

# SALTASH TOWN COUNCIL CIVIC HANDBOOK

RESPONSIBLE COMMITTEE: P&F

The Civic and Constitutional Role of the Mayor.

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## **Introduction**

If you are reading this as the newly elected Mayor of Saltash – Congratulations on your election!

This handbook has been produced to assist both the incumbent Mayor and Councillors considering standing for office by providing information on the two distinct aspects to the role - the ceremonial duties and that of the Chairman of Saltash Town Council.

The handbook is divided into three sections:

The Mayoral Candidate – giving information that the potential candidate may wish to consider before standing for election to the office.

The Office of Mayor – the Civic role explained.

The Chairman of the Council – the legal role and responsibilities.

## **The Mayoral Candidate**

If you are considering putting yourself forward as a candidate for the position of Mayor, you will need to consider how different the role of Mayor is to that of a Town Councillor.

It has different rules, working hours and restraints and can be physically and mentally demanding. This must be considered in advance of accepting the office particularly in respect of employment and family life. It is however reported to be an enjoyable and rewarding experience by those who have undertaken the role.

## **What should you consider?**

You need to remember that there are two different facets to the role of Mayor – the Civic role where you are the face of the Town Council in the community and that of the Chairman of the Town Council - both of which can require a lot of your time.

Paul Millward, former Chairman of the National Association of Civic Officers and recently appointed President of the Association, gives a comprehensive list of considerations for Members considering standing for Mayor in 'Civic Ceremonial, A Handbook, History and Guide for Mayors, Councillors and Officers' (Millward, 2007). Copyright prevents duplication of the full text here but the book is available to read in the Guildhall on request and any Town Councillor considering standing for the office is encouraged to read chapter three.

The list of considerations is as follows:

- The effect of becoming Mayor on their family and friends.
- The effect on a career or job.
- The effect on a political career.
- The effect on personal and religious beliefs.
- The pomp, circumstance and protocol.
- The effect on non-Town Council interests.
- The effect on the Mayoral partner.
- The effect on a Mayor's relationships with other councillors.

- The effect on the Mayor's relationship with their constituents.
- The effect on the prospective Mayor themselves.

In addition, it is advised to speak to former Mayors about their experiences and the wider effect of the role on their lives although you should remember that everyone is different!

### **What skills do you need?**

A presentation made to the National Association of Civic Officers suggested the following key skills to be an effective Mayor:

- Leadership
- Chairing<sup>1</sup>
- Organisational skills
- Team working and relationship building
- Communication
- Knowledge

You may find this a daunting list or you might think 'I've already got these skills' but remember there are opportunities to undertake training.

The role of the Chairman will require you to become much more involved in the work of the Town Council than you might have previously been. The Town Clerk is the Proper Officer of the Town Council and will be able to talk to you about the role.

In addition, once you have made the decision to stand for election, you can prepare for the role as follows:

- Check and practice your skills
- Talk to your Officers
- Talk to the current and previous Mayors

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<sup>1</sup> You may find the Councillor workbook on Chairing Skills produced by the Local Government Association useful

- Read the handbook
- Check your wardrobe
- Attend events that the current Mayor is attending
- Start distancing yourself from controversial matters

### **The Election process**

The election of the Mayor and Deputy for the following year will take place in March (except in an election year) with a call for nominations. This process follows the procedure laid out in the Policy for the Election of the Mayor and Deputy. Please refer to the website for the most up to date version.

## **The Office of Mayor**

### **The History of the Mayor of Saltash**

Circa 1225 Reginald de Valletort, Lord of Trematon Castle and Trematon Manor, granted a Charter (not dated) to the burgesses of Essa, as Saltash borough was then called. He confirmed all the privileges which they had received from his ancestors. The charter contained a clause stating that the burgesses would be able to elect a reeve themselves. A reeve was a borough administrator.

Two centuries later the term “Mayor of Saltash” began to appear in some documents; gradually it became the standard title. It was made official in the charter granted to Saltash borough by Queen Elizabeth I in 1585.

The Town of Saltash is twinned with Plougastel in Brittany.

For more information on the history of the town please visit Saltash Heritage.

### **The Civic Head of the Town**

The Mayor is the First Citizen of the Town and will be in the public eye for the whole of their term. The central role is as representative for the Town Council, the community and local democracy.

The Office of Mayor can be used to:

- Promote the Town Council’s aims and objectives
- Promote the Town and economic investment
- Champion causes raising their profile
- Raise awareness of local democracy
- Celebrate success
- Be the face of the Town in times of sadness
- Welcome visitors on behalf of the Town.

**Please note:** A female Mayor is not a Mayoress which is a title that may apply to a Mayor’s nominated female partner.

## **The Deputy Mayor**

Duties and responsibilities:

1. The Deputy Mayor deputises for the Mayor when they are unable to fulfil the duties of the post, at the request of the Mayor.
2. Support the Mayor at annual Civic events or other events hosted by the Town Council, at the request of the Mayor.
3. Carry out duties of the post fairly and without discrimination, and in accordance with the aims and objectives of the Town Council.

## **The Consort**

The role of the Consort, whilst not recognised by law, is accorded precedence alongside the Mayor. Whilst it is not obligatory to appoint a Consort they can provide assistance as follows:

- Personal support to the Mayor
- Accompany the Mayor on engagements
- Observance of Civic protocol
- Support with Mayor's charities and events

The Consort will not normally attend engagements without the Mayor.

When carrying out their roles, the Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Consorts should at all times consider the public nature of their office. Behaviour and manner will need to be appropriate at all times and not bring the Town Council into disrepute. They should follow the advice and guidance issued by the Mayor's office at all times and should not:

- Attend any function or otherwise give support to any organisation or person whose objectives are contrary to law and/or Town Council policy;
- Solicit engagements or visits or otherwise procure favours by virtue of office.

**A note on precedence**

The Town Council has a protocol in place for order of precedence at Civic Events<sup>2</sup> in the town. Where a member of the Royal Family visits the Lord Lieutenant will advise on the required protocols and precedence. Guidance can also be found in the NALC Legal Topic Note 10<sup>3</sup>.

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<sup>2</sup> Appendix 1

<sup>3</sup> Appendix 2

## Initial actions on election as Chairman of the Town Council (Mayor)

Appoint a Consort (if desired)	Chairman of the Town Council (Mayor) to appoint and advise the Mayor's Secretary.
Appoint a Chaplain (if desired)	The Chairman of the Town Council (Mayor) should personally approach the Chaplain and, once the position has been accepted, advise the Mayor's Secretary of the name and contact details for the Chaplain.
Appoint a Mayor's Cadet (if desired)	If you have a personal connection with a youth organisation, you may wish to select a Cadet. Alternatively, a request for nominations can be issued. This should be discussed with the Mayor's Secretary.
Choose a town based charity/organisation/group to support during the year.	If you wish to support a local charity/organisation/group please make the details known to the Mayor's Secretary.
Make an appointment with the Mayor's Secretary	<p>This first appointment should be used to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide biographic notes for inclusion on the Mayoral information page of the website. <a href="http://www.saltash.gov.uk/mayoral.php">www.saltash.gov.uk/mayoral.php</a></li> <li>• Notify the Mayors Secretary of any dates where you will be unavailable during your term of office.</li> <li>• Advise of any special requirements that you might need to be communicated to organisers</li> </ul>

	<p>of events (please note that any details provided will be protected by Data Protection/ UK GDPR).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide proposed dates and plans for Civic events such as – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Mayor Making</li> <li>- Remembrance</li> <li>- Civic Service</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Provide details of any additional events you plan to hold during your term to ensure sufficient time for obtaining permissions and approvals <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>e.g. Beating of the Bounds</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Advise if during the term as Mayor you wish to undertake Christmas visits to care homes and send e-Christmas cards.</li> </ul>
Purchase a supply of thank you cards!	A handwritten note from the Mayor after an event will be appreciated by organisations.

### **The role of the Mayor's Secretary**

The Mayor's Secretary is the Officer of the Town Council who will support the Mayor in their Civic role. This forms only part of their role as a full-time member of the administration team.

The Mayor's Secretary will:

- Receive invitations for the Mayor and reply after consultation with the Mayor
- Maintain the Civic Diary
- Maintain the Mayor's Page on the STC website
- Receive and respond to Mayor's correspondence where appropriate
- Organise Civic and Community events (e.g. Civic Service, Remembrance Service) and attend as directed by The Office Manager / Assistant to the Town Clerk
- Produce the monthly Chairman's Report

### **Carrying out the role**

A word on home security – you will be out and about and away from home for much of the Mayoral year. Whilst engagements are not published in advance by the office you may wish to review your home security arrangements.

### **Engagements**

Every invitation for the Mayor to attend an event must be routed through the Mayor's Secretary. If the Mayor is contacted directly the correspondent should be asked to resubmit their invitation through the official channels. This allows the Mayor's Secretary to run an accurate and efficient diary and is also a requirement for insurance purposes.

The Chain will only be covered at Town Council events or where the Mayor is representing the Town Council. If the Town Council is unaware that the Mayor had the chains while on official business, it would be difficult to prove they were insured, and as a result, the chains would not be covered.

The Mayor will be expected to attend the majority of engagements with the Deputy only being involved where there is a double booking or during the Mayor's holiday, unforeseen illness etc.

Once an invitation has been accepted it should not be cancelled, except in an emergency, and it is not acceptable to 'change your mind' if a later invitation is received that is more appealing. Events and engagements within the town will always take precedence over events outside the town boundary.

The Mayor should not attend commercial functions where their name may be used for advertising purposes except where it is of clear benefit to the town.

The Mayor should attend punctually (but not too early), being ready to take their place at the appointed time whilst allowing time for robing if necessary.

After an engagement the Mayor may wish to send a handwritten note of thanks to the hosts.

The Mayor's Secretary writes the Chairmans Monthly report to the Town Council which includes details of all engagements attended the previous month. This information is then displayed on the Mayoral page of the Town Council website.

### **Speeches**

Please note that the Mayor is responsible for writing their own speeches.

### **Town Messenger**

The Mayor is responsible for writing a monthly column for the Town Messenger.<sup>4</sup>

### **Mayor's Charity**

If you choose to support a local charity during your year in office, it is your responsibility to lead in any fundraising initiative(s).

The Mayor's Secretary is in place to support the smooth running of Civic Events but not charity events. When looking at these events the Mayor should give thought as to how they can be organised without assuming that Officers will be able to staff and organise them.

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<sup>4</sup> Communications Policy

Where money is collected at a fundraising charity event run by the Mayor the following procedure should be followed:

- Any money collected should be deposited in a sealed collection tin during the event and brought into the Guildhall for opening.
- The Finance Assistant will open the collection tin, count the money, following the Town Council's financial processes and deposit it into the Mayor's Charity Bank Account.
- Once the total amount raised is confirmed the Mayor's Secretary will notify the Mayor who can publicise this if they wish.

### **Chains, Badges and Robes**

Chains and badges – safe custody guidelines:

The Town Council has agreed the following guidelines for the safekeeping of the Civic Regalia. You should read these carefully and adhere to them. Please contact the office if you have any queries.

Responsibilities:

1. The Town Council will:
  - 1.1. Maintain insurance cover for all Civic regalia under the Town Council insurance policy;
  - 1.2. Be responsible for the maintenance of the regalia including any damage or wear and tear etc.
2. The Mayor and Deputy:
  - 2.1. Ensure the specific conditions of the Town Council insurance are followed (you will be briefed by the Town Clerk following your election).
  - 2.2. As far as is practical follow the other guidelines for the safe custody of the regalia.
  - 2.3. Do not attempt to clean or repair any part of the regalia. Reporting any damage immediately to the Town Clerk.
  - 2.4. Take reasonable precautions to minimise the loss or injury of any Town Council regalia, considering every situation carefully.

For example:

If travelling to an event (especially if alone) is it safe to wear whilst driving or walking to the venue?

However, if parking at the event, it would be expected for the Mayor to be wearing the Chain on entry, therefore wearing it travelling from the car to the event would be reasonable.

Store the Chain in the case provided when not being worn.

Follow guidance provided on the safe custody of all parts of the regalia.

### **Guidance on wearing the Civic Regalia**

Note: Civic chains are not worn with military uniform but may be worn over academic dress or full canonicals by a member of the clergy.

A buttonhole (the exception being a poppy) is not normally worn with the Mayoral Chain.

The section on Pre-Election Period also applies to wearing of Civic Regalia.

<b>Item</b>	<b>Guidance on wearing/use of item</b>
<b>Mayoral Chain</b>	<p>When undertaking official duties as Mayor and/or private places/engagements: with suitable precautions adhered to including reserved parking space where possible and the agreement of the Town Clerk.</p> <p>In other parish/town: only with written permission of the Mayor's office of that parish/town which the Mayor's Secretary will obtain behalf of the Mayor.</p>
<b>Consort's Chain and Medallion</b>	<p>The Consort will only wear the chain and medallion when accompanying the Mayor wearing the chain. (Same guidance applies.)</p>
<b>Deputy Mayors Chain and Pendant</b>	<p>The Deputy Mayor does not wear the chain and pendant at Town Council meetings except in the absence of the Mayor when they will be required to take the Chair.</p> <p>The Deputy Mayor may wear the chain and pendant in the presence of the Mayor when attending Civic, Ceremonial and official functions.</p>
<b>Deputy Consort's Pendant</b>	<p>May be worn when accompanying the Deputy Mayor.</p>

<b>Mayoral Robes</b>	<p>May be worn when attending a Civic Event.</p> <p>Robes comprise of:</p> <p>Bicorn with gold flash (Tricorn for female Mayors)</p> <p>Red robe trimmed with fur</p> <p>White gloves</p> <p>Lace Jabot</p> <p>(plus, Chain of office)</p> <p>At the discretion of the Mayor the accompanying Town Sergeant, Mace Bearer and Town Clerk will also be in Civic dress.</p>
<b>Deputy Mayor Robes</b>	<p>May be worn when attending a Civic Event.</p> <p>Robes comprise of:</p> <p>Bicorn with silver flash</p> <p>Navy robe</p> <p>(plus, Chain)</p> <p>At the discretion of the Mayor the accompanying Town Sergeant, Mace Bearer and Town Clerk will also be in Civic dress.</p>

When the Mayor is wearing full official Robes and Hat, the Hat should be removed when:

- Acknowledging Salutes;
- During the playing of the National Anthem;
- In the presence of a member of the Royal Family;
- During Church services
- During March Pasts, the Mayor should remove and replace the Hat:
  - As each section passes the salute;
  - When the Colours pass; and
  - On an inspection when the Mayor passes the Colours.

**See appendix 5 for photos of robes**

## **Wearing the Chains**

You may need to secure the Chains to your clothing to correctly position them. You may for example wish to have some loops attached to a suit jacket but it is worth considering the delicacy of any fabric when selecting an outfit for an official engagement.

## **Budgets, Allowances and Hospitality**

The Chairman of the Town Council is paid an allowance (taxable) during the term of office to reflect expenses incurred (LGA 1972, s15 (5) and 34 (5)). The objective of the allowance (which is separate from the Town Councillors Allowance) is to allow any Town Councillor to be able to be Mayor regardless of personal financial circumstances and to allow each Mayor to fulfil the duties of the role with dignity.

The Finance Officer will advise on the allocation of the Mayor's allowance.

### **Who pays for what?**

The Chairman is given the allowance in the expectation that they will fund a number of things while other expenses are paid from the Civic Occasions budget. The LGA does not stipulate the type or category of expenditure. A breakdown is shown below and while not an exhaustive list, the examples should cover most expenditure items of the year. If you are in any doubt as to whether you are expected to pay for something, please ask.

<b>Category</b>	<b>Paid from the Chairman of the Town Councils Allowance</b>	<b>Paid from the Civic Ceremonial Events Budget</b>
<b>Flowers</b>	Personal bouquets; buttonholes; special arrangements	Remembrance Sunday costs including wreaths
<b>Food/Drink</b>	Private catering/working lunches including alcohol	Official lunch meetings Special meetings (e.g. the High Sherriff)
<b>Photos</b>		All photography at Town Council Civic events is paid for by the Town Council
<b>Travel</b>	Mileage to and from events	
<b>Entry to events</b>	Tickets for events	
<b>Charity events</b>	Raffle prizes/tickets; charitable fundraising	

<b>Donations</b>	Donations to charities	
<b>Additional Mayor Making Expenditure</b>	All additional expenses must be paid from the Mayor's Allowance e.g. Gifts to attendees that the Mayor may wish to thank	Pennies and Fruit for Mayor Making
<b>Administration expenses</b>	Telephone, stationery, printing and postage	
<b>Exchange visits with Plougastel</b>	Passports and medical insurance for visit to France. Cost of hosting Plougastel visitors in home (such as food and activities) Note – Saltash Twinning Association pay for travel to France and any group activities (such as welcome reception)	Mayoral Chain insurance and gifts from the Town Council.

### **Hospitality / Gifts**

The Mayor is entitled to four free uses of the Town Council premises for fundraising events. The Mayor can gift the free use of Town Council facilities to other charities or organisations to benefit from if they wish.

Other requests for free room hire should be referred to the Hire of Town Council Premises and Events Policy.

The Mayor and Deputy Mayor must register all gifts regardless of value that fall outside of the appropriate gifts and hospitality guidance. This is done by providing the full details in writing to the Assistant to the Town Clerk/ Office Manager, who will enter it on to the Town Council's Register of Gifts and Hospitality.

For further guidance on gifts and hospitality please refer to the Code of Conduct Appendix A.

### **The Civic Year**

There is a structure to the year with a number of regular Civic events that will appear in the Mayor's Diary as follows:

#### **Mayor Making**

As soon as you are elected you will be asked if you wish to hold a Mayor Making Ceremony. This is entirely up to you but is an opportunity to continue the traditions associated with the event (previously known as Mayor Choosing) with your friends, family and colleagues.

The Mayor's Secretary will assist with the arrangements although the booking of a photographer (if desired) and the catering (including drinks) are the responsibility of the Mayor to arrange and pay for. The venue is also the choice of the Mayor but please note if not held in the Guildhall, the associated costs are the responsibility of the Mayor.

#### **Civic Service**

This is normally held towards the end of the Civic Year (March/April) to celebrate the year held in office.

The Mayor may also wish to present awards as part of the Civic Service. More information can be found in the Civic Awards Policy.

The Mayor's Secretary will assist in the arrangements.

#### **Remembrance Sunday – the closest Sunday to 11<sup>th</sup> November**

The Town Council holds an annual service and parade followed by wreath laying. This is a Civic Event which the Town Council deliver and invites the Saltash Branch of the Royal British Legion to participate.

Each year, the Mayor, acting on behalf of Saltash Town Council, will review the arrangements for Remembrance and prepare a proposal for the Town Council. In doing so, the Mayor will consider all elements of Remembrance, following the successful model historically used in Saltash, and will work in collaboration with the Mayor's Chaplain. This work will be supported by the Mayor's Secretary, who will assist with report writing, planning, coordination, and administrative arrangements.

The proposal for arrangements must be received no later than August's Full Town Council meeting to apply for any road closures required and to allow members time to consider and approve the proposed arrangements.

The Civic Event includes the laying of wreaths by the Mayor and Civic Party at the following locations

- Saltash Waterside
- Saltash Railway Station
- Memorial Peace Gardens
- St Stephens War Memorial
- St Nicholas and St Faith War Memorial following the afternoon service.

The laying of wreaths is subject to weather conditions on the day.

### **Armistice Day – 11 November**

A short service of commemoration is held in Fore Street—organised and led by the Saltash Branch of the Royal British Legion at 11.00 a.m. and is a Civic Event.

When an invitation is received from the Saltash Branch of the Royal British Legion it will be received at a Full Town Council meeting for consideration.

### **Other Town events that may request a Civic presence/parade:**

- May Fair
- Saltash Regatta
- Christmas Event

These organisations may wish to invite the Mayor and formally request the Civic Party's attendance, which can be requested via the Town Council and well in advance to allow for proper preparations by the Mayor's Secretary.

### **Civic Funerals**

Any serving Town Councillor who dies during their term of office is entitled to a Civic Funeral but only at the express wish of the family.

Any former Mayor or Freeman who dies is entitled to a Civic Funeral but only at the express wish of the family. There is a protocol in place, and the Town Clerk will offer guidance.<sup>5</sup>

**Death of Senior Member of the Royal Family (or other significant National Figure where public mourning is indicated)**

There is a protocol in place, and the Town Clerk will offer guidance.

**Honorary Positions**

The Mayor holds the following honorary positions:


- Royal Naval Association- Patron.
- Rotary Club of Saltash - Honorary member and welcome to attend meetings and give a talk.
- Saltash Sailing Club- Honorary member.
- Saltash Twinning Association – Honorary member, welcome to attend meetings and participate in mutual exchanges with Plougastel.

**The Chairman of the Council**

The Town Council cannot operate without a Chairman and the Local Government Act 1972 provides legislation to ensure:

- a. that there is always someone to preside over a meeting;
- b. the person presiding has a casting vote which must be used.

The Chairman should ensure they have a good understanding of the Town Council Standing Orders as they begin their term of office. It is also recommended that training on chairing skills is undertaken.

 Make sure that you have all the dates for Town Council meetings that you will chair in your diary. If you are not able to attend, give your Deputy sufficient notice for them to be fully briefed and able to chair the meeting effectively.

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<sup>5</sup> Appendix 3

## **Term of Office**

The Chairman's term of office continues until the appointment of a successor, other than where the Chairman resigns or is disqualified.

## **Legislation**

At the Annual Meeting:

The first item of business is to elect a Chairman. <sup>6</sup>

The Chairman of the Town Council remains in office until his successor has been elected and should preside even if they have not been elected to the Town Council.<sup>7</sup>

The retiring Chairman will:

- Receive apologies and confirm the meeting is quorate
- Receive nominations and count votes for the election of the new Chairman
- If the retiring Chairman has been elected as a Town Councillor, they have an original vote but is under no duty to cast it. <sup>8</sup>
- If the retiring Chairman has not been elected as a Town Councillor they do not have an original vote<sup>9</sup>
- In the event of a tie the retiring Chairman (regardless of whether they are an elected Town Councillor) must use their casting vote to break the deadlock.<sup>10</sup>

Note: there is no reason why a candidate shall not vote for themselves.

On election the Chairman will immediately sign the Declaration of Acceptance of Office<sup>11</sup> in front of the Town Clerk and then preside over the remaining business.

If the Declaration of Acceptance of Office is not signed at the due time or before the next meeting of the Town Council, the Town Councillor will thereupon vacate the office and a casual vacancy will arise.

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<sup>6</sup> LGA 1972 ss.15(1) and (2)

<sup>7</sup> LGA 1972 ss.15(4)

<sup>8</sup> LGA 1972 Sch12 para 39(1)

<sup>9</sup> LGA 1972 ss.15(2)

<sup>10</sup> LGA 1972 s.15(3)

<sup>11</sup> LGA 1972 s.83(4)

Note: The Vice-Chairman does not sign a Declaration of Acceptance of Office as Vice-Chairman but (simply) acceptance of office of Town Councillor.

## The Role of the Chairman at Meetings



Be prepared! It is the Chairman's responsibility to carry out their own research prior to attending meetings of the Town Council.

If present, the Chairman of the Town Council must preside at Town Council meetings.

If the Chairman is not present, the Vice-Chairman must (if present) preside.

In the event that neither the Chairman nor Vice-Chairman is present, the Town Council shall vote for a member to preside at that meeting.

The Chairman or member of the Town Council presiding at a meeting, will sign the minutes of that meeting.

It is the Chairman's responsibility (McCourt; Millward, 2007):

1. To determine that the meeting is properly constituted and that a quorum is present;
2. To be informed as to the business and objects of the meeting;
3. To preserve order in the conduct of those present;
4. To confine discussion within the scope of the meeting and reasonable limits to time;
5. To decide whether proposed motions and amendments are in order;
6. To formulate for discussion and decision questions which have been moved for the consideration of the meeting;
7. To decide points of order and other incidental questions which require decision at the time;
8. To ascertain the sense of the meeting by:
  - 8.1. Putting relevant questions to the meeting and taking the vote thereon (and if so minded giving a casting vote);
  - 8.2. Declaring the result; and
  - 8.3. Causing a ballot to be taken if duly demanded;
9. To approve the draft of the minutes or other record of proceedings (with the consent of the meeting);
10. To adjourn the meeting when circumstances justify or require that course; and
11. To declare the meeting closed when its business has been completed.

CALC suggests some ground rules for running a successful meeting as Chairman:

- Stick to the agenda and keep to time;
- Work towards consensus;
- Everyone is encouraged, but no-one is forced, to participate. No-one dominates;
- Be courteous towards others, including members of the public, guest speakers and other Town Council members;
- Try not to interrupt when someone else is speaking;
- Respect the ideas of others. Everyone has something of value to contribute.
- If you wish to challenge – challenge the idea not the person;
- Remain open-minded and non-judgmental.

### **Voting**

During the meeting, if a vote on a matter is tied, the Chairman, or other person presiding, has a second or casting vote. (See above.)

Whilst it is a convention in some councils that the Chairman will not vote when a matter is put before the meeting and will only use their casting vote, there is no rule of law on this and it is becoming a practice little followed. Some councils apply a convention that the Chairman will use their second or casting vote in a way to support the status quo and keep the question open for reconsideration at a later date, which is generally considered to be best practice. The choice remains with the individual Chairman.

## **Outside of the meeting**

Relevant policies available on the Town Council website:

- Scheme of Delegation
- Communications Policy and Strategy
- Protocol for Member Officer Relations

The Chairman has much more involvement in the Town Council during their term of office working closely with and supporting the Town Clerk, or in their absence the Office Manager / Assistant to the Town Clerk. You should be prepared to receive more direct emails and phone calls.

The Town Clerk may approach the Chairman of the Town Council to informally discuss matters that arise or informally consult on decisions that is within the remit of the Town Clerk to make. The Chairman of the Town Council may also be asked for information about the town.

Correspondence to and from the Town Council is normally dealt with by the Town Clerk or their delegated officer.

## **Out-of-Hours Emergency Contact Protocol**

In the event of an urgent Town Council matter arising outside normal office hours, the following communication is to be adhered:

- Staff or concerned Members will contact the Chairman of the Town Council as the first point of contact.
- The Chairman will assess the situation and decide whether immediate action is required.
- If further advice, authority, or operational decision-making is needed, the Chairman will contact the Town Clerk via their personal mobile phone.
- If the Chairman is unable to make contact with the Town Clerk, they have delegated authority to act in the best interests of the Town Council and will report to the Town Clerk upon their return.
- In the absence of the Chairman the point of contact is the Deputy Chairman, and in the absence of the Deputy Chairman the immediate past Chairman becomes the point of contact.

### **The Monthly Meeting of the Town Council**

The agenda for the monthly meeting of the Town Council will be worked up with the Town Clerk and you will be asked to approve the agenda before it is issued. There are legal requirements for issuing notice of meetings which the administration office work to and you may find it helpful to set time aside in your calendar to ensure you are able to respond in good time especially where you have questions. You should also give plenty of notice of any items you would like to add to the agenda.

Prior to the meeting there will be a briefing with the Town Clerk. You should be able to estimate the time needed per item from this meeting.

### **Extraordinary Meetings**

The Chairman of the Town Council has the power to call an Extraordinary Meeting at any time. The Town Clerk will advise you further on this power.

### **Authorisation for payments**

At any time, the Chairman of the Town Council may be contacted for authorisation under the Scheme of Delegation. Please ensure you are familiar with your role under this policy.

### **Press releases and communicating with the media**

The Town Clerk, or Office Manager / Assistant to the Town Clerk will clear all press releases, or comments to the media, with the Chairman of the Town Council or the Chairman of the relevant committee as appropriate.<sup>12</sup>

Where comments are requested from the media, the Chairman of the Town Council will normally be the authorised spokesperson but they may choose to authorise another Town Councillor to speak on an issue.

Please refer to the Communications Policy and Strategy.

### **Official Signatory**

The Chairman of the Council will on occasion be required to be a signatory in addition to the Town Clerk or in their absence the Office Manager / Assistant to the Town Clerk to the Town Council's official seal on documents on behalf of the Town Council.

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<sup>12</sup> Communications Policy and Strategy

## **Resignations**

The Chairman of the Town Council is the person who receives the resignations of other councillors or the Town Clerk.

## **Neutrality**

The convention has been that during the Civic Year the Chairman of the Town Council reduces their political profile and displays even handedness, avoiding involvement in contentious issues.

The Chairman of the Town Council should not attend political events in their capacity as Mayor of Saltash and wearing the Chain.

## **Pre-Election Period**

Special conditions apply to the issue of publicity in the period leading up to elections. During the six-week period leading up to an election, the Town Council must take special care not to issue any publicity that might conceivably be perceived as having the potential to influence the outcome of the poll.<sup>13</sup>

To ensure compliance with the various Acts and Publicity Code, the Town Council will avoid issuing any publicity in this period in the name of or associated directly with any Councillor, including the Chairman of the Town Council.

No Civic Events should be held during this period and the Chairman of the Town Council (or any previous Chairman of the Town Council) should not use any photographs of them wearing Mayoral Robes or any Civic Regalia in election publicity material.

## **The end of your year in office**

- Write your final column for the Town Messenger.
- Write any letters of thanks.
- Ensure all items of Civic Regalia and keys are returned to the Guildhall and checked in with the Mayor's Secretary.

The final role will be to chair the first item at the Annual Meeting, the election of the new Chairman of the Town Council.

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<sup>13</sup> Representation of the People Act 1983; Local Government Act 1986; Local Authority Publicity Code of Recommended Practice 2001

You will be presented with a Mayor's Badge engraved with your name and term of office by the new Chairman of the Town Council. The badge will be presented at the Annual Meeting and at Mayor Making.

## **Appendix 1**

### **Protocol for precedence at Civic Events**

#### **Civic Event Order of Precedence Protocol**

#### **Town Sergeant to exercise control and form up parade.**

Town Sergeant and Mace Bearer

Mayor and Mayoress/Consort or Lord Lieutenant if present.

Town Clerk and Mayors Chaplain  
plus, Mayoress/Consort if Lord Lieutenant present.

Deputy Mayor and Deputy Mayoress/Consort.

Mayors Cadets

Town Councillors (In order of length of service/seniority).

Freeman of Town (In order of length of award)

Member of Parliament

Town Crier plus May Queen and Princesses

Visiting dignitaries

Police /Fire Representatives

Others

## Appendix 2

### Royal Visits



## Legal Topic Note

***LTN 10***

***March 2013***

### **ROYAL VISITS**

#### **Introduction**

1. This Legal Topic Note explains the formalities and rules of precedence associated with a visit to a town; parish or community by a member of the Royal Family or the Lord Lieutenant.

#### **Legislation**

2. By virtue of section 3(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 'The chairman of a district council shall have precedence in the district, but not so as prejudicially to affect Her Majesty's royal prerogative'.

#### **Royal Prerogative**

3. Her Majesty the Queen has made known her wishes about precedence in connection with Royal visits by Her Majesty the Queen, and by those members of the Royal Family styled His or Her Highness and their spouses.
4. Except where a District matter is the purpose of a Royal visit to a county the order of presentation by the Lord-Lieutenant to the Royal visitor normally be:-
  - a. Lord-Lieutenant's spouse;
  - b. High Sheriff and spouse;
  - c. Chairman of County Council and spouse;
  - d. County Chief Executive and spouse;
  - e. Chairman of District Council and spouse;
  - f. District Chief Executive and spouse;
  - g. Member of Parliament and spouse;
  - h. Chief Constable and spouse; and

- i. The Principal Organiser of the event.
5. Thereafter other necessary presentations may be deputed to the Principal Organiser.
6. Where a District matter is the purpose of the Royal visit, the Chairman of the District Council (or Mayor of the Borough) will take precedence over the Chairman of the County Council (s. 3(4) of the Act of 1972). Where there is doubt whether the visit is for a District matter organisers are expected to consult the Lord-Lieutenant.

### **Town, Parish and Community Councils – Visits**

7. There is no provision in the formal order of precedence on Royal visits for the Town Mayor or Chairman of the Parish or Community Council. Where the visit has a particularly local character and is taking place in a Town, Parish or Community the Town Mayor or Chairman would normally be presented as a courtesy after the organiser of the event. In cases of difficulty, it should be possible for the Lord Lieutenant to resolve the problem. Advice in advance can also be sought from the Private Secretary to the Member of the Royal family.

### **Events Not Involving Royal Family**

8. The Lord-Lieutenant, if present, takes precedence as the representative of Her Majesty. The Mayor of the Borough or Chairman of the district council has precedence (next after the Lord-Lieutenant) in the borough or district over all other persons (s. 3(4) of the Act of 1972). This statutory right applies even at functions or meetings convened by a Town Mayor or Chairman of a Parish or Community Council. In his town or parish or community the Town Mayor or Chairman should have precedence after the Borough Mayor or District Chairman.
9. The question of precedence is a social, not an executive issue. Accordingly notwithstanding the rules of precedence, the person entitled to preside, or the person convening the meeting or event, whichever is appropriate, will preside. So at a Town Council dinner the Town Mayor presides even though the District Chairman is present.
10. The order of Civic precedence after the local Mayor or Chairman is not pre-determined. So far as is necessary it should be arranged by the organiser of the event. Modelling the list so far as possible on that prescribed for Royal visits and differentiating between equals by reference to the date of first taking up the position currently held should normally provide a satisfactory answer. Where

there are clear local customs these should be followed. For social precedence there is a clear and long list mainly based on titles or honours to be found in standard books of etiquette.

### **Insignia**

11. Invitations to events should as a matter of courtesy indicate the style and dress and, in particular, invitations by Town Mayors or Chairmen to the heads of other local authorities should say whether Civic insignia (such as a Mayoral chain) is to be worn. This is a matter for the convenor of the event. The organiser does not have to follow any direction or wish of the Mayor of the borough or Chairman of the district although normal Civic courtesy would give weight to any request from him.

### **Titles**

12. A Town Mayor should be described as 'The Town Mayor of \_\_\_\_'. A chairman of a parish or community council should be entitled 'The Chairman of the Parish (or Community) Council of \_\_\_\_'. A member of a town parish or community council should, if any title is used, be entitled 'Councillor (Miss or Mrs) \_\_\_\_'.

### **Forms of Address**

13. In view of the need to distinguish between borough mayors and town mayors it is thought that the proper forms of address should be 'Mr (or Madam) Town Mayor', Mr (or Madam) Chairman, or 'Town Mayor'. Members of councils should be addressed as 'Councillor (Mrs or Miss) \_\_\_\_' where formality is required. A deputy should be addressed as 'Mr (or Madam) Deputy Town Mayor' not as 'Mr Deputy'.

### **Civic Services**

14. There are no generally followed forms of church service for use on Civic occasions. It is normal practice for the service to be settled by arrangement between the clergyman and the local authority.
15. Further information can be found in "Civic Ceremonial: A Handbook, History and Guide for Mayors, Councillors and Officers" by Paul Millward.

**Other Legal Topic Notes (LTNs) relevant to this subject:**

LTN	Title	Relevance
12	Honorary Titles and Officers of Dignity	Sets out the powers of councils to grant honorary freedoms.

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## **Appendix 3**

### **Civic Funeral Protocol**

The procedure for a Civic funeral will normally follow closely that governing the attendance of the Town Council at church services

The Town Council will normally attend a funeral formally only if the deceased was a past Chairman of the Town Council or serving member of the Town Council or Freeman and then only at the invitation of the deceased's family

For the funeral of a Chairman of the Town Council who died in office the senior member of the Town Council will follow the coffin bearing the Mayoral Regalia on a black cushion.

However, the overriding factor shall be that of the family's wishes and protocol will not dictate precedence or procedure in these circumstances.

If the Chairman of the Town Council is to attend and the chain is to be worn the church must be notified and the family of the deceased may then mention the attendance of the Mayor during the service if they so wish.

On all occasions of public mourning either for royalty or for any of the above the head of the maces should be draped in black or a black bow tied around the shaft.

The Town Council flag shall be flown at half-mast from the day of the death until sunset on the day of the funeral.

Procedure notes:

- Agree with family/funeral director what the Town Council input into the service should be.
- St Stephens Church and St Nicholas and St Faith have a special pew for the Mayor that dictates where the Civic Party sit together with dedicated mace stands however other churches will require the mace stands to be in place beforehand.
- The Chairman of the Town Council will advise past Chairmen of the Town Council, Freeman, MP and past MPs that a Civic funeral will be taking place so that they can make a decision to be part of the Civic Party if they choose to.

- Town Sergeant and Mace Bearer to be notified (The black hoods for the maces are in the Guildhall safe).

## **Appendix 4**

### **Town Council Photography**

#### **Professional Photographer**

The Town Council may hire and pay for a professional photographer when:

- When it is a Civic Event organised by the Town Council.
- High-quality images are needed for the official record or Town Council publications.
- Specialist skills or equipment are required that cannot be provided in-house.

#### **Town Council Communications Officer**

The Communications Officer will normally take photographs for:

- Routine Town Council publicity such as social media or website.
- Smaller-scale or internal Town Council events.
- When professional photography is not essential.

#### **Authorisation**

- An appointment for a professional photographer is to be actioned by the Town Council office in accordance with 'who pays for what' please refer to page 21.
- Mayor cannot hire a photographer at Town Council expense for personal or charity events.

## Appendix 5

### Photos of the regalia worn by the Civic Party

Mayoral robe, tricorn hat (for female Mayors) and jabot



Town Clerk robe



Deputy Mayor robe, bicorn hat with silver flash



Mace Bearers robe, tricorn hat and white gloves



Town Crier robe, tricorne hat and jabot

