

**PROTOCOL FOR THE APPOINTMENT OF HONORARY ALDERMEN/
ALDERWOMEN**

1. Background Information

Section 249(1) of the Local Government Act 1972 gives principal councils the power 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 no longer members of the council. There is no statutory guidance or definition of "eminent services". This is, instead, a matter of local interpretation and the criteria used to select Honorary Aldermen/Alderwomen for appointment at Halton Borough Council is set out in section 4, below.

The position of Honorary Alderman/Alderwoman is non-political and the appointment must be agreed by the Council by resolution of not less than two-thirds of the members at a meeting specially convened for the purpose.

2. The Role of Honorary Alderman/Alderwoman

Honorary Aldermen/Alderwomen may attend and take part in civic ceremonies by invitation, but they will not have the right to attend meetings of the Council etc., or to receive any allowances or payments under section 173 to 176 of the Local Government Act 1972.

Whilst Honorary Aldermen/Alderwomen have no legal, social or royal precedence, they can be used to support the office of Mayor. Such people can be encouraged to attend en masse all civic ceremonial events when invited and can support the work of the Mayor's charity. Similarly, when invited, they can provide valuable support in hosting receptions and promoting civic pride. Although, without formal precedence, it is suggested that they be placed immediately after Honorary Freemen, with precedence amongst the Honorary Aldermen/Alderwomen being accorded to the number of years of service on the Council.

Honorary Aldermen/Alderwomen are invited to the following Civic Functions:-

- ❑ Mayor's Installation
- ❑ Civic Sunday (but only to the Church not to the Town Hall for coffee or lunch)
- ❑ Remembrance Sunday (but only to the service at The Cenotaph not to the Town Hall for coffee or lunch)
- ❑ Mayor's Ball

- Honorary Freedom of the Borough and Honorary Aldermen/Alderwomen of the Borough Ceremonies
- Various “one-off” events e.g. Unitary and Jubilee Celebrations

The role is an honorary one but to the public an Honorary Alderman/Alderwoman is perceived to be a representative of the Council. In taking up this role all Honorary Aldermen/Alderwomen must agree that they:-

1. are perceived to be representative of the civic element of the Council and must act in accordance with the 7 Principles of Public Life;
2. become apolitical in public; knowing that any views expressed may be interpreted as views of the Council.
3. are not to speak on behalf of the Council in any way whatsoever.

3. Nomination and Appointment

Nominations for Honorary Aldermen/Alderwomen may be made by any serving Member of the Council by way of a letter or email to the Chief Executive. The nomination must be received within two years of the nominee ceasing to be a councillor and must set out the reasons for the nomination, having regard to the criteria for appointment.

The nomination will be considered by the Executive Board and assessed against the criteria for appointment. If the criteria are met, a recommendation for appointment will be made to Council for the final decision.

A special council meeting shall be convened by the Mayor to consider the recommendation. During the meeting a Notice of Motion will be put forward to confer the title of Honorary Alderman/Alderwoman on the nominee(s) to recognise their services to the Council and the community. The Motion shall be seconded and the resolution passed by not less than two thirds of the Members present.

If the Resolution is passed, arrangements will be made by the Democratic Services Manager to order the scrolls and arrange a second special council meeting so that those being awarded the title of Honorary Aldermen/Alderwomen will be presented with:

A ‘Certificate of Conferral of the Status of Honorary Alderman/Alderwoman’ which will carry the Council’s Coat of Arms and the Common Seal of the Council, witnessed by the Mayor and the Chief Executive. The certificate will be framed for presentation.

Following the presentation, those appointed Honorary Alderman/Alderwomen will be asked to sign the ‘Roll of Honorary Aldermen/Alderwomen’.

4. Criteria for appointment

Any person nominated for the appointment of Honorary Aldermen/ Alderwomen must meet the following criteria:-

1. they are a past member of the Council;
2. they have made a significant contribution to public life;
3. they have given notable service on behalf of the Council, which has enhanced the reputation of Councillors and the Council itself;
4. they have served the Borough for 12 years or three terms or more as a Borough Councillor, or with service in another role (e.g. Metro Mayor); and
5. they are no longer seeking election to Halton Borough Council.

Any person who meets the above qualification criteria will not automatically become an Honorary Alderman/Alderwoman. The process set out in section 3 must be followed.

5. Withdrawal of title

There may be occasions where, due to the past or future behaviour of individuals who have been appointed as Honorary Aldermen/Alderwomen, the Council may wish to remove the title of Honorary Alderman/Alderwoman from an individual in order to protect the reputation of the Council.

Removal of the title of Honorary Alderman/Alderwoman will follow the same process as appointment (proposed and seconded, and then a resolution of two thirds of those present must be passed). However, it may take place at any meeting of Full Council rather than a specially convened meeting.

6. Past Appointments

The following people were Honorary Aldermen/Alderwomen: -

- The Rt Hon Lord Ashley of Stoke
- The Rt Hon Gordon Oakes
- Honorary Alderman R Eastup
- Honorary Alderman R Beswick
- Honorary Alderman S Gerrard
- Honorary Alderman J Hughes
- Honorary Alderman S Broome
- Honorary Alderman Mrs O Smith