



REGULATORY & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

Wednesday, 7 June 2023

REPORT TITLE:	CONFERMENT OF THE TITLE OF HONORARY ALDERMAN
REPORT OF:	DIRECTOR OF LAW & GOVERNANCE

REPORT SUMMARY

This report requests the Committee to consider whether to recommend to Council that the title of Honorary Alderman be conferred on former Councillors Tony Smith and Dave Mitchell.

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 Alderman on former Councillors Tony Smith and Dave Mitchell 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 Tony Smith was a Member of the Council from May 1995, representing Bebington Ward as Labour Party Member and has served as the Member for Upton Ward since 2004 until May 2023. Tony Smith served as Mayor of Wirral for the Municipal Year 2019-2020 which continued into 2020-2021 during Covid lockdown and is a retired teacher and Educational Psychologist. Tony Smith was also a Cabinet member for Social Inclusion and Children's Services during his service to Wirral Council.
- 1.2 Former Councillor Dave Mitchell was a Member of the Council from May 1983, representing Eastham Ward as a Liberal Democrat Member until May 2023. Dave Mitchell served as Mayor of Wirral for the Municipal Year 2013-2014. Dave Mitchell was Chair of the Planning Committee when the Wirral Waters development was approved and was also a Cabinet member for Highways and Transportation. He was also a member of the Mersey Port Health Authority and has also served on the Merseytravel Committee.
- 1.3 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.
- 1.4 Former Councillors Tony Smith and Dave Mitchell are therefore eligible to have the title of Honorary Alderman conferred upon them. The recommendation provides the committee with the opportunity to consider this and put forward a subsequent proposal to the Council.

2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 2.1 The alternative option is not to recommend former Councillors Tony Smith and Dave Mitchell for the position of Honorary Alderman.

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 Alderwomen 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 Aldermen and Alderwomen 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 Alderwomen of this Council have previously been awarded a suitable badge at a special ceremony. Currently, former Councillors Tony Smith and Dave Mitchell are eligible to be appointed as an Honorary Alderman / Alderwoman, based on the Council's criteria.

4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 It would be the intention to present Tony Smith and Dave Mitchell with a badge of office, the total cost of which is approximately £1600. There will also be the small cost of inscribing their names 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 Alderman), 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.

7.0 RELEVANT RISKS

- 7.1 There are no known risks associated with this report.

8.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION

- 8.1 Political Group Leaders have been consulted and support the proposals.

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

TERMS OF REFERENCE

This report is being considered by the Regulatory and General Purposes Committee in accordance with Section 8.2 of its Terms of Reference

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date
Not applicable	