



Monday, 27 October 2025

Cabinet
4 November 2025

Please find enclosed the reports for the item 5.5 and 12 on the main agenda.

5.5 Freemen and Aldermen Ceremony (Pages 3 - 8)

To consider holding a Freemen and Aldermen ceremony in 2025/26 and providing the necessary budget for the associated costs.

12. Opportunity to Purchase a Property for Housing Conversion (Pages 9 - 12)
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Report of the Portfolio Holder for Resources and Personnel Policy

Freemen and Aldermen Ceremony

1. Purpose of Report

To consider holding a Freemen and Aldermen ceremony in 2025/26 and providing the necessary budget for the associated costs.

2. Recommendation

Cabinet is asked to:

- 1. RESOLVE that the official admittance to the office of Honorary Freeman/Alderman of the Borough will take place at a special meeting of the Council to be held on 28 January 2026.**
- 2. CONSIDER the associated cost options and RESOLVE accordingly.**

3. Detail

It is proposed that a Freemen and Aldermen of the Borough ceremony take place on 28 January 2026, to allow time for appropriate preparations to take place.

As in the previous ceremony in January 2024, the Council makes use of the relevant legislation to include the titles of both Freeman/Alderman and Freewomen/Alderwoman for those who wish to use them.

Appendix 1 shows the estimated costs while **Appendix 2** provides the proposed timeline.

4. Financial Implications

The comments from the Interim Deputy Chief Executive and Section 151 Officer were as follows:

The estimated cost of the Freemen and Aldermen ceremony under option 1 is £5,650, which could be met from the existing Ceremonial Events budget.

The estimated cost of providing the ceremony under option 2 is £17,650. Whilst the first £5,650 could be covered from existing budgets, an additional £12,000 of funding would be required for which there is currently no budgetary provision. If Members were to support option 2, a supplementary revenue development of £12,000 would have to be funded from the General Fund Revenue Contingency budget of which £38,000 remains available in 2025/26.

5. Legal Implications

The comments from the Head of Legal Services were as follows:

The relevant legislation for the admission of honorary freemen or honorary freewomen is contained in the Local Government Act 1972 which was amended by the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009 to include 'honorary freewomen' into the scope of the legislation where previously it was only freemen. Human Resources Implications

6. Union Comments

Not applicable.

7. Climate Change Implications

Not applicable.

8. Data Protection Compliance Implications

This report does not contain any OFFICIAL(SENSITIVE) information and there are no Data Protection issues in relation to this report.

9. Equality Impact Assessment

Not applicable.

10. Background Papers

Nil.

Appendix 1

Estimated costs

Costs are shown for the admittance of four new Freemen or Aldermen.

Option 1 – Event to take place within the Council Offices

Since the last ceremony, refurbishment work has been completed on the Council reception area to make it a multi-use space suitable for civic hospitality outside of business hours.

It is therefore feasible for the event to take place within the Council Chamber, providing that there were no more than four new Freemen or Aldermen to be admitted in order to meet the safe capacity limits of the space.

These event costs could be met from within existing Civic budgets.

Item	Estimated costs
Four Silver Badges of Office	£2,000
Print and photography	£300
Certificates and scrolls	£250
Honours Board updates	£600
Hospitality	£2,500
Venue	Nil
Live streaming	Nil
Total	£5,650

Option 2 – Event to take place at an external venue

This option would utilise an external venue, which has been used for events previously.

An additional budget of £12,000 would be required to support the event, with the balance being met from within existing budgets.

It is possible, due to the short timescales, that the venue may not be available at the required time, in which case an alternative venue would be sought, which may incur additional costs.

Item	Estimated costs
Four Silver Badges of Office	£2,000
Print and photography	£300
Certificates and scrolls	£250
Honours Board updates	£600
Hospitality	£2,500
Venue	£9,000
Live streaming	£3,000
Total	£17,650

Appendix 2

Timeline

6 November 2025	Nominations process opens Venue confirmed
28 November 2025	Nominations process closes
Week commencing 1 December 2025	Cross-party meeting to discuss and determine who will be selected.
Week commencing 8 December 2025 to 19 December 2025	Preparations (invitations and acceptances of the honour, interviewing for profiles, printing honour boards, event logistics etc.)
Week commencing 5 January 2026	Photography and preparation of event booklet
28 January 2026	Freeman and Alderman event

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