

Policy Approved at the Full Town Council Meeting on 5th March 2018

Reviewed on 1st July 2019 and amendments approved (Minute 19/7/27)

Further reviewed 6 April 2021

To be further reviewed April 2023



OTTERY ST MARY TOWN COUNCIL`S POLICY RE THE MAYOR (AND DEPUTY MAYOR)

Introduction

Section 245 of the Local Government Act (`LGA`) gave Parish Councils the power by resolution to give themselves the title of Town Council. The Chair of a Town Council is entitled to the title of Town Mayor.

Sections 15 & 34 of LGA 1972 require local Councils to appoint a Mayor as the first business to be transacted at the Annual Council meeting. At the meeting at which the Mayor is elected (or before or at a later meeting, if so permitted by the Council) he/she must sign a Declaration of Acceptance of Office and agreement to be guided by the Code of Conduct in the performance of his/her duties. The Mayor's main role is to run Council meetings. He/she is responsible for ensuring that effective and lawful decisions are taken at meetings of the Council and, assisted by the Clerk, guides activities by managing the meetings of the Council, ensuring that all Councillors have the opportunity to speak and that they keep to the point. The Mayor has a casting vote if there is a tied vote. If the Mayor is not present at a Council meeting, the Deputy Mayor has to preside

The Mayor has no more power than any other Councillor except that of a casting vote and has no power to make decisions without the resolution of the Council.

The Mayor is the public face of the Council and may be invited to official functions, where he/she must represent views of the Council and not personal views. Section 15(5) of LGA 1972 enables a Mayor to be paid an allowance to meet the expenses of his/her office

The Mayor is the Chair of the Council and as such is the first citizen of the town of Ottery St Mary. The Mayor is the ambassador of the town and can help in the promotion of the Council's objectives in the local community. In turn the people of the town will have the highest regard for their Mayor and they will expect the Mayor to carry out a full range of duties on their behalf and throughout the town.

Election of Mayor

The Mayor and Deputy Mayor must be members of the Council.

The election of Mayor is the first item of business at the Annual Council Meeting with the election being decided by a majority of members present and voting on the matter at the meeting (LGA 1972, Section 15). However this is now subject to the following provisions:-

- **The Term of office of Mayor and Deputy Mayor will remain (as the law requires, and is practiced correctly by the Council) to one year**
- **Consecutive terms for Mayor and Deputy to be limited to two years. Including the first term of office.**
- **Repeat (further) appointment not earlier than 2 years, following the completion of a previous term or the completion of a consecutive term of two years term.**
- **The arrangements to come into effect in 2018 (Annual Town Council Meeting). Terms of office served before 2018 are taken into account**

Unless he/she has resigned or been disqualified, the outgoing Mayor continues in the post until his/her successor has been chosen and made a valid declaration of office.

The outgoing Mayor will, if present, preside at the meeting to elect his/her successor. If the outgoing Mayor is not present, the Deputy Mayor shall preside at the meeting to elect the successor. If neither the outgoing Mayor or Deputy Mayor are present, the members present shall elect another member of the Council to preside.

Mayor and Deputy Mayor's Role

The Mayor and Deputy Mayor will be elected by the Council annually. The person presiding at the Annual Council meeting must give a casting vote in the event of any equality of votes for the election of the new Mayor.

The Mayor and, in his/her absence, the Deputy Mayor will have the following responsibilities:

- To chair council meetings;

- To focus his/her activities on the communities of the town and, by focusing on the Council's priorities, strengthen its links between those local communities and the Council;
- To act as an enabler and ambassador

The Mayor may call an extraordinary meeting of the Council subject to provisions in the Council's Standing Orders.

The Mayor shall be expected to give a monthly report on his/her activities during each period to a meeting of the Town Council

The Mayor / Deputy is required to attend events organised by Ottery St Mary Town Council.

Participation in events within and beyond the town shall be coordinated by the Council's Admin Support Team ('the Office') on behalf of the Mayor.

Written & Verbal Protocol

The full title of the Mayor is:-

The Worshipful the Mayor of Ottery St Mary or the Mayor of Ottery St Mary

Addressed as:-

Dear Mr. Mayor or Dear Madam Mayor

Chain of Office

The chain of office is a unique piece of regalia. Any alterations or additions will need to be ratified by Full Council.

The chain of office should only be worn when the Mayor is undertaking official duties in his/her capacity as Mayor.

The chain of office may be worn where an official invitation has been received for events within the town where the Mayor and Town Clerk considers that those present would consider it appropriate to mark the occasion.

When attending an event within another Mayor's boundary, that Mayor's permission must be given for the wearing of the chain, and worn when invited to do so. If this permission is not forthcoming, the chain of office cannot be worn, nor badge of office.

It is the responsibility of the Mayor to undertake the safe keeping of the chain and to collect and deposit the same from the Office. The chain is to be returned to the Office as soon as possible after the event attended

The Mayor enjoys precedence in his/her own area – not that of their neighbours. Therefore, the Mayor should not accept an invitation to attend, in an official capacity, a function in another area without the express consent of that area.

The Mayor is responsible for the chain during his/her term of office. It is insured by the Council but the Mayor must ensure that it is kept safely so that it does not get damaged and should only be worn for official duties organised by the Office.

Should the Mayor be unable to attend an event at which the wearing of the chain of office is required and at which event the Deputy Mayor attends in the Mayor's absence then the Deputy Mayor shall be permitted to wear the chain of office and the aforementioned provisions shall apply

Political Activities

The Mayor's role is apolitical; political points should not be made. The Mayor should not attend any political gatherings in his/her capacity as Mayor and no reference to politics should be made during conversation or during a speech.

Promotion of the Council

The Mayor has a key role in acting as ambassador, promoting the town to the wider community. This may take a number of forms, including attending events arranged by other organisations as the Council's official representative; hosting events that recognise achievement and/or service by members of the community or to help in achieving a closer relationship or understanding with organisations in the town. If two invitations are received at the same time and the dates coincide, then the one concerning Ottery St Mary should take precedence over any invitation coming from outside the town.

The office of Mayor is a valuable avenue through which to improve ties with the local community.

All official visits outside of the County of Devon are to be approved by the Mayor and Clerk, at the discretion of the Office. All overseas visits are to be approved by Full Council.

The Mayor and Deputy will undertake an accredited charring course as soon as elected into office.

Conduct

The Mayor, when performing official duties, is the visible presence of the Council. It is important that while being seen as warm and friendly, the office of Mayor is upheld with dignity, avoiding demeaning the role or acting in a way that could be criticised.

Mayor's Allowance

The Mayor's Allowance is paid an allowance

The Council recognises the need for an allowance to deal with the expectations of the office in connection with wardrobe, contribution to raffles, fetes, attendance at charity events, sending flowers and payment of tickets for their consort. It is important that the purpose to which the allowance is put can withstand public scrutiny.

Deputy Mayor

The Deputy Mayor only has a civic and legal status in the absence of the Mayor. It follows that:

Invitations to a function should not be sent to (or solicited by) a Deputy Mayor. The Deputy Mayor should not attend functions in his/her own right but only when deputising for the Mayor.

All invitations should be sent for consideration to the Mayor as First Citizen (via the Office) and, if the Mayor cannot attend, it may be appropriate to “pass down” the invitation. However this should be by no means automatic or desirable.

Gifts

When the Mayor attends an event to which he/she has been invited he/she may be presented with a token of appreciation – often in the form of a bouquet of flowers. It is important to remember that, under the Code of Conduct, any such gifts must be reported to the Council Office in writing, within 28 days of receipt.

There may be occasions when the Mayor will need to present gift. Any such gifts will be paid for out of the Mayor`s Allowance.

Mayor`s Charities

If the Mayor decides he/she wish to support a charity and/or local projects during their term of office he/she should ensure that the charity is non-political and non-discriminatory and should benefit residents of the Parish. Monies must not be donated to profit making businesses established for that purpose.

Mayor`s Duties

The Mayor should undertake the following duties in order of priority as set out below:-

- Attending and chairing the Town Council meeting
- Attending events and functions within Ottery St Mary organised by the Council and other organisations etc
- Attending events and functions outside of the Parish of Ottery St Mary organised by other organisations and bodies

Engagements and Diary

On receipt of an invitation for the Mayor, the Office will forward the Mayor a copy at the earliest opportunity. Invitations need to be replied to within 7 days after they are received. The Mayor should keep a record of engagements and also inform the Office of any times that are unavailable for mayoral duties to ensure the Deputy is available in their place.

The Mayor should make every effort to attend each engagement but if he/she is otherwise engaged the Deputy Mayor may attend, with mutual agreement. The Office will confirm the Mayor’s/Deputy Mayor’s attendance

If the Mayor and Deputy are unavailable, the invitation is to be declined. When required the Mayor will be notified of details such as speech required and would already have received a copy of each invitation together with the attendance form (attached) and they should have informed the Office of whether they wish to accept the invitation as soon as possible.

If the Office have confirmed acceptance and Mayor and Deputy Mayor subsequently cannot attend, they must inform the Office for an apology to be sent on the following working day. Following the attendance at any engagements it is seen as polite and good manners that a thank you email be drafted by the Office on behalf of the Mayor

Disability

The Mayor and Deputy Mayor should inform the Office of any health condition or disability at the start of their term, for which the Office will arrange any reasonable adjustments

Dietary Requirements

The Mayor should inform the Office of any dietary needs, such as vegetarian and/or diabetic requirements.

Dress Code

The Mayor should look smart and well groomed at all engagements.

I Cllr. _____ as Mayor of Ottery St Mary confirm that I have read and will adhere to the procedures outlined in the Policy.

SIGNED.....

DATED:

