

**WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL**  
**COUNCIL – WEDNESDAY 7 SEPTEMBER 2016**  
**NOMINATIONS TO ATTEND ROYAL GARDEN PARTIES**  
**REPORT OF THE HEAD OF DEMOCRATIC SERVICES**

**(Contact: Paul Cracknell, Tel: (01993) 861523)**

**I. PURPOSE**

At the request of the Chairman of the Council, to consider future arrangements for nominations to attend Royal Garden Parties.

**2. RECOMMENDATION**

That the Council considers the proposed arrangements as set out below.

**3. BACKGROUND**

- 3.1. Each year the Council receives an invitation through the Local Government Association to submit nominations for four guests to attend one of Her Majesty's Garden Parties.
- 3.2. The invitation specifies, inter alia, that nominees must not have previously attended a Garden Party and emphasises that 'invitations are in recognition of **past service for Members and Local Authority Staff** and it is therefore appropriate that outgoing members / staff, rather than those newly elected / appointed should be invited to attend'.
- 3.3. Traditionally, the Council's practice has been to seek expressions of interest and hold a draw for the places, two Members and their partners being selected to attend. In January, 2015, it was agreed that the Chairman of the Council and their partner be invited to attend on one occasion during his or her term of office, the remaining attendee being selected through a draw.
- 3.4. The Chairman of the Council has expressed concern that the Council's current arrangements do not adequately reflect the desire that places should be allocated in recognition of past service and, in order to make the system operate in the manner intended by the Palace has suggested that the following process be adopted:
  - (a) On receipt of notification from the Palace, Members will be invited to register their interest in attending by completing a ballot form.
  - (b) When the nomination list is closed, providing that they have not previously attended a Garden Party as a representative of the Authority, the applicant with the longest service with the Council will automatically receive one of the invitations.
  - (c) A ballot will be drawn for the remaining place in the traditional manner.
  - (d) As previously determined by the Council, the Chairman will attend on one occasion during his/her term of office. When the Chairman exercises their right to attend, the senior applicant will take a place and there will be no draw that year.
- 3.5. The Chairman has also suggested that, there could be some infrequent occasions when it may be appropriate for a member of staff to attend a Royal Garden Party in recognition of long service or some other notable event. The Head of Paid Service may make the name of any suitable individual known to the Chairman, who, in consultation with the

Leader of the Council, will determine if it is appropriate to offer a place to the member of staff suggested. If a place be offered, it would be the place reserved for ballot.

3.6. Members are invited to consider the proposed arrangements as detailed above.

#### **4. ALTERNATIVES/OPTIONS**

The Council may choose to adopt the proposed arrangements, retain the current system or approve some alternative method of selection.

#### **5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no financial implications arising from this report.

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Head of Democratic Services

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Background Papers:  
None