



REGULATORY AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

Thursday, 20 January 2022

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| REPORT TITLE: | CONFERMENT OF THE TITLE OF HONORARY ALDERWOMAN |
| REPORT OF: | DIRECTOR OF LAW AND GOVERNANCE (MONITORING OFFICER) |

REPORT SUMMARY

This report requests that Committee gives consideration to whether to recommend to Council that the title of Honorary Alderwoman be conferred on former Councillor Jean Stapleton.

The Wirral Plan 2021 - 2026 sets out the Council's vision to secure the best possible future for the Council's residents and covers the following five themes:

- A thriving and inclusive economy, creating jobs and opportunities for all;
- A clean-energy, sustainable borough, leading the way in tackling the environment crisis;
- Brighter futures for all regardless of their background;
- Safe and pleasant communities that our residents are proud of; and
- Healthy and active lives for all, with the right care, at the right time.

By recommending the recognition of eminent service to the community, the proposals within this report align with the theme of safe and pleasant communities that our residents are proud of.

This matter affects all Wards within the Borough.

RECOMMENDATION/S

The Regulatory and General Purposes Committee is requested to recommend to Council the conferment of the title of Honorary Alderwoman on former Councillor Jean Stapleton in accordance with Section 249(1) of the Local Government Act 1972.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

- 1.1 Former Councillor Jean Stapleton was a Member of the Council from 4 May 2000, representing Birkenhead and Tranmere Ward as Labour Party Member until 6 May 2021.
- 1.2 The Council has previously determined that former Members who have served twenty years on the Council or a predecessor Council are eligible for nomination to this award.
- 1.3 Former Councillor Jean Stapleton is therefore eligible to have the title of Honorary Alderwoman conferred upon her. The recommendation provides the committee with the opportunity to give consideration to this and put forward a subsequent proposal to the Council.

2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 2.1 The alternative option is not to recommend Jean Stapleton for the position of Honorary Alderwoman.

3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 3.1 Section 249 of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) provides that the title of Honorary Alderman or Honorary Alderwoman may be conferred by the Council on persons who are:

(a) persons of distinction; and/or

(b) who have, in its opinion, rendered eminent service to the place or area.

A full Council resolution to this effect must be passed by not less than two-thirds of the Members voting thereon at a specially convened meeting.

- 3.2 Honorary Aldermen and Alderwoman are invited to attend Council Meetings in a non-participating capacity. They do not receive any allowances or payments under section 173 – 176 of the Local Government Act 1972. Honorary Aldermen and Alderwomen are also invited to attend and take part in civic ceremonies such as Civic Sundays and Remembrance Sundays and other appropriate Civic events. The names of Honorary Alderman and Alderwoman are inscribed on a Roll of Honour Board on the first-floor landing of Wallasey Town Hall.
- 3.3 Successful nominees for the office of Honorary Aldermen and Alderwoman of this Council have previously been awarded a suitable badge at a special ceremony. Currently, former Councillor Jean Stapleton is the only former Councillor eligible to be appointed as an Honorary Alderwoman, based on the Council's criteria.

4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 It would be the intention to present Jean Stapleton with a badge of office, the total cost of which is approximately £682.75. There will also be the small cost of inscribing her name on the Roll of Honour board which can be met from existing budgets.

5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The formal decision to confer the status of Honorary Alderman/Alderwoman must be ratified by an Extraordinary Meeting of the Council. It is proposed that the Extraordinary Meeting will be scheduled at an appropriate date in the future. A full Council resolution to this effect must be passed by not less than two-thirds of the Members voting thereon at a specially convened meeting.

6.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: STAFFING, ICT AND ASSETS

- 6.1 It is also customary for the Council to cover the cost of hospitality provided for the newly appointed Honorary Aldermen and Alderwomen and a select number of guests. Arrangements for such an event, that could be held on the rise of an Extraordinary Council meeting. (convened to confer the status of Honorary Alderwoman), would be made in consultation with the mayor. There is no specific budget head for this but the funding required can be allocated from the Civic Services catering budget. Consideration will be given to the current Covid-19 pandemic.

7.0 RELEVANT RISKS

- 7.1 There are no risks associated with this report, other than referred to in paragraph 6.1 above, namely those directly arising from any hospitality arrangements that may be considered during the current Covid-19 pandemic

8.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION

- 8.1 Political Group Leaders be consulted on these proposals and an update will be provided at the January meeting of Regulatory and General Purposes Committee.

9.0 EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 Wirral Council has a legal requirement to make sure its policies, and the way it carries out its work, do not discriminate against anyone. An Equality Impact Assessment is a tool to help council services identify steps they can take to ensure equality for anyone who might be affected by a particular policy, decision or activity. Measuring the impact of equality implications and mitigating any negative impact where possible is embedded into the core principles of good governance. There are no equality implications arising from this report.

10.0 ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 This report is for information purposes and as such, there are no direct Environment and Climate Implications

11.0 COMMUNITY WEALTH IMPLICATIONS

11.1 This report is for information purposes and as such, there are no direct Community Wealth Implications

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APPENDICES

None

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Section 249 Local Government Act 1972

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

| Council Meeting | Date |
|-----------------|------|
| Not applicable | |