

**STAMFORD TOWN COUNCIL**

**CIVIC PROTOCOL**

## **The Role of the Town Mayor (and Deputy) of Stamford Town Council**

### **Introduction.**

The Mayor<sup>1</sup> is Stamford's foremost citizen and the ceremonial leader of the town. In cases of unavailability or absence, the Mayor may be represented by the Deputy Mayor, or a senior councillor (Past Mayor who is an active member of the council), as and when appropriate. The function of the Mayor is entirely apolitical. An effective Mayor can play a major rôle in promoting a positive image of Stamford and Stamford's influence and importance at a local, regional, national and international level. A Mayor's major contribution to the rôle is to focus on the promotion, development and execution of the Town Council's vision and core objectives. Residents of Stamford rightfully expect the highest standards of conduct and impartiality in their Mayor and that the incumbent will proactively engage upon a wide range of duties and activities on their behalf during the mayoral year of office.

This guide summarises the rôles of the Mayor and the Deputy Mayor, together with the support services available. It highlights certain aspects of the rôles that may not have been previously considered.

Patricia Stuart-Mogg  
Town Clerk & Proper Officer.

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<sup>1</sup> LGA1972,s246(6)  
Review STC 300615

## Becoming Mayor.

Councillors considering the prospect of becoming Mayor should contemplate the following issues which they will likely encounter before or during their year in office:

- a. The effect and consequences of becoming Mayor on their family and friends
- b. The effect and consequences on their career, their job or any fixed commitments.
- c. The effect on a political career, given that from a legal standpoint, party politics can play no part in council activities at parish and town council levels.)
- d. The effect on personal and religious beliefs
- e. The self-confidence required to effect high profile ceremonial activities on behalf of the Town and the Town Council.
- f. The effect on non-council interests, activities and pastimes.
- g. The effect on the Mayor's spouse or partner
- h. The effect on a Mayor's relationship with other councillors and officers.
- i. The effect on the Mayor's relationship with constituents
- j. The effect on the prospective Mayor's general health and well-being.
- k. The time commitment in undertaking this rôle (eg. Number of events and possible hours)

## 1. The Election of the Mayor or Chairman.

The election of the Mayor is the first item of business at the Annual Town Council Meeting<sup>2</sup>, with the election being decided by a majority of members present. The Mayor-elect must be a member of the Council and make a declaration of Acceptance of Office<sup>3</sup> within two months of the day of the election, which declaration must be delivered to the Council's Proper Officer.

## 2. Rôle & Function of the Mayor & Deputy Mayor

The Mayor will:

- Be the first citizen of Stamford and will carry out a wide range of civic and ceremonial duties as the Chairman of Stamford Town Council.
- Be the Chairman of the Council and be the Council's principal spokesman
- Offer considered direction and judgement to the Council
- Preside over meetings of the Town Council and ensure that meetings follow the procedures set out in Standing Orders.
- Promote public involvement in Stamford Council's activities

The responsibilities of the Deputy Mayor are:-

- To assist and deputise for the Mayor in carrying out the responsibilities of office
- In the absence of the Mayor, to preside over meetings of the Town Council in line with Standing Orders
- To attend such civic events and functions as the Mayor may determine.

<sup>2</sup> LCA 1972, s4 (1) & 23 (1) (**Standing Order 2e**)

<sup>3</sup> LGA 1972, s3 (2) and 22 (2)

### 3. Support Staff

Detailed operational policy support and advice on a day-to-day basis is provided by the following staff:

- The Town Clerk & Proper Officer.
- The Civic Officer

#### **Town Clerk:**

E.mail: [townclerk@stamfordtowncouncil.gov.uk](mailto:townclerk@stamfordtowncouncil.gov.uk)

Office telephone: 01780 753808

- The Town Clerk's prime responsibility is the management and administration of the Town Council and the execution of the Town Council's determinations. This includes the functionality of the Mayor's Office including administration, budget management, providing direction and guidance on matters of civic procedure and protocol and ensuring the safety of the Mayor and the civic insignia.

#### **Civic Officer:**

E.mail: [townhall@stamfordtowncouncil.gov.uk](mailto:townhall@stamfordtowncouncil.gov.uk)

Office telephone: 01780 753808

- The responsibility for providing practical secretarial and administrative support, diary management, transport arrangements, hosting arrangements for visitors, preparation of briefing notes, ceremonial protocol and etiquette, financial administration and the preparation of correspondence in respect of the Mayor's office.
- The Diary details for all the civic engagements are to be produced on a weekly or fortnightly basis (as required) for both the Mayor, the Deputy Mayor and appropriate consorts; providing briefing information about the venue, the required dress code and expected involvement for each occasion.

In addition to civic engagements the diary may contain information about councillors' meetings and appointments. At the beginning of the Mayoral year it will be agreed with the Mayor and Deputy Mayor exactly what they wish to have entered in the civic diary.

The diary is distributed widely amongst council officers, councillors and the local media. A copy is also put into the public domain in being published on the Town Council's website.

Every week the Mayor should arrange a meeting with support staff to discuss relevant issues regarding involvement in particular civic diary events and related issues. A weekly or fortnightly diary of all scheduled civic engagements is confirmed to include council or committee meetings and any functions taking place in the Town Hall. In respect of civic invitations, whenever a firm booking for a civic engagement is made, a letter of confirmation is sent to the organisers enclosed with which is a 'function form' requesting additional information about the coming event or function.

The objective of this form is to establish key details in respect of the event so as to clarify what (if any) specific rôle the Mayor is required to play. It is requested that the form be returned no later than one week before the event

or function, along with background information about the event or organisation(s) involved. Notes are maintained for reference purposes.

A week ideally before each event a copy of this form should be available with all appropriate, additional information such as details of any gifts or awards to be presented, bullet-points for speeches etc. The rationale is to provide the Mayor with clear details about each engagement. The form will give information about the organising group and the event itself, as well as essential practicalities – such as the required dress code, arrival time, person(s) who will meet the Mayor and the time after which the Mayor will be free to leave. It will also detail what is expected from the Mayor while present – e.g. taking part in a photo call, cutting a ribbon or drawing a raffle. Sometimes the Mayor is asked to speak in which event suggested points will be provided; otherwise it may be appropriate that very short, general remarks or observations are made.

It is requested that the Mayor and the Deputy Mayor provide feedback after each event or function as to whether the information provided proved useful and whether any additional information would have been helpful.

### **MAYOR'S CADETS**

2071 Squadron ATC are the official escort at ceremonial occasions.

## **4. GENERAL REQUIREMENTS**

- *Invitations*

All incoming invitations should be sent for consideration to the Mayor as the First Citizen. If the Mayor cannot attend it may be appropriate to delegate at the Mayor's discretion.

On occasions when the Deputy Mayor or other Councillor is invited to a function in their civic capacity, the invitation should be brought to the attention of the Civic Officer, who will inform the Mayor in order ensure clarity and avoid the potential for any misunderstanding.

- *Availability*

The Mayor must endeavour to carry out the full year's programme of engagements.

Mayoral engagements are very wide ranging. Where possible all invitations will be accepted, provided the engagements are appropriate and that the Mayor, or the Deputy Mayor, is available.

The Mayor should accept as many engagements in person as possible. The Deputy Mayor is normally called upon in the event of the Mayor's unavailability or in unforeseen circumstances etc. The Mayor is advised to have a few days free of engagements built into the Mayoral diary to allow time to 'recharge batteries' and catch up on personal matters.

Upon the commencement of taking Office, the Mayor and the Deputy Mayor should advise office staff of their availability (particularly if they are in employment) and of any meetings or events already scheduled in their personal diaries.

As a general rule, invitations are accepted on a first come, first served basis to avoid offence; but inevitably there are exceptions. Usually engagements are

determined using the following precedence – Stamford town, adjacent authorities, local military units and then any other activity or event which will benefit the town and its residents.

There are times, however, when it is appropriate for the Mayor to attend an event rather than the Deputy Mayor.

## **Specific Requirements**

The prime, specific requirements of the Mayor's rôle are:

- Chairing skills as the Civic Head, with a detailed understanding of the Council's Standing Orders
- Confidence and clarity in making speeches
- Ability to network and socialise at all levels
- Ability and willingness to demonstrate an intelligent interest within a wide demographic of people and issues
- An understanding that, as Mayor, they will be in the public gaze and attract media attention during the majority of their time in office.

## **5. Political Neutrality**

Every Mayor must be a councillor and, by definition, a diplomat with clear responsibilities to the electors in his or her ward.

The convention has been that during the Mayoral Year the Mayor reduces his or her constituency profile. Mayors should go out of their way to display neutrality in political matters during their year in office. It is inappropriate for the Mayor to be associated with any politically contentious or divisive issues.

## **6. Use of Civic Chains**

The wearing of Mayoral and Deputy Mayoral robes, chains and badges is the outward manifestation of civic office.

There is significant history and protocol regarding the wearing of such insignia. An important point to remember is that the dignity of the Office must be maintained and that the use of civic robes should not be a matter of routine. When wearing the mayoral chain, the Mayor and/or Deputy Mayor should be appropriately dressed as befits the office and never wear inappropriate, casual clothing such as T shirts, jeans or trainers. Mayors and Deputy Mayors should also be aware that it would be a gross breach of protocol for them to wear Chains of Office outside the Town boundary **without the express permission of the Council being visited**. This caveat includes events held at Burghley House.

The Deputy Mayor may only wear a robe and chain in the absence of the Mayor or at the Mayor's discretion

In 1926, six robes were presented to the Aldermen of Stamford by the Marquess of Exeter. The Aldermen were elected by Council members themselves and not by the electorate. When Stamford lost its Borough status, it also lost the right to confer the title 'Honorary Alderman' who, as such, had hitherto worn these robes. In the interests of maintaining a ceremonial tradition Stamford Town Council determined these robes would continue to be worn at civic functions by Past Mayors attending the event, in order of 'seniority', and who are serving Councillors. During Town Council meetings

such Councillors may also wear these robes at the discretion of the Mayor, and follow the Mayoral procession into the Chamber prior to meetings. All other Councillors should be present and already in their seats to acknowledge the arrival of the Mace and the Mayoral procession. The Mace will be carried by the longest-serving Past Mayor, or another Past Mayor deputising.

The Mayoral Chain should only be worn at events, never when travelling to and from events. The Chain should always be kept, and transported, in its' official box or on the Mayor's person; carefully folded in the pouch provided. Although insurance cover is in place when the Chain is in the possession of the Mayor, it must be borne in mind the Chain is irreplaceable. The Chain should never be left unattended (such as in the Mayor's vehicle) or placed at risk at any time.

The Mayor should take personal responsibility to ensure adequate security measures are always in place whilst in possession of the chain. The Chain should remain in its designated box at the Town Hall other than when being worn on official or ceremonial duties.

The above equally applies to the Mayoress or Consort and the Deputy Mayor and Deputy Mayoress or Deputy Consort's Chains of Office, which should only be worn when required on official occasions.

When wearing official robes and hats, the Mayor (both male and female) should remove the hat when:

- Acknowledging salutes;
- During the playing of the National Anthem;
- In the presence of a member of the Royal Family.

During march pasts, the Mayor should remove and replace the hat:-

- As each section passes the salute;
- When the Colours pass; or
- On an Inspection when the Mayor passes the Colours

When attending church services guidance will be sought from the Mayor's Chaplain.

## **7. Mayor's Chaplain**

The Mayor may appoint a Chaplain at the Annual Town Council Meeting.

If a Chaplain is appointed, the Chaplain or Chaplain's representative will normally attend the start of each Town Council meeting to say the opening prayer. The Mayor's Chaplain also officiates at the following services:

- Mayor's Sunday
- Armed Forces Week (Flag Raising)
- Battle of Britain Parade
- Remembrance Sunday

The Mayor may invite the Chaplain to attend other functions during the year, such as the Civic Dinner. If no chaplain is appointed, the Dean of Stamford should be invited to civic events in lieu.

## 8. FINANCE

### **a. Mayoral Allowances**

The Mayoral Allowance is a payment made to the Mayor to assist with the expenses of being in office. The Mayor will be informed of the annual gross figure and payment is made at the beginning of each Mayoral year.

The following expenses are to be paid for from the allowance and are a rough guide to provide an indication how the allowance of £2,000 may be split between the functions for which the Mayor is responsible.

- i. Civic Dinner (must be self-financing through ticket sales and cost neutral, £400 may be utilised towards cost of personal guests)
- ii. Reception of Civic Heads (optional) £480
- iii. Mayoress' Tea Party (optional) £340
- iv. Regalia evenings (optional) £100
- v. Photographs for Year Book and council Chamber £100
- vi. Miscellaneous expenses £580
- vii. Design and printing of Christmas Cards

The Mayor and Deputy Mayor will receive travel allowances, as determined by the Town Council, to assist with any transport expenses incurred in the line of duty. The Mayor will be advised by the Town Treasurer in respect of the overall travel allowance at the beginning of the Mayoral year (£500).

Functions paid for by Town Council:

- |                         |                                  |
|-------------------------|----------------------------------|
| i. Mayor Making* )      |                                  |
| ii. Mayor's Sunday )    |                                  |
| iii. Freedom Parade )   | Value determined by Town Council |
| iv. Remembrance Day )   |                                  |
| v. Burghley Sermon )    |                                  |
| vi. Battle of Britain ) |                                  |

**\*PLEASE NOTE:** The Town Council will finance the drinks and buffet for Mayor Making only, all other functions will be drinks only.

There is an additional Mayor allowance (£100) held by the Council to pay for cards, flowers and anything else which may normally be paid out of Council funds.

It should be noted that all expenditure from any allowance must be accountable and will be put in the public domain and be available for public viewing. The Mayor is responsible for organising such civic activities that they think fit within the allowance limit. They may consult with the Civic Officer but will be expected not to make unreasonable demands on their time.

### **b. Hospitality Budget (Mayor only)**

In the interests of transparency and best practice, and to ensure that the hospitality budget is administered properly, the Council's policies and procedures relating to the management of budgets must be followed.

### **c. Mayor's Charity**

The Mayor must nominate the Charity/ies of choice at the Annual Town Council Meeting. If another charity receives a benefit at any other time during

their Mayoral year (**e.g. use of the Town Hall**) then this must be clearly shown on any paperwork relating to that occasion.

The nominated bank account for the Mayor's Charity (Stamford) alone will be used and the incumbent Mayor, Deputy Mayor and the Town Clerk will be signatories. For fiscal probity, at the end of the Mayoral year a copy of the accounts for the charity/ies should be presented to the Town Treasurer, showing funds raised for each event and the payments made to the nominated charity or charities, a copy of the accounts to be put in the public domain and examined by the Independent Auditor.

If the Mayor wishes to raise funds for their nominated Charity or charities, this is considered a private matter and must not add to the administrative work already undertaken by the Town Hall staff. However if staff are available such staff may assist, subject to their freely-given individual agreement, if an event is taking place in the Town Hall provided it does not impinge on their completing their core duties.

When the Mayor is involved in a retail unit opening or similar, it is suggested that the organisation makes a donation to the Mayor's Charity fund.

#### ***d. Christmas Cards***

The Mayor is expected to send Christmas cards (see 9a) to other civic heads, past mayors, town councillors and local organisations. The cost of producing the cards is the Mayor's responsibility and should be debited from the Civic allowance. The Town Hall will post and pay postal costs for such official cards to those named above only. Payment of postage costs for cards sent by the Mayor to family and friends is the Mayor's personal responsibility and will not be met by the Council.

## **9. Giving and Receiving of Civic Gifts**

A formal register is maintained of gifts presented to the Town and gifts presented on behalf of the Town. It is important that gifts are meticulously recorded. This avoids duplication on future occasions and allows a review prior to future visits, in all likelihood by different representatives. The register also acts as an ongoing inventory of Civic property, relating to international, cultural and other links and for insurance purposes. The register is important as it acts as a clear record of both outgoing and incoming gifts.

In order to safeguard the position of Mayor, Mayoress or Consort and Deputies, as well as the Council, the Mayor is asked to notify the office staff at the earliest opportunity of any gifts received or presented, together with information identifying the donor/recipient and such listing to be put in the public domain. Arrangements can then be made to issue appropriate letters of thanks. It is important to distinguish between civic and purely personal gifts (e.g. flowers, chocolates, etc).

Five special, hand-painted presentation plaques of the Town Council's armorials are available for the Mayor to present during the Mayoral year. Should any more be required, these are to be funded from the Mayoral allowance.

## **10. Use of Office facilities and other matters**

- ***Mayor's Parlour***

This is the Mayor's office and as such is free for the Mayor to use at all times on Mayoral business. Subject to the Mayor's approval this area may be used for other duties and occasions. Proper respect must be accorded by all who visit or use to the Mayor's Parlour.

- ***Seating in Council Chamber***

The seating method applied in the Council Chamber is by 'seniority'.

Seniority relates solely to a Councillor's length of service and the number of votes gained upon that councillor's election. It neither confers nor infers any privilege nor advantage over any other councillor. Length of service includes broken service. The Mayor occupies the Mayoral chair with the Deputy Mayor to the immediate right and the Town Clerk sitting to the immediate left. Councillors who are Past Mayors occupy the remaining 'top table' chairs in order of 'seniority'.

- ***Past Mayor's Portraits***

At the end of each Mayoral year the retiring Mayor's portrait is hung on the Chamber wall and the oldest portrait is removed. The Chamber holds 27 consecutive Mayoral portraits at any one time. Any deceased Past Mayor, within the 27 year rotation period, will be indicated by a black crepe ribbon draped across the top right hand corner.

- ***Deferment of Mayoralty***

In the case of a member due to become Mayor-elect by virtue of seniority and wishing to defer their year in office, such deferment may not be postponed for more than a maximum period of two years. After this period the 'deferring' Mayor would lose all 'seniority' for the purpose of becoming Mayor and be relegated to the bottom of the list pending the next four year term of the Town Council.

- ***Free use of the Town Hall***

The Mayor may agree to make the Town Hall available, free of charge, to charities or voluntary organisations on six occasions during the Mayoral year. However, this must be agreed well in advance with the Town Clerk to ensure availability and adequate staff cover.

- ***Other Facilities***

The Town Hall is for the use of the Mayor only in respect of their position as Mayor. The use of Town Hall facilities, such as paper, copier and staff, is restricted to Mayoral duties and the function of Mayor only. As the Town Hall support staff deal with all correspondence on behalf of the Mayor, there should be no reason for the Mayor to require stationery etc. All business cards must carry the Town Hall's address, telephone number, postal and email addresses only, **not personal home or business address details.**

## **11. Membership of Local Organisations**

The Mayor is traditionally asked to represent the Town Council on a number of bodies within the Town. Some of these positions carry the responsibilities of Trusteeship or Governorship. By the nature of these appointments, the Mayor will become liable, as any Trustee or Governor, both legally and financially. However, any liability, other than rising from a criminal act, will be covered either by the Town Council's insurance or insurance taken out by the charity or organisation that the Mayor is asked to join.

It is an honour to be asked to join these organisations, and forms a key and fundamental part of the rôle of Mayor.

- **Endowed Schools:** There is no formal governing rôle, but the Mayor will be invited to attend appropriate school functions.
- **Browne's Hospital:** The Mayor is automatically a Trustee of the charity that runs Browne's Hospital. The primary purpose of this charity is to run the alms houses in Broad Street, known as Browne's Hospital, and to that end the Trustees deal with matters relating to property owned by the charity, including the hospital itself, together with small areas of land and financial investments. The Board of Trustees meet every couple of months and includes representatives of The Burghley Estate, the Church of England, the Town Council and other interested bodies.
- **Harry Skells Trust:** All Town Councillors are automatically Trustees of this charity, which supports applicants in accordance with the Will of Harry Skells. The Mayor is Chairman of the Board of Trustees, which meets quarterly. Councillors must bear in mind that Skells Trust business is completely separate from, and must not be influenced by, any Town Council business.
- **Stamford Festival Committee:** The Mayor is both a director of, and a Town Council representative on, the Festival Committee. The Mayor is invited to attend the meetings.
- **Burghley Park Golf Club:** The Burghley Golf club are happy to grant honorary membership of the club to the incumbent Mayor for their term of mayoralty.

## Standard Events

The traditional Stamford Civic Events during the Mayoral year are:

- **Inauguration of the new Mayor** – May (usually the second Thursday) at noon. This is linked with the Annual Town Council Meeting.
- **Mayor's Sunday** – June (usually second Sunday) often at 11am but has occurred in the afternoon on occasion. A formal event with a Civic Parade to church.
- **Battle of Britain** – September (First Sunday on or after 15 Sept). Formal event principally organised by R.A.F Wittering with a military parade and civic procession to church and then to the War Memorial.
- **Freedom Parade** – Usually incorporated with Battle of Britain activities when exercised in Stamford (every 4 years).
- **Burghley Horse Trials** – During this four-day event the Mayor of Stamford and one guest will receive free entrance, parking and access to the Members' Enclosure. The Mayor will be invited to a Reception at Burghley House usually on the first evening of the event. On the Sunday, the Mayor will be invited for luncheon in the President's tent prior to watching the event from grandstand seats.
- **Burghley Sermon** – In 1581, William Cecil, Lord Burghley, Queen Elizabeth I's Chief Minister, endowed 24 scholarships at St. John's College Cambridge. Ever since, there has been an annual sermon with the Mayor and Council and the descendants of the Founder in attendance. This is usually held on the 3<sup>rd</sup>

Sunday in October in remembrance of William Cecil. A short Civic procession and church service at St. Martins Church organised by Burghley. After the service, guests are invited by the Mayor for drinks at the Town Hall. This is followed by the Mayor attending Burghley House for an informal family lunch.

This is an event the Mayor has a formal duty to attend and may not be substituted under any circumstances.

- **Remembrance Sunday** – Closest Sunday to the 11<sup>th</sup> November. Formal Civic procession to the War Memorial.
- **Civic Dinner** – Possibly late Nov / early Dec. A formal dinner is optional. The Mayor may choose both the style of the function, the dress code and the location.
- **Mid-Lent Fair** – Monday after Mothering Sunday. Formal Civic procession followed by an informal buffet reception.
- **Mayoress' Tea Party** (optional) – March / April. Informal afternoon tea.

Stamford, as many towns and districts, has annual events to which the Mayor will be invited. In addition, the Mayor is invited to certain other events within Stamford and in the vicinity.

- **R.A.F:** The Mayor is invited to formal receptions and dinners, sometimes unaccompanied by the Mayoress / Consort, at both **R.A.F** Wittering and Kendrew Barracks. Other functions may include the Queen's Birthday Reception, Wittering Family Day and a tour of R.A.F Cranwell.
- **May Day:** The Mayor may be invited to crown the May Queen at the Welland Dancing School.
- **Stamford Festival:** The Mayor will be invited to view the parade of floats and together with the Festival Committee, to judge the floats. The Mayor will also be invited to the Churches Together service which usually takes place on the Recreation Ground and from which that event's collection will be donated to the Mayor's Charity. There is usually a golf day at which the Mayor will be asked to present the prizes. At this event a donation is usually made to the Mayor's Charity.
- **Commonwealth Day:** The Mayor will invite guests to their parlour for a single commemorative act marking the centenary of World War One. The choice of date reflects the involvement of so many representatives from around the Commonwealth who supported this country in the conflicts. This simple but meaningful act is based on the feeling of darkness that came over Europe 100 years ago and uses light as a symbol of hope.

**Armed Forces Week:** The Mayor, councillors and members of the British Legion will gather on the terrace of the Town Hall for a flag raising ceremony to launch National Armed Forces Week in the town.

**June 2015**