



ANDOVER TOWN COUNCIL CIVIC PROTOCOL

ADOPTED BY COUNCIL – June 2017

INTRODUCTION

This Civic Protocol is designed to assist the Town Mayor and Deputy Town Mayor to understand their roles and responsibilities and provide some useful information, which may be of assistance when undertaking civic duties.

The Protocol at Appendix A is designed to ensure a consistent approach when dealing with issues connected to the Civic Function. The object of the information is to try and ensure that the Mayor's civic year runs as smoothly as possible.

Not everything will be covered by this protocol and assistance is available from the Council Offices and the Monitoring Officer.

BACKGROUND

TOWN MAYOR

Section 245 (6) of the Local Government Act 1972 gives Parish Councils the power by resolution to allow themselves the title of Town Council and the Chairman of a Town Council is entitled to the style of 'Town Mayor'.

A Town Mayor has the same rights and duties as a Parish Chairman. The office and leadership role of Town Mayor must be respected by all members of the Council at all times.

THE COUNCILLOR BECOMING MAYOR

The Mayor, by virtue of the Office, can and should seek to use his/her influence and standing in the role to stimulate community pride, encourage business and promote the voluntary sector. The Mayor is also likely to have many meetings with various other dignitaries, other engagements and will be in the public eye for virtually the whole year.

The Mayor is formally elected by the Council at the Annual Council Meeting held in May. A Deputy Mayor is also elected at this meeting. The new Mayor is required to make the following declaration when accepting the Term of Office at the Annual Meeting:

"Ihaving been elected to the Office of Mayor of the Town of Andover, hereby declare that I take the said Office upon myself and will duly and faithfully fulfil the duties thereof according to the best of my knowledge and ability.

I undertake to observe the Code as to the Conduct which is expected of Members of Andover Town Council".

The Declaration of Office is signed by both the new Mayor and the Town Clerk of the Council. The new Deputy Mayor makes a similar declaration.

The Mayors Term of Office is for one Civic Year and during this time the Mayor continues to be a member of the Council and presides over the meeting of the Full Council. In the event

of more than one nomination being put forward, the meeting shall select the successful candidate in accordance with the Town Council's Standing Orders.

ROLE OF THE MAYOR

Duties which the Mayor may carry out include:

1. Organising Events to raise funds for the Mayor's chosen charities
2. Acting as host on behalf of the Town Council at functions organised by the Town Council
3. Attending functions within Andover, or on occasions outside the Town as a ceremonial representative of the Council
4. Undertaking official openings or presentations within Andover on behalf of the Town Council
5. Representing the Town Council during royal visits to the town.

The Town Mayor will choose their own consort who can be either a partner, fellow Councillor, or a family member or friend. If the consort is female, she may be referred to as Town Mayoress.

The Town Mayor also has a number of statutory functions as set out below:

- a. The Town Mayor, when present, must preside over meetings of the Full Council and the Annual Town Meeting.
- b. The Town Mayor has a casting vote in the event of an equality of votes
- c. The Town Mayor should ensure, together with the Town Clerk, that the Town Council makes legal decisions.
- d. The Town Mayor has a duty to ensure the agenda is followed correctly and that Standing Orders are properly applied.

SUPPORT FOR THE TOWN MAYOR

Day to day support for the Town Mayor will be provided by the Town Council's office staff.

The Town Clerk will arrange with the Town Mayor plan his/her Civic Year. This will involve making plans for any events that the Town Mayor wishes to hold throughout the year. Once agreed the dates will be circulated to minimise clashes with any other events.

The Town Clerk will receive invitations for the Mayor and liaises with the Town Mayor before accepting/declining invitations.

The Town Clerk/Town Council Officers, are responsible where necessary for arranging transport to events. The Town Mayor (or the Deputy Town Mayor if deputising for the Mayor) will normally use their own transport to attend Civic functions within Andover. Depending on the circumstances, alternative means of transport may be considered for engagements out of the Town.

If the Town Mayor is unsure of anything or requires some guidance, then this should be raised with the Town Clerk, who will provide the necessary information.

MAYOR'S CHARITIES

The Town Mayor's Charity raises funds for one or more local charities or good causes. It is advisable to choose organisations to be supported, at an early stage. The Town Mayor may decide to support as many organisations as they wish.

It is preferable to announce the chosen charity as part of the incoming Town Mayor's speech.

Support will be given by the Town Clerk. However, it is helpful if a separate support mechanism is set up amongst colleagues.

The chosen organisation(s) will be notified and all funds raised at the events to be held by the Town Mayor will be donated to the chosen organisation(s) at the end of the Civic Year.

Funds raised for the Town Mayor's charities cannot be used for any other purpose other than as a donation to the charity identified when the funds were raised, save to cover for all reasonable costs to raise the funds.

Charity events vary with individual Town Mayors and may include a Charity Dinner/Ball etc. Other events may be organised by local organisations, clubs or institutions, with proceeds given to the Town Mayor's charity. Any events the Mayor wishes to organise should be organised with the Town Council Officers.

DONATIONS

To enable the Mayor to raise funds for local charities, the Council may rely on local businesses donating prizes to be used in raffles and tombola's. Although some businesses may support the Town Mayor's charity, there may be some who will not donate prizes. The Town Mayor may feel it necessary to visit local businesses around the Town to request prizes as a more personal approach can encourage businesses to support the chosen charities. It is considered good practice to disclose publically the donations received.

CHEQUE PRESENTATION

Town Council Officers will co-ordinate a cheque presentation at the end of the Civic Year with associated publicity. The Town Mayor will announce the total amount raised for their charity at the Annual Council Meeting.

TOWN MAYOR'S ALLOWANCE

The Town Mayor may be given an allowance to meet the expenses of the office (LGA 1972, ss 15(5) and 34(5)). The Local Government Act does not stipulate the type or category of expenditure for which the Town Mayor may use the Civic Allowance. However, it is commonly described as recompense for the expenses of maintaining the dignity of the office. Furthermore, general items include:

- a. Clothing
- b. Consorts clothing
- c. Donations to charities
- d. Collections
- e. Personal hospitality (including lunch and dinners)
- f. One-off events held by the Town Mayor

It should be noted that the purchase of the above items would not necessarily qualify towards the allowance for tax-deductive purposes; it merely suggests that the items relate to maintaining the dignity of the office.

The Town Council's budget should contain provision for certain civic events including (Remembrance Sunday) receiving Civic visitors. It is important for the Mayor to plan the use of the allowance over the year.

Once the budget level has been reached, no payments can be made or further orders placed by the Council Officers.

SUPPORT BY DEPUTY MAYOR

The Deputy Mayor will support the Town Mayor throughout the year by representing the Town Council when the Town Mayor is unavailable or has another engagement.

If the Town Mayor is not present at a Full Council meeting, the Deputy Mayor shall preside.

In effect, the Deputy Mayor has no standing as Deputy Mayor when the Town Mayor is present but assumes the precedence and standing of the Town Mayor when they are deputising for the Town Mayor rather than acting as Deputy. Notwithstanding the presence of the Town Mayor, the Deputy Mayor is permitted to wear insignia at Council meetings and Civic events within the Town.

Invitations to the Deputy Mayor should be dealt with as follows:

- a. Invitations to functions should not be sent to (or solicited by) the Deputy Mayor. The Deputy Mayor should not normally attend functions in their own right, except when deputising for the Mayor.
- b. All invitations should be sent for consideration by the Town Mayor as First Citizen and, if the Town Mayor cannot attend, it may be appropriate to 'pass down' an invitation firstly to the Deputy Mayor, then previous Mayor and then another Councillor chosen by the Town Mayor.

- c. On the rare occasion when the Deputy Mayor is invited to a function in their own right, there should be a clear procedure whereby the invitation is shown formally by the Town Clerk to the Town Mayor, in order that there is no misunderstanding.

INVITATIONS TO COUNCILLORS

Invitations to Councillors other than the Town Mayor or Deputy Town Mayor to represent the Town Council should be dealt with in the same way as invitations to the Deputy Mayor.

CIVIC INSIGNIA

The Mayors chain is the outward sign of the civic office held, i.e. its insignia.

The Town Mayor should wear the Chain at ceremonial occasions, such as Remembrance Sunday, Royal visits etc. and when chairing the Town Council meetings.

The Town Mayor may also wear the Chain, when officially invited as Town Mayor, to external functions (the Town Council officers will liaise with external officers on protocol for this).

The Town Mayor should not wear the civic insignia in any other area without the express permission from the Council for that area. Civic chains should never be worn with a military uniform. However, a Town Mayor who is a member of the clergy may wear full canonicals with the Chain over the gown. Similarly, the Chain may be worn over academic dress.

PRECEDENCE AND PROTOCOL

A formal distinction has to be made between the style of address of a Borough Mayor and that of a Town Mayor. It is suggested that, at least in the presence of the Borough Mayor, Town Mayor's should be addressed as 'Mr/Madam Town Mayor'.

A female Mayor should still be termed as Mayor, not a Mayoress.

Precedence and protocol for visits and events is often set by custom and practice, with the exception of Royal Visits.

The Town Clerk will be able to offer further advice and assistance with these matters.

RECEIPT OF GIFTS

In the course of the duty of being Town Mayor, often gifts will be offered to the Town Mayor. It is suggested that all members should treat with extreme caution any offer of a gift, favour or hospitality that is made to them personally.

As is the case with Town Councillors in general, the Town Mayor and Deputy Town Mayor remain subject to the Code of Conduct for Members which is in force at the time.

The Code of Conduct requires Members, including Town Mayors, to register any gifts or hospitality worth £25 or over that are received in connection with their official duties as a Members, and the source of the gift or hospitality. You must register the gift or hospitality and its source within 28 days of receiving it.

Be aware that this will be a non-pecuniary interest and if a matter under consideration is likely to affect a person who gave you the gift or hospitality it must be declared.

If in doubt consult the Town Clerk.

THE CIVIC YEAR

Below is a list of typical events which can be organised during the Town Mayor's Year in Office. These dates should be discussed and arranged during a meeting with the Town Mayor and the Town Clerk at the beginning of each new Civic Year to suit the Town Mayors diary.

CIVIC SERVICE

The Civic Service is held at one of the Town's places of worship. Consultation for the date of the Service can be carried out by a meeting with the minister or leader of the place of worship.

The Civic Service can be held in the early part of the Civic Year but care should be taken to avoid clashes with similar events organised by neighbouring authorities.

Civic dignitaries from the Town Council designated list together with colleagues, friends and family are invited and partake or refreshments at the conclusion of the service.

ANNUAL TOWN ELECTORS MEETING

This is not the Annual Meeting of the Town Council. It is a legal requirement that all Parishes in England hold an 'Annual Parish Meeting' to which all electors are entitled to attend. It must be held between 1st March and 1st June each year, and must start no earlier than 6pm. The Town Council usually holds this in March.

REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY (Currently organised by TVBC)

Remembrance Sunday is held on the Sunday nearest to the Anniversary of Armistice Day which is on November 11th. The Town Mayor lays a wreath at the War Memorial in St Mary's Church Yard.

MAYORS CHARITY EVENT

The Charity Event will be the highlight of the Town Mayor's year. Invitees will include Civic Dignitaries from the Borough Council and neighbouring Town and Parish Councils, Town Councillors and representatives of local organisations and local people.

The date of the event will be at the discretion of the Town Mayor but every effort will be made to avoid any clash with a similar event organised by a neighbouring authority.

MISCELLANEOUS EVENTS WITHIN THE TOWN

Various miscellaneous events are attended by the Town Mayor, examples of which could be:

- a. Presenting awards and prizes to individuals and organisations
- b. Entertaining guests and visitors at the Town Council offices
- c. Presentations at local schools
- d. Christmas Lights Switch-on
- e. Attending and meeting Royal Visitors to the Town

MISCELLANEOUS EVENTS OUTSIDE THE TOWN

The Town Mayor can be invited to a number of events outside the town which can include:

- a. Civic services
- b. Civic Carol Services
- c. Civic dinners
- d. Charity Evenings

MAYOR'S END OF YEAR

The outgoing Town Mayor should consider a number of matters:

- a. Thanks to support employees is always appreciated
- b. Thanks to the Town Mayor's personal supporters – partner, family, friends etc.
- c. Thanks to the Deputy Mayor for support and assistance
- d. Thanks to the Town Mayors charity supporters, those Councillors who have helped – and anyone else.
- e. Talking to the successor, when announced, giving advice and information.

The agenda for the Annual Town Electors Meeting will be formatted to allow the outgoing Mayor to offer thanks.