

HONORARY ALDERMEN, FREEMEN & LORD MAYOR'S COMMENDATION

HONORARY ALDERMAN

1. Appointment of Honorary Alderman

1.1 In accordance with Section 249 of the Local Government Act 1972, the City Council may confer the title of Honorary Alderman on any former Councillor who it considers has provided eminent service to the City Council. The term "eminent services" is not defined in law so is a matter of local interpretation.

1.2 "Eminent service" will be defined for appointment at Exeter City Council as an Honorary Aldermen as follows:

- a) Is not a serving member of Exeter City Council or any other local authority;
- b) Has served as a Member of the City Council for at least 12 years in total; and
- c) Has given exceptional service during that period.

1.3 Upon retirement, qualifying Councillors can be nominated by their own political party and such nomination shall be seconded by the largest opposing political party. The nomination will be brought to a panel for consideration which will consist of leaders of the political groups (and such panel shall be supported by Lord Mayor's Support Officer or such other nominated officer).

1.4 An Honorary Alderman will serve a formal term of four years, during which they are expected to support the Lord Mayor at events. After completing the four-year term, they will no longer have any responsibilities related to attending events.

1.5 Appointments of Honorary Aldermen must take place at an Extraordinary Council meeting specially convened for the purpose. The meeting can occur on the same date of another Full Council Meeting.

1.6 Two thirds of the members present at the meeting must vote in favour of a resolution for the nominee to be appointed as an Honorary Alderman.

1.7 The recipient will be presented with a scroll confirming the title by the Lord Mayor at a separate ceremony and will be given an opportunity to address the Lord Mayor

1.8 Honorary Aldermen cannot be appointed posthumously.

1.9 The number of active Honorary Aldermen will be capped at 10.

1.10 The Council will only bestow this position to an individual once a year.

2. Rights and Responsibilities of Honorary Alderman

2.1 The title of Honorary Alderman does not confer any special privileges or rights upon the appointee to speak or vote at Council meetings, beyond the rights and privileges already afforded to the public.

2.2 The only rights that are conferred to an Honorary Alderman by virtue of their appointment is to be invited to Civic functions and events. The Council will decide which Civic functions and events it is appropriate to invite the Honorary Alderman to.

2.3 The role of Honorary Alderman is an honorary one, but to the public an Honorary Alderman is perceived to be a representative of the Council. In accepting the honour, all Honorary Aldermen must agree and adhere to the protocol laid down by this Council. There are three key elements:

- a) That the person becoming an Alderman does so in the full knowledge that they are perceived to be a Civic representative of the Council and must not bring the Council into disrepute.
- b) In taking this role, the Alderman agrees to become apolitical in public when using the title of Alderman; knowing that any views expressed may be interpreted as views of the Council.
- c) That the Alderman agrees to attend and support the Lord Mayor at Mayoralty invites.

3. Removal of Title of Honorary Alderman

3.1 There may be occasions where, due to the behaviour of individuals who have been appointed as Honorary Aldermen, the Council may wish to remove the title from an individual in order to protect the reputation of the Council.

3.2 If an Alderman brings the council into disrepute, they will be invited to an informal discussion regarding the matter. If deemed appropriate, they may be asked to step down from their role as Alderman.

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

3.4 Removal of the title of Honorary Alderman must be proposed by notice of motion (Council Procedure Standing Order 6) which must set out the circumstances of how an Alderman has not acted in accordance with 2.3 a) or b).

3.5 Upon receipt of a motion to remove the title of Honorary Alderman, the Head of Service Legal & Democratic Services will notify an affected Alderman and offer the right of reply (either in writing, or in person, pursuant to public speaking rights).

3.6 Should the affected Alderman indicate that they consent to the honour being removed, the motion will be moved, seconded, and put to the vote without debate.

4. Temporary Suspension of Title of Honorary Alderman

4.1 The position of Honorary Alderman is awarded for exceptional service and is a non-political role. As such the Council considers that is inconsistent for an Honorary Alderman to be politically active. In the event of an Honorary Alderman is seeking election to the City Council, or any other Council within the area, he or she shall, cease to hold the position of Honorary Alderman. The role of Alderman will also be suspended if they are politically active in electioneering, including canvassing, acting as an election agent etc.

4.2 If an Honorary Alderman fails to be elected, then the rights and privileges of an Honorary Alderman shall be restored.

4.3 If elected, the rights and privileges of an Honorary Alderman shall remain removed until such time as they cease to be a Councillor, when they will be restored with immediate effect.

FREEDOM OF THE CITY

There are three types:

1. Honorary Freeman (Section 5):

The highest honour, awarded to individuals who have given eminent service to the City. This title cannot be passed down (we currently only bestow these).

2. **Hereditary Freeman:**

Passed down through generations. Requires proof of relation to the last person who held the title. Ceremonies include reading a pledge, presenting a birth certificate, and having a witness testify to their identity.

3. **Military Freedom of the City:**

Bestowed to Military Regiments who are affiliated with the City

5. Honorary Freeman of the City

5.1 Award of Honorary Freeman of the City

5.1.1 In accordance with Section 249 of the Local Government Act 1972, the Council may confer the Honorary Freeman of the City on any person in recognition of their exceptional service to the city, or because they are a person of distinction.

5.1.2 Anyone can propose the award of Honorary Freeman of the City, in writing to the Lord Mayor's Support Officer, who will consult with the Head of Service Legal & Democratic Services and the Leaders of Political Groups (the "Panel"), to establish if there is sufficient consensus in support of bestowing the honour. The nominated person, will then be canvassed to establish their interest and availability. If it is not appropriate the Panel will consider if a Lord Mayor's Commendation is more appropriate

5.1.3 Awarding the Honorary Freeman of the City must take place at an Extraordinary Council meeting specially convened for the purpose. The meeting can occur on the same date of another Full Council Meeting. The nomination will be proposed and seconded.

5.1.4 Two thirds of the members present at the meeting must vote in favour of a resolution for the nominee to be awarded the Honorary Freeman of the City.

5.1.5 The recipient will be presented with a scroll confirming the title by the Lord Mayor at a separate ceremony and will be given an opportunity to address the Lord Mayor for up to 15 minutes.

5.1.6 Honorary Freeman of the City is the highest honour that a Council can grant and in order to preserve its status and value, conferment should be strictly limited to those who have made a very significant contribution to the City, or who is genuinely a person of distinction because of outstanding achievements.

5.1.7 Honorary Freeman of the City cannot be awarded posthumously, nor can it be passed down through generations.

5.1.8 The Council will only bestow this position to an individual once a year.

5.2 Rights and Responsibilities of Honorary Freeman of the City

5.2.1 The award of Honorary Freeman of the City does not confer any special privileges or rights upon the appointee to speak or vote at Council meetings, beyond the rights and privileges already afforded to the public.

5.2.2 The only rights that are conferred to an Honorary Freeman by virtue of their appointment is to be invited to Civic functions and events. The Council will decide which Civic functions and events it is appropriate to invite Honorary to.

5.3. Removal of Honorary Freeman of the City

5.3.1 There may be occasions where, due to the behaviour of recipients of Honorary Freeman of the City, the Council may wish to remove the title in order to protect the reputation of the Council.

5.3.2 Removal of Honorary Freeman of the City will procedurally 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.

5.3.3 Removal of Honorary Freeman of the City must be proposed by notice of motion (Council Procedure Standing Order 6) and must set out how the recipient has behaved in such a way that the reputation of the City has been damaged.

6. Hereditary Freeman

6.1.1 Passed down through generations. Requires proof of relation to the last person who held the title ie birth, marriage and death certificates.

6.1.2 The Lord Mayor's Support Officer, who will consult with the Head of Service Legal & Democratic Services and the Leaders of Political Groups, to establish if there is sufficient evidence in support of bestowing the honour.

6.1.3 The Council will only bestow this position to an individual once a year.

6.2 Rights and Responsibilities of Hereditary Freeman of the City

6.2.1 The award of Hereditary Freeman of the City does not confer any special privileges or rights upon the appointee to speak or vote at Council meetings, beyond the rights and privileges already afforded to the public.

6.2.2 The only rights that are conferred to an Hereditary Freeman by virtue of their appointment is to be invited to Civic functions and events. The Council will decide which Civic functions and events it is appropriate to invite Honorary to.

6.3. Removal of Hereditary Freeman of the City

6.3.1 There may be occasions where, due to the behaviour of recipients of Hereditary Freeman of the City, the Council may wish to remove the title in order to protect the reputation of the Council.

6.3.2 Removal of Hereditary Freeman of the City will procedurally 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.

6.3.3 Removal of Hereditary Freeman of the City must be proposed by notice of motion (Council Procedure Standing Order 6) and must set out how the recipient has behaved in such a way that the reputation of the City has been damaged.

7. Military Freedom of the City

7.1 Award of Freedom of the City

7.1.1 In accordance with Section 249 of the Local Government Act 1972, the Council may grant the Freedom of the City to Military Regiments.

7.1.2 The honour grants the military unit freedom 'to march through the streets of the city with bayonets fixed, drums beating and Colours flying'.

7.1.3 A Regiment can put an interest forward, in writing to the Lord Mayor's Support Officer, who will consult with the Head of Service Legal & Democratic Services and the Leaders of Political Groups, to establish if there is sufficient consensus in support of bestowing the honour.

7.1.4 Awarding Freedom of the City must take place at an Extraordinary Council meeting specially convened for the purpose. The meeting can occur on the same date of another Full Council Meeting.

7.1.5 Two thirds of the members present at the meeting must vote in favour of a resolution for the nominee to be awarded the Freedom of the City.

7.1.6 The recipient will be presented with a scroll confirming the title by the Lord Mayor at a separate ceremony and will be given an opportunity to march through the City.

7.1.8 Freedom of the City is the highest honour that a Council can grant and in order to preserve its status and value, conferment should be strictly limited to those who have an affiliation to the City.

7.1.9 The honour can be passed over when a regiment is reformed ie merging of services to create a new regiment.

7.2 Rights and Responsibilities of Freedom of the City

7.2.1 The award of Freedom of the City does not confer any special privileges or rights upon the appointee to speak or vote at Council meetings, beyond the rights and privileges already afforded to the public.

7.2.3 The honour grants the military unit freedom 'to march through the streets of the city with bayonets fixed, drums beating and Colours flying'. Written request will need to be sent to the Lord Mayor's Support Officer.

7.2.4 The honour grants the availability of the Guildhall once a year for the affiliated Military Regiment to use for a function of their choice ie dinner, meeting etc.

8. Lord Mayor's Commendation Award

8.1 Award of Lord Mayor's Commendation Award

8.1.1 The Lord Mayor has the discretion of awarding individuals/organisations with a Lord Mayor's Commendation Award during their term of office.

8.1.2 Any one can propose an individual/organisation, in writing to the Lord Mayor's Support Officer, who will consult with the Lord Mayor and the leaders of political groups, to establish if there is sufficient consensus in support of bestowing the honour. The nominated person will then be canvassed to establish their interest and availability.

8.1.3 Two thirds of the panel present at the meeting must vote in favour of a resolution for the nominee to be awarded the Lord Mayor's Commendation Award.

8.1.4 The recipient will be presented with a certificate confirming the title by the Lord Mayor at a separate ceremony along with other recipients

8.1.5 Lord Mayor Commendation Award can only be awarded once to an individual or organisation

8.1.6 Capped at 5 nominations a year.

8.1.7 Any nomination of the staff of the City Council that are nominated will need to be approved by the Chief Executive first.

8.2 Rights and Responsibilities of recipients of Lord Mayor's Commendation Award

8.2.1 The award of Lord Mayor's Commendation does not confer any special privileges or rights.