

**JOINT MEETING OF CABINET MEMBERS (COMMUNITY SAFETY AND EQUALITIES)
AND (POLICY, LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE)**

6th September, 2012

Cabinet Members

Present: Councillor J Mutton, Cabinet Member (Policy, Leadership and Governance)
Councillor Townshend, Cabinet Member (Community Safety and Equalities)

Shadow Cabinet

Members Present: Councillor Foster, Shadow Cabinet Member (Policy, Leadership and Governance)

Other Members

Present: Councillor Duggins, Cabinet Member (Strategic Finance and Resources)

Employees Present: H. Abraham (Customer and Workforce Services Directorate)
J. Barlow (Customer and Workforce Services Directorate)
C. Forde (Finance and Legal Services Directorate)
J. Parry (Chief Executive's Directorate)
S. Symonds (Customer and Workforce Services Directorate)

Apologies: Councillor Crookes, Shadow Cabinet Member (Community Safety and Equalities)

Public Business

RECOMMENDATIONS

10. Protocol for Conferring the Title of Honorary Alderman or Alderwoman

The Cabinet Members considered a report of the Director of Finance and Legal Services which recommended changes to the Protocol for conferring the title of Honorary Alderman or Alderwoman. The report was due to be considered by Council at its meeting on 18th September, 2012. The timescales had not permitted the report to be considered by the Cabinet Member (Policy, Leadership and Governance) Constitutional Advisory Panel prior to consideration by the Cabinet Members.

The Council approved a Protocol for conferring the title of Honorary Alderman or Alderwoman to former Councillors at its Annual Meeting on 19 May 2011 (their Minute 17/11 refers). Under the current Protocol, nominations for the title of Honorary Alderman/woman could only be made once a year, by the end of February, with the nominations being submitted to Council at its meeting in March. A special meeting to confer the honorary title would then take place immediately prior to the Annual Council Meeting in May.

However, the time periods in the Protocol were restrictive and it was proposed that a more flexible approach should be taken. It was recommended therefore that the Protocol be amended to allow the title to be conferred at any time of the year. The title of Honorary Alderman or Alderwoman would be conferred at a specially convened meeting of the Council by a resolution passed by not less than two thirds of members present and voting. Nominations may, in addition to this, be considered at a prior ordinary Council meeting, and the nomination approved in principle by a resolution comprising a majority vote. If nominations were considered at an ordinary meeting, it was proposed that the specially convened meeting may be held immediately after this ordinary meeting, or at a future meeting, subject to the appropriate notice of the special meeting having been given.

It was also proposed that the criteria for eligibility for the title of Honorary Alderman/woman which referred to the 15 years of service as an elected member may be continuous or non-continuous.

The Lord Mayor's Office would be managing the process for Honorary Aldermen/women, in conjunction with the Cabinet Member holding the portfolio for Democratic Services and the Lord Mayor of the City of Coventry. This included ensuring recipients were given a medal and certificate, and that their names were recorded in a special register or 'Roll'.

There would be limited costs for awarding recipients with a medal and certificate, and for a Register to record the names of Aldermen and Alderwomen. In 2012/13, there would be estimated one-off costs of £850 for purchasing 20 medals/certificates and a Register. The overall Democratic Services budgets would fund these expenses in 2012/13. In future years, the estimated costs of £200 per annum for medals and certificates would be met from the budget within the Lord Mayor's Office.

If these proposals were approved, Appendix 1 to Part 8 of the Constitution (Procedural Matters) would need to be amended to reflect these changes. The proposed changes to Part 8 were shown in the Appendix to the report. It was further proposed that the Protocol be renamed and relocated to Part 5 of the Constitution which specifically related to Codes and Protocols.

The Cabinet Member's discussed the practical management of the process for ensuring appropriate use of the honorary status. Officers were asked to consider measures to protect the dignity of the post in public life. Clarity was also sought in respect of the status of the role should a holder wish to stand for public office, i.e. what would be the process for suspension and reinstatement of the honorary role?

RESOLVED that after due consideration of the report, and matters raised at the meeting, that the Cabinet Members (Community Safety and Equalities) and (Policy, Leadership and Governance) recommend that the City Council:

- (i) Approve the changes to the Constitution, as set out in Section 2 of the report and detailed above.**
- (ii) Approve the protocol for conferring the title of Honorary Aldermen and Alderwomen (as appended to these minutes).**