the Local Government Act 1972.

Constitutional basis

12. The constitution mirrors the legal basis in that it specifies that:
 - a. only Full Council may bestow an Honorary Award;
 - b. the resolution must be passed by two thirds of the members voting.

Constitutional Process

13. The constitution states that:
 - a. the Council shall hold an extraordinary meeting immediately before the Annual Meeting to decide whether to confer any Honorary Awards. (This does not apply to a year where there is an ordinary election of Councillors).
 - b. in a year in which there is an ordinary election of Councillors, the Council shall consider the conferment of Honorary Awards at the first ordinary meeting following the Annual Meeting
 - c. Honorary Awards may be considered at any other time by way of motion.

Protocol

14. Whilst the conferment of an Honorary Award is reserved to Full Council who shall take each decision in accordance with the legal basis and the constitution, this Protocol seeks to provide further guidance to the Council (in the interests of transparency and public confidence) as to the criteria by which any nomination for an Honorary Award may be judged.

Criteria

15. Honorary Awards should only be granted sparingly and awarded on merit to exceptional persons.
16. There is no definition as to what “eminent service” is or what qualifies someone to be viewed as a “person of distinction” but the following examples / guidelines may assist. Where such a person has:
 - a. demonstrated exceptional achievement or service to the community which is outstanding in its field and made a real difference in their field of work or their community;
 - b. brought distinction to the Borough and enhanced its reputation in the area or activity concerned;
 - c. demonstrated innovation, entrepreneurship or exceptional business acumen which has delivered benefits and results to the Borough;
 - d. contributed in a way that significantly improved the lot of those less able to help themselves or suffering disadvantage;
 - e. given outstanding military service;
 - f. evidenced exceptional voluntary or charitable service to the Borough or any part of it or community within it;
 - g. displayed moral courage and vision in making and delivering exceptionally tough choices;
 - h. contributed to the Borough beyond the call of duty in a way that stands out above others and promoted community cohesion.
17. Some examples from previous awards are:
 - a. An Olympic games medallist from the Borough;

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- b. Continuous involvement with the borough in personal life and through the directorship of a Corporation that has an international repute.
- c. Service to the community and over 40 years of charity involvement, including fundraising of over £600,000.

Long service

- 18. The Honorary Awards Panel (detailed at para. 21 below) may itself make nominations for the conferment of an Honorary Award where a member, past or present, has sufficient long service with the Council.
- 18a. Where any serving member has achieved 24 years of service with the Council (which need not be continuous), this shall be deemed “eminent service” for the purposes of awarding the Freedom of the Borough.
- 18b. Where any past member has achieved 20 years of service with the Council (which need not be continuous), this shall be deemed “eminent service” for the purposes of awarding an Alderman/woman.

Organisations

- 19. Only in exceptional circumstances should consideration be given to the admission of organisations.

The Procedure

- 20. Nominations for persons or organisations to be granted an Honorary Award, may be made at any time by any serving member of the Council to the Monitoring Officer on the appropriate form (see Appendix A).
- 21. All nominations will be considered by the Honorary Awards Panel which shall be comprised of each of the leaders of the political groups on the Council (Deputy Leaders can substitute if their Leader is unable to attend), with relevant officers to consider:
 - a. whether they have sufficient information on which to form a view and, if not, to instruct officers to seek further information;
 - b. once satisfied that they have adequate information, whether the nomination satisfies the criteria above;
 - c. whether the nomination should go on to Full Council for decision with the endorsement of the Honorary Awards Panel.

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22. The Honorary Awards Panel will only support the nomination to Full Council where there is unanimous agreement.
23. Once agreement has been reached by Group Leaders, they will seek to ensure that their Groups adhere to the agreement to avert embarrassment to the nominee.
24. In the event that the Honorary Awards Panel concludes that the nomination is not suitable as it does not meet the criteria or it is unlikely that the nomination will receive sufficient support, the Monitoring Officer will advise the member who made the nomination of this conclusion and the reasons for reaching it. The member will then be given the opportunity to withdraw their nomination,
25. Please note, the view of the Honorary Award Panel does not prevent a member from presenting the nomination to Full Council.
26. The endorsement of the Honorary Awards Panel is not binding upon Full Council.



APPENDIX A

NOMINATION FORM FOR HONORARY AWARDS.

I Councillor wish to nominate the following person (organisation) to be considered for the status of (*please tick one*):

- Freedom of the Borough of the London Borough of Havering; or
- Honorary Alderman/ Alderwoman of the London Borough of Havering.

Nominee.....

I am aware that the criteria in the Honorary Awards Protocol needs to be applied to the achievements of the nominee. The criteria is to bestow Honorary Awards on:

- a. persons of distinction, and
- b. persons who have, in the opinion of the Council, rendered eminent services to the Borough.

I believe that they have met these criteria in the following way:

Please continue overleaf or attach supporting evidence.

We the undersigned Councillors support this nomination for Honorary Award: