

Protocol on the Appointment of Honorary Aldermen and Alderwomen

Updated Draft – December 2025

1. Purpose and scope

This Protocol sets out the County Council's approach to the appointment of Honorary Alderman and Alderwomen.

2. Legal basis

Under section 249(1) of the Local Government Act 1972, a Council may confer the title of Honorary Alderman or Alderwomen on persons who have rendered eminent services to the Council as past members of the council, but who are not currently members of the council. The resolution must be passed by not less than two-thirds of the members present and voting at a meeting of the Council specially convened for the purpose.

3. Eligibility criteria

To be eligible for consideration, nominees must:

- Be a past Member of Leicestershire County Council.
- Have rendered eminent services to the Council and the local community during their period of office.
- Have left office in good standing (i.e., not disqualified, not subject to outstanding serious conduct findings, and have complied with statutory requirements).
- Not be a serving Member of the Council at the time of consideration.

Nominees who wish to remain politically active or become involved with campaigning in public (in a broad sense) in some other way must ensure that this does not bring them into conflict with the Council.

4. Indicative factors demonstrating “eminent service”

In assessing whether service is “eminent”, the following (non-exhaustive) factors may be considered:

- Length of service (12+ years, or exceptional impact over a shorter period).
- Holding significant civic or leadership roles (for example Leader, Chairman, Cabinet Lead Member, Committee Chairman, Group Leader).

- Outstanding contributions to major projects, policy development, community outcomes, or civic life.
- Exemplary conduct, integrity, and support for democratic processes.
- Recognition from peers, partners, or the community.

5. Nominations

Nominations should be put forward by individual Group Leaders following support from within their own Political Party. This can include nomination of individuals from any Political Party. Discussions should then take place at Group Leader level to confirm which nominations should be put forward for appointment.

6. Decision-making process

Prior to any appointment, the council will give written notice of the nomination to the individual with an opportunity for them to indicate whether they are in agreement with the nomination.

A special meeting of Full Council will be convened, on the same day as an Ordinary Council meeting for the purpose of appointing Honorary Aldermen and Alderwomen, with agenda papers published in accordance with statutory notice requirements. No other business will be conducted at this meeting.

The recommendation, which will be contained in a report from the Chief Legal Officer and Monitoring Officer, requires a resolution passed by not less than two-thirds of Members present and voting at the meeting.

As it is likely that there will be a very limited number of nominations from the political groups, it will usually be appropriate to appoint Honorary Aldermen and Alderwomen every four years, following the County Council elections. An extraordinary meeting will be held immediately prior to the first ordinary meeting of the Council in that year (excluding the Annual Meeting).

However, where agreed by all Group Leaders, additional nominations can be considered at any time during the life of the Council.

7. Rights, privileges and limitations

Honorary Aldermen and Alderwomen may be accorded the following, subject to this Protocol:

- Invitation to such civic ceremonies as the Council may from time to time decide.

- Invitation to attend meetings of the full Council as an observer (with no speaking or voting rights or other participation in business).
- Use of the style “Honorary Alderman or Alderwomen of Leicestershire County Council”.
- Receipt of civic insignia, which may be worn at civic events.

Limitations:

- The title confers no special rights to attend or vote at Council or committee meetings.
- The title must not be used in political campaigning or election materials.
- No allowances or financial remuneration are payable.

8. Conduct expectations and withdrawal of honour

Recipients are expected to uphold the dignity of the office and the reputation of the Council. Where a recipient is convicted of a serious criminal offence, is found to have engaged in conduct gravely incompatible with the honour or otherwise misused the title, or brings the Council into serious disrepute, the Council may withdraw the honour by resolution of Full Council following consideration by the Monitoring Officer.

9. Where an Honorary Alderman or Alderwoman becomes re-elected to the council

If a recipient is subsequently re-elected to the County Council, the title is held in abeyance for the duration of service.

10. Posthumous awards

As a general principle, nominations should be made for living past Members. In exceptional circumstances, the Council may consider a posthumous award where the eminent service and local significance are compelling. A presentation will be made to the next of kin at the special meeting of Council.

11. Local Government Reorganisation and Successor Arrangements

In the event of local government reorganisation where the County Council ceases to exist, merges, or is replaced by a successor authority, legislation provides for Honorary Aldermen and Alderwomen of a dissolved council to become Honorary Aldermen and Alderwomen of its successor council on the reorganisation date (Local Government (Structural Changes) (Transitional Arrangements) (No. 2) Regulations 2008, s.32)

The following provisions will apply:

- Existing Honorary Aldermen and Alderwomen titles remain valid as a historic civic honour conferred by the former County Council.
- The legislation makes clear that where a council becomes wholly or partly included in a new council, services rendered by councillors shall be treated as services rendered to the new council for the purposes of consideration of honorary titles.
- The successor authority should maintain a consolidated Civic Roll, incorporating Honorary Aldermen and Alderwomen of all predecessor councils.
- Ceremonial invitations and recognition for former Honorary Aldermen and Alderwomen will be at the discretion of the successor authority, subject to its own civic protocols.
- Records of admissions, citations, and associated documentation must be transferred to the successor authority's archives in accordance with statutory records management requirements.
- Where multiple councils merge, the successor authority may adopt a harmonised protocol for future admissions, ensuring fairness and continuity.
- The title does not confer any rights in the successor authority's governance arrangements beyond those expressly provided in its civic protocol.

12. Review and amendment

The Chief Legal Officer and Monitoring Officer and the Head of Democratic Services will keep this protocol under review and consult on any proposed changes with Group Leaders and the Constitution Committee before seeking Full Council approval.