

**LONDON BOROUGH OF BRENT**  
**SPECIAL MEETING OF FULL COUNCIL**  
**26<sup>th</sup> January 2004**

**FROM THE BOROUGH SOLICITOR**

**REPORT TITLE: Honorary Alderman of the Borough**

**1. Summary**

- 1.1 This report sets out the powers the Council has for conferring the title of honorary alderman on appropriate persons and proposes that the Council exercise these powers by conferring such a title on former Councillor Eric McDonald. It also suggests a procedure for doing this by the arrangement of a separate award ceremony hosted by the Mayor.

**2. Recommendations**

- 2.1 That Council confers the title of Honorary Alderman on Mr Eric McDonald in appreciation of the eminent services he has rendered to the Council during his 40 years as a councillor for the Queensbury Ward of both Wembley and Brent Councils.
- 2.2 Subject to 2.1, that Council authorise the Mayor, in consultation with the Chief Executive, to arrange and host a separate ceremony where a sealed copy of the foregoing resolution and a suitable gift will be presented to Mr McDonald

**3. Financial Implications**

- 3.1 The costs associated with the holding of a ceremony and presentation of an award will be met from existing budgets.

**4. Legal Implications**

- 4.1 Under Section 249 of the Local Government Act 1972 the Council of a London Borough ( amongst other types of authorities) may "by a resolution passed by not less than two thirds of the Members voting thereon at a meeting of the Council specially convened for the purpose with notice of the object, confer the title of honorary alderman 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 Councillors of the Council".
- 4.2 The Act also provides for the Council to expend such reasonable sum as it thinks fit for the purpose of presenting an address or a casket containing an address to a person upon whom it has conferred the title of honorary alderman.

## 5.0 **Detail**

- 5.1 The Leader of the Opposition, Councillor Blackman, on behalf of his Group has requested that in view of the long and distinguished service to both Wembley and Brent Councils by former councillor Mr Eric McDonald, that he be conferred the title of Honorary Alderman. The Council has not previously invoked these powers to confer such a title on any persons in the Borough and neither has it agreed criteria by which such awards will be made. However it is considered that the time Mr Eric McDonald served as a councillor beginning as a councillor for Wembley in 1960 and only standing down from Brent Council in 2002 as a result of an unfortunate accident, demonstrates exceptional service and merits such an award. This is a view shared by the Leader of the Council and her colleagues.

Members will be interested to note that the Local Government Act 1972 makes provision for circumstances where former members of the council who are conferred the title, return as serving members of that council. An honorary alderman is not entitled, whilst serving as a councillor, to be addressed as alderman or to attend or take part in any civic ceremonies of the council as an alderman. Otherwise, an honorary alderman may attend and take part in such civic ceremonies as the council may from time to time decide but shall not, as such, have the right:-

- (a) to attend meetings of the council or a committee of the council;
- (b) to receive any such allowance or other payments as are payable under a members allowance scheme.

- 5.3 It is proposed that once the Council has passed the necessary resolution, a modest ceremony hosted by the Mayor be held to honour Mr Eric McDonald at which a suitable scroll recording his eminent services to the Councils of Wembley and Brent, together with a suitable gift marking the occasion will be presented to him.
- 5.4 Although the Local Government Act makes reference to the presentation of an address contained within a casket enquiries are being made as to a more suitable form of gift to be presented along with the address.

## **Background Information**

Local Government Act 1972 (Section 249)

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