



Teignmouth Town Council

Mayor's Handbook/Civic Protocol

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Mayors Handbook/Civic Protocol Teignmouth Town Council

1. Introduction

The role of Mayor and Chairman of the Council differs from being a Town Councillor, therefore the Mayor's Handbook has been produced as it was considered that a guide for the Mayor and Deputy Mayor would be beneficial to assist them with their civic role. It also enables Councillors to get an indication of what the role requires should they consider standing for the position of Mayor in the future.

The handbook is intended to be used as a guide and its contents are not exhaustive but assistance is always available from Officers of the Council.

2 Becoming Mayor

Section 245 (6) of the Local Government Act 1972 gave Parish Councils the power by resolution to give themselves the title of Town Council and the Chairman of a Town Council to become the 'Town Mayor'. A Town Mayor has the same rights and duties as a local Council Chairman. Traditionally the role is politically neutral and not party political.

The Mayor is elected by the Full Council at the Annual Town Council meeting in May. A Deputy Town Mayor is also elected. Both the Mayor and Deputy Town Mayor sign a Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

Being the Mayor is different to being a Councillor. A Mayor, by virtue of the Office, can stimulate community pride, encourage business, promote the voluntary sector etc. The Mayor acts as the Queen's representative locally.

The Mayor is the public face of the Council and with this in mind the Mayor needs to portray a genuine interest in those he/she meets, show enthusiasm and commitment to the role and always be mindful of the dignity of the office.

The Mayor may choose his/her own consort who can be either a spouse/partner, fellow Councillor, family member or friend. The consort should be given the same respect and dignity whenever he/she accompanies the Mayor on an engagement.

3 Role and Responsibilities

The role of the Town Mayor is to undertake Teignmouth Town Council's civic and ceremonial duties in a dignified manner so as to uphold and enhance the status of the town and stimulate civic pride.

Responsibilities include:

- i. Attend civic and ceremonial functions and local community activities as the Council and he/she deems appropriate
- ii. Represent the Council at ceremonial events
- iii. Promote Teignmouth as a place to live and visit
- iv. Host official visitors to Teignmouth
- v. Host the Council's Annual Civic Service
- vi. Act as Chairman at Full Council meetings in accordance with Standing Orders.

4 Invitations to Events

The Mayor will attend a range of events during the civic year throughout the town and local area. Invitations must be sent through the Office to be a formal engagement. If an invitation is sent directly to the Mayor, the Mayor must pass it on to the Mayor's PA to ensure it is included on the Mayor's engagements and for insurance purposes.

In the instance that the Mayor is unable to attend an event the Deputy Mayor may be asked to attend to deputise for the Mayor.

Invitations should be considered equally and the Office strives to inform people inviting the Mayor promptly of their attendance.

5 Regalia

The Council will ensure that the Mayoral Regalia is appropriately insured and will be responsible for the maintenance of the regalia. The Regalia is an historic civic symbol held by the Town Council of which must never be brought into disrepute or disrespected.

The Town Mayor will ensure the following:

- i. Sign-in and sign-out the Mayor's chain using the appropriate form
- ii. Store the chain in the Mayor's Parlour especially when it is not being used for over a week
- iii. Take due diligence for the security of the chain, for example, not leaving the chain unattended
- iv. Keep the chain in its proper case
- v. Inform the Office if the chain is lost/stolen/damaged

The Mayor's Consort (if female) may wear the Mayoress chain and the same responsibilities must be adhered to this chain.

The Deputy Mayor may wear the Deputy Mayor ribbon when deputising for the Mayor at civic events and the same responsibilities must be adhered to the ribbon. The Deputy Mayor does not wear the ribbon whilst in the company of the Mayor at an event. The ribbon should be worn at Full Council meetings.

6 Support for the Mayor

Day to day support for the Mayor is provided by the Mayor's PA under the general direction of the Town Clerk. The Mayor's PA assists the Mayor with organising their term of office whilst carrying out other duties for the Council.

7 Mayor's Allowance

There is a Mayor's allowance to help cover the cost of office. Although there is no legislation to stipulate how the allowance is spent the list below gives examples of expenditure deemed acceptable:

- Mileage to and from events
- Tickets for events
- Raffle tickets
- Reasonable clothing allowance for civic events

Teignmouth Town Council is committed to accountability and transparency and it is recommended that the Mayor keeps a record of receipts to account for expenditure. Alternatively, if the allowance is held by the Office, the Mayor may apply for recompense of money on issue of a receipt. When a receipt is not available, a voucher must be completed. Alternatively the allowance may be paid via payroll. It is acknowledged that the Mayor may be accompanied at engagements and reasonable expenditure for his/her consort is acceptable.

When the Deputy Mayor is deputising for the Mayor allowable expenses are payable out of the Mayor's allowance. When another Councillor who is not the Deputy Mayor is representing the Mayor allowable expenses are payable out of the Mayor's allowance.

8 Mayor's Charity(ies)

It has become customary but not essential that the Mayor has a charity appeal during the term of office. It is expected that the beneficiaries are Teignmouth based or benefit Teignmouth residents.

During the Mayor's term he/she may host fundraising events and the Mayor's PA will provide assistance but consideration must be given to the amount of staff time that this may involve. In the interests of openness and transparency events are to be cost neutral to the Council.

The Annual Council meeting at the end of the term of office is an opportune time for the Mayor to present a cheque(s) to the beneficiary(ies).

9 Mayor's End of Year

The Annual Council meeting notes the end of the outgoing Mayor's term of office and it is traditional for the outgoing Mayor to make a short speech. Within the speech the outgoing Mayor may give thanks to those who have supported his/her Mayoral term and details of money raised for charity(ies) (if applicable).

The newly elected Mayor will present the outgoing Mayor with a Past Mayor's medal.