

Crawley Borough Council

Report to Governance Committee

10 June 2024

Nominations for Appointment of Honorary Aldermen/Alderwomen and Honorary Freeman/Freewomen

Report of the Head of Governance, People & Performance – LDS/213

1. Purpose

- 1.1. To consider nominations received for the award of the courtesy titles of Honorary Alderman or Alderwoman and Honorary Freeman or Freewoman in accordance with the provisions of Section 249 of the Local Government Act 1972 (“the Act”).
- 1.2. Paragraphs 5 to 7 of this report specifically relate to the proposed Honorary Aldermen/Alderwomen and paragraphs 8 to 10 relate to the proposed Honorary Freeman/Freewomen.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1. That the Committee determine whether to recommend that the Mayor convene an Extraordinary Meeting of the Full Council to bestow the title of Honorary Alderman/Alderwoman on the following former Councillors.
 - a) Colin Lloyd
 - b) Brian Quinn
 - c) Brenda Smith
- 2.2. That the Committee determine whether to recommend that the Mayor convene an Extraordinary Meeting of the Full Council to bestow the title of Honorary Freeman/Freewoman on the following people.
 - a) Richard Burrett
 - b) Colin Lloyd
 - c) Brian Quinn
 - d) Brenda Smith
- 2.3. That the Full Council be recommended to amend the Protocol on the Appointment of Honorary Aldermen/Alderwomen and Honorary Freeman/Freewomen as set out in paragraph 7.4 of this report.

3. Reasons for the Recommendations

- 3.1. Honorary Aldermen/Alderwomen: To recognise the work of former Councillors who had a length of service which was substantially greater than the average length of service per Councillor, and who have also given service to the wider community in a role outside of their duties as a Borough Councillor.
- 3.2. Honorary Freemen/Freewomen: To recognise individuals that have given extraordinary service to the town over a prolonged period, or who, by their action, have brought significant distinction to the town.
- 3.3. The proposed amendment to the Protocol will provide clarification for when an Honorary Alderman/Alderwoman is subsequently re-elected as a Councillor.

4. Background

- 4.1. The Full Council approved revisions to the Protocol on the Appointment of Honorary Alderman/Alderwomen and Honorary Freeman/Freewomen (“the Protocol”) at its meeting on [29 March 2023](#). The Protocol incorporated the provisions of Section 249 of the Local Government Act 1972 and set out the procedure for nominating these honours.
- 4.2. The Head of Governance, People & Performance agreed that a further minor amendment to the Protocol be made so that nominations for Honorary Aldermen/Alderwomen can both be put forward by Group Leaders and considered by the Governance Committee and an Extraordinary Meeting of the Full Council at any point in the municipal year. This minor change was published on 6 February in Councillors’ Information Bulletin [IB/1219](#).
- 4.3. The nominations have been submitted by the respective Party Group Leaders.

5. Criteria for Nominations of Honorary Aldermen/Alderwomen

- 5.1. The Act permits a Local Authority to bestow the title of Honorary Alderman/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 not then Members of the Council”.
- 5.2. As legislation does not define the term “eminent service” in further detail, the Council has determined that nominees for Honorary Aldermen/Alderwomen should be a former Councillor who have:
 - a) Served a minimum total length of 20 years in that capacity.
 - b) A length of service which is normally substantially greater than the average length of service per Councillor.
 - c) Also given service to the wider community in a role outside of their duties as a Borough Councillor. This may include notable work with the voluntary sector, with educational bodies, with other Local Authorities covering the geographical areas of the Borough, or any other body that the Council deems appropriate.
- 5.3. It is for this Committee to consider the nominations and determine whether it should recommend that the Mayor convene an Extraordinary Meeting of the Full Council for the purpose of considering any nominations. It should be noted that any resolution by the Full Council to bestow these honours must be passed by no less than two thirds of the Councillors voting on the matter.

6. Nominees for Honorary Aldermen/Alderwomen

- 6.1. The following former Councillors have been nominated for their loyal and distinguished service to the Council:
 - a) Colin Lloyd (Honorary Alderman): 24 years' service
 - b) Brian Quinn (Honorary Alderman): 21 years' service
 - c) Brenda Smith (Honorary Alderwoman): 36 years' service
- 6.2. The citations (reasons for nomination) for each nominee identified above are attached as an appendix to this report.

7. Entitlements of Honorary Aldermen/Alderwomen

- 7.1. Honorary Aldermen/Alderwomen may attend and take part in such civic ceremonies as the Council may from time to time decide.
- 7.2. Aldermen/Alderwomen are not entitled to receive any Councillor allowances or other payments of allowances, expenses etc.
- 7.3. Whilst a person who is serving as a Councillor cannot be made an Honorary Alderman/Alderwoman, the Act does appear to envisage that a person on whom this honour has been bestowed may subsequently be re-elected as a Councillor. In these circumstances, the Act specifically provides that no Honorary Alderman/Alderwoman shall, whilst serving as a Borough Councillor, be entitled to be addressed as Alderman/Alderwoman or to attend or take part in any civic ceremonies of the Council as an Alderman/Alderwoman.
- 7.4. For clarity it is therefore proposed that the Full Council be recommended to include the following additional sentence in the Council's Protocol on the Appointment of Honorary Alderman/Alderwomen and Honorary Freeman/Freewomen:

"Where an Honorary Alderman/Alderwoman is subsequently re-elected as a Councillor, that Honorary Alderman/Alderwoman shall, whilst serving as a Borough Councillor, not be entitled to be addressed as Alderman/Alderwoman or attend or take part in any civic ceremonies of the Council as an Alderman/Alderwoman."

8. Criteria for Nominations of Honorary Freeman/Freewomen

- 8.1. The Act permits a Local Authority to bestow the title of Honorary Freeman/Freewoman on "persons of distinction" who have, in the opinion of the Council "rendered eminent services" to the town.

- 8.2. As legislation does not define the term “eminent service” in further detail, the Council has determined that nominees for Honorary Freeman/Freewomen should be individuals who have:
- a) Given extraordinary service to the town over a prolonged period; or
 - b) Who, by their action, have brought significant distinction to the town.
- 8.3. It is for this Committee to consider the nominations and determine whether it should recommend that the Mayor convene an Extraordinary Meeting of the Full Council for the purpose of considering any nominations. It should be noted that any resolution by the Full Council to bestow these honours must be passed by no less than two thirds of the Councillors voting on the matter.

9. Nominees for Honorary Freeman/Freewomen

- 9.1. The following individuals have been nominated for their extraordinary service to the town:
- a) Richard Burrett (Honorary Freeman)
 - b) Colin Lloyd (Honorary Freeman)
 - c) Brian Quinn (Honorary Freeman)
 - d) Brenda Smith (Honorary Freewoman)
- 9.2. The citations (reasons for nomination) for each nominees identified above are attached as an appendix to this report.

10. Entitlements of Honorary Freeman/Freewomen

- 10.1. The title of Honorary Freeman/Freewoman is a mark of distinction which reflects the eminence of the person on whom it is bestowed. The honour itself carries no entitlement.

11. Financial Implications

- 11.1. Sections 249(4A) and 249(9) of the Local Government Act 1972 permits a Council, to “spend such reasonable sum as they think fit for the purpose of presenting an address, or a casket containing an address, to a person on whom they have conferred the title of Honorary Alderman or Honorary Alderwoman, or Honorary Freeman or Honorary Freewoman’.
- 11.2. It is anticipated that each Honorary Alderman/Alderwoman and Honorary Freeman/Freewoman title will cost approximately £1200 to bestow although, if several honours are bestowed at one Extraordinary Full Council meeting, the individual cost will be less than this. This cost will be funded through the Council’s Ceremonial Budget.

12. Background Papers

- [Protocol on Appointment of Honorary Aldermen/Alderwomen or Honorary Freeman/Freewomen.](#)
- [Minutes of the Governance Committee](#) held on 13 March 2023.
- [Minutes of the Full Council](#) held on 29 March 2023.

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Citations

Richard David Burrett

- Borough Councillor from 1992 to 2023
- West Sussex County Councillor from 2009 until the present day
- Non-Executive Director and Chair of the Audit Committee throughout the existence of the Crawley Primary Care Trust from 2002 to 2006
- Governor of Bewbush Middle School/Bewbush Primary School from 1996 to 2012 and Chair of the Governing Body from 2004 to 2012
- Governor of Thomas Bennett Community College from 1997 to 2018 and Vice-Chair of the Governing Body from 2000 to 2012 and again from 2014 to 2017
- Member of Crawley Crime Prevention Panel from 1986 to 2003 and Chairman from 1996 to 1999 and again from 2001 to 2003
- Trustee of Crawley Open House from 1996 until the present day and Vice-Chair of the Trustees from 2003 to 2014
- Trustee of the Gatwick Airport Community Trust from 2013 until the present day

Colin Christopher Lloyd

- Borough Councillor from 1990 until 2008 and from 2010 until 2016
- West Sussex County Councillor from 2001 until 2005
- Governor for many years at both Desmond Anderson Primary School and Thomas Bennett Community College

Brian James Quinn

- Borough Councillor from 1998 until 2019
- Mayor of the Borough in 2003/4 and 2017/18
- West Sussex County Councillor from 2013 until the present day
- Past Committee Member and Chairman of Broadfield Community Centre
- School Governor at Seymour School from 2004 to 2013
- Trustee at Crawley Museum from 2008 to 2013
- Chairman of the Sarah Robinson Education Foundation from 2011 until the present day
- President of Crawley Judo Club from 2008 to 2019
- Chairman of Crawley & District Royal British Legion member since 1968 and Chairman for 2011/2012

Brenda Ann Smith

- Borough Councillor from 1978 until 1984, 1988 until 1992, 1996 until 2022
- Mayor of the Borough in 1990/91 and 2014/15
- West Sussex County Councillor from 2009 to 2021
- Member for many years of Crawley & Dorsten Town Twinning Association and Chairman from 2017-2018
- Crawley Dementia Ambassador
- Founder of the Langley Green Forum
- Campaigner for the building of the Mother and Baby Room situated on The Boulevard, Crawley
- School Governor at Langley Green Infants & Junior School and Holy Trinity Church of England Secondary School for many years