



KNUTSFORD TOWN COUNCIL CIVIC PROTOCOL

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VERSION 2023 Revised
OWNER Full Council
APPROVED Draft



LOCAL COUNCIL
AWARD SCHEME
QUALITY GOLD

INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This protocol is designed to assist the Town Mayor and Deputy Town Mayor to understand their roles and responsibilities and to provide guidance for undertaking civic duties.

BACKGROUND

- 1.2 Since it was established in 1974, the council has been styled as a Town Council which entitles the chairman of the council to the style of 'Town Mayor'.
- 1.3 The Town Mayor has the same rights and responsibilities as a council chairman, the office and leadership role of the Town Mayor must be respected by all members and officers of the council at all times.

THE COUNCILLOR BECOMING MAYOR

- 1.4 By virtue of their office, the Town Mayor should seek to use their influence and standing in the role to stimulate community pride, encourage business and promote the voluntary sector. The Town Mayor will likely also have meetings with other dignitaries, attend engagements and generally be in the public eye for their time in office.
- 1.5 The Town Mayor is formally elected by the council from amongst its members at the annual council meeting each May. A Deputy Town Mayor is also elected at this meeting. The term of office for the Town Mayor is one civic year, which runs until the next annual meeting. The Deputy Town Mayor will usually become Town Mayor the following year and Annex D of Standing Orders (repeated as Annex A of this document) outlines how the council determines who should be Town Mayor.
- 1.6 Upon election, the Town Mayor gives a declaration of acceptance of office before the Town Clerk. This may be read aloud
- 1.7 The Town Mayor may choose a consort, which can be their partner, a fellow councillor, a family member or a friend. If the consort is female, she may be referred to as the mayoress.



THE ROLE OF THE TOWN MAYOR

- 2.1 The Town Mayor can expect to undertake a number of civic duties:
- a. Hosting fundraising events to raise funds for their chosen charities/good causes
 - b. Hosting council functions
 - c. Attending functions across Knutsford such as presentations and official openings
 - d. Attending functions outside Knutsford as a representative of the town
- 2.2 The Town Mayor can also expect to undertake a number of duties as chairman of the council:
- a. Presiding over meetings of the Full Council
 - b. Presiding over any meetings of the town meeting
 - c. Maintaining an oversight of council activity, ensuring, together with the Town Clerk, that the council makes legal decisions and operates effectively
 - d. Reinforcing the standards of behaviour expected of members of the council
 - e. Providing *administrative* line management for the Town Clerk
- 2.3 The Town Mayor and Deputy Town Mayor are ex-officio members of all council committees. This enables them to attend any committee as a voting member but it is not expected that both the Town Mayor and Deputy Town Mayor attend all meetings during the civic year. It is customary that they share committee work between them but each is entitled to attend any meeting.

SUPPORT FOR THE TOWN MAYOR

ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT

- 3.1 Day-to-day support for the Town Mayor is provided by the Civic Events Officer, under the general direction of the Town Clerk. The Civic Events Officer is an employee of the council who, as well as undertaking other duties for the council, assists the Town Mayor in organising their term of office.
- 3.2 The Civic Events Officer will usually meet with the Deputy Town Mayor in advance of the annual council meeting to discuss their ideas for their term in office. This will



include making provisional plans for Civic Sunday, discussing the objectives of the charitable fundraising and their general plans for their time as Town Mayor.

- 3.3 All invitations for the Town Mayor should be directed to the Civic Events Officer who will ensure all necessary information is obtained. The Civic Events Officer will then liaise with the Town Mayor before accepting/declining an invitation.
- 3.4 The Civic Events Officer may arrange transport for the Town Mayor to attend events. Whilst the Town Mayor will usually use their own transport to attend functions within Knutsford, alternative forms of transport may be considered for engagements outside Knutsford. The Civic Events Officer will provide guidance on this.

LEADERSHIP SUPPORT

- 3.5 The Town Mayor is the effective leader of the council and wider community. The Town Mayor should be expected to lead in all matters of concern in the life of the town.
- 3.6 The Town Clerk will provide guidance and support in the Town Mayor fulfilling their leadership role.

THE MAYOR'S ALLOWANCE

- 3.7 The Town Council provides an allowance to the Town Mayor to meet the expenses of office. The allowance is taxable income, and it is intended to help maintain the dignity of the office. It may be used as the Town Mayor sees fit such as purchasing clothing for themselves and their consort, purchasing raffle tickets or making donations at engagements and personal hospitality.
- 3.8 The Town Council separately provides budgets to purchase tickets for the Town Mayor to attend engagements where this is required, to host small receptions (such as after the annual council meeting), to organise the council's civic events and to reimburse travel costs.

SUPPORT FROM THE DEPUTY TOWN MAYOR

- 3.9 The role of Deputy Town Mayor is to support the Town Mayor throughout the year by representing the council when the Town Mayor is unavailable.
- 3.10 If the Town Mayor is absent from a Full Council meeting, the Deputy Town Mayor shall preside.



- 3.11 The Deputy Town Mayor has no formal standing as Deputy Town Mayor when the Town Mayor is present, but assumes the precedence and standing of the Town Mayor when they are deputising for the Town Mayor.
- 3.12 Invitations should not be sent to nor solicited by the Deputy Town Mayor and they should not normally attend functions in their own right except when deputising for the Town Mayor. Where the Deputy Town Mayor is invited to a function, it should be referred to the Civic Events Officer as an invitation for the Town Mayor.
- 3.13 If the Town Mayor is unable to attend an engagement, the Deputy Town Mayor will be asked to deputise. Where the Deputy Town Mayor is unable to attend the immediate past mayor will be asked to represent the Town Mayor and if they are unable to attend the Town Mayor may choose another councillor to serve as their representative.

THE MAYOR'S CHAPLAIN

- 3.14 The Town Mayor may appoint a chaplain. This will usually be a member of the clergy from one of the Knutsford churches which will be where Civic Sunday is held.
- 3.15 The role of the chaplain is to:
- give spiritual guidance / advice to the Town Mayor
 - officiate or support the Town Mayor at Civic Sunday
 - to officiate and support the Town Mayor as requested at other events during the civic year such as Remembrance Sunday and the Crib Service

THE MAYOR'S CADET

- 3.16 The Town Mayor shall appoint a Mayor's Cadet from the Air Training Corps, Army Cadets, Fire and Rescue Cadets, Scouts or Guides.
- 3.17 The Town Council will invite the Commanding Officer of the relevant organisation to nominate candidates to the position each February. The nominated cadets should expect to be in the locale for their term of office i.e. from May to May
- 3.18 The Deputy Town Mayor shall review the nominations and appoint a Mayoral Cadet to serve the next Civic Year by April 1st. The chosen cadet will be appointed regardless of whether the Deputy Town Mayor is elected Mayor at the Mayor Making.



- 3.19 The Mayor's Cadet will be sworn in at the annual council meeting and presented with a badge of office. Their appointment shall run until the appointment of the new Mayor's Cadet.
- 3.20 The Mayor's Cadets duties will be:
- Attendance at Mayor Making
 - Participation in Mayoral Processions / Civic Service
 - Participation in the Remembrance Sunday Parade and Services
 - Briefing the incoming cadet of their duties
 - Other occasions as requested by the Town Mayor
- 3.21 It is anticipated opportunities will arise for the cadet attend (with the Mayor) a wide variety of local cultural and community events, including those of other local towns and civic dignitaries. The cadet's education and organisational needs to take precedence.
- 3.22 The Town Mayor's Cadet is expected to be clean and smart at all times, keep confidential any matters learned as a result of the exercise of the office and inform the Civic Events Officer if they are unable to attend any function.

MAYORAL FUNDRAISING

- 4.1 The Town Mayor will select one or more local charities or good causes to support during their term; it is usual for two or three to be chosen. The Town Mayor might select local charities/community groups, the local branch of a national charity or to raise funds for a specific project/initiative. The beneficiaries will be announced as part of a speech at the annual council meeting.
- 4.2 The Civic Events Officer and Town Mayor will agree a programme of fundraising activity early in the civic year.
- 4.3 All funds raised and expenses incurred will be administered by the Town Council from a separate account in the name "Mayor of Knutsford Fundraising Account". Funds raised may not be used for any purpose other than a donation to the selected beneficiaries at the end of the civic year. All expenses incurred must be met by income gained from the fundraising activity. At the end of the civic year the Civic Events Officer will organise a cheque presentation and publicity and the outgoing Town Mayor will announce the amount raised at the annual council meeting.



- 4.4 The Town Mayor may raise funds in a number of ways:
- a. Hosting fundraising events such as dinners, quiz nights, golf days, afternoon teas or bake sales
 - b. Holding the Mayor's Ball
 - c. Undertaking sponsored activities
- 4.5 The Town Mayor relies on donations from local businesses to support the charitable fundraising, providing prizes for raffles, auctions and events. Many businesses readily support the fundraising efforts of the Town Mayor but the personal approach of a visit from the Town Mayor in their regalia has been proven to be very effective.

CIVIC INSIGNIA, PRECEDENCE AND PROTOCOL

CIVIC INSIGNIA

- 5.1 The Mayor's Chain is the outward sign of civic office and may only be worn by the Town Mayor.
- 5.2 The Town Mayor should wear the chain at ceremonial occasions, such as Civic Sunday, Remembrance Sunday, when hosting dignitaries and when chairing Town Council meetings. The Town Mayor does not wear the chain at meetings other than Full Council.
- 5.3 The Town Mayor may also wear the chain when attending functions or undertaking duties as Town Mayor
- 5.4 The Town Mayor should not wear the chain when in another area without the express permission from the council for that area.
- 5.5 Civic insignia should never be worn with military uniform; It may be worn by a Town Mayor who is a member of the clergy with full canonicals with the chain over the gown and it may be worn over academic dress.
- 5.6 The Deputy Town Mayor may wear their insignia at Full Council meetings, civic events within Knutsford or when deputising for the Town Mayor.

PRECEDENCE AND TITLE



- 5.7 The Town Mayor is first citizen of Knutsford and enjoys precedence over everyone except the King (or the Lord Lieutenant) and the Borough Mayor.
- 5.8 The Town Mayor should be addresses as “Mr/Madam Mayor” or, in the presence of the Borough Mayor, “Mr/Madam Town Mayor”. A female mayor is not a mayoress.
- 5.9 Precedence and protocol for visits/events may be set by custom and practice, except on Royal Visits where there is an established order. Local custom is that the Town Mayor enjoys precedence over the Borough Mayor at town events and functions organised by the Town Council. The Civic Events Officer / Town Clerk can provide further guidance on precedence.

ACCEPTANCE OF GIFTS

- 5.10 In the course of the duty the Town Mayor may be offered gifts. All Members should treat with extreme caution any offer of a gift, favour or hospitality that is made to them personally. As is the case with members in general, the Town Mayor remains subject to the council’s code of conduct and the requirements for the registration of gifts above a certain value with the Cheshire East Council Monitoring Officer.
- 5.11 Be aware that the receipt of a gift/hospitality may be regarded as a personal interest and if a matter under consideration is likely to affect a person who gave you a gift or hospitality that must be declared at the meeting.
- 5.12 The Town Clerk will provide further guidance with respect the acceptance of gifts.



ANNEXES

ANNEX A: STANDING ORDERS GUIDANCE ON THE ELECTION OF THE TOWN MAYOR AND DEPUTY TOWN MAYOR

The following is Annex D of Standing Orders.

Notwithstanding the statutory provisions relating to the same, the election of the Town Mayor and Deputy Town Mayor shall be in accordance with the following.

ELECTION OF TOWN MAYOR

Subject to their consent, the Deputy Town Mayor shall be elected Town Mayor on the condition they continue to meet the qualification criteria for Deputy Town Mayor.

In the event of the Deputy Town Mayor not meeting these requirements or not consenting to be elected Town Mayor, then the member who would qualify to be elected Deputy Town Mayor shall be elected Town Mayor.

ELECTION OF DEPUTY TOWN MAYOR

The Deputy Town Mayor shall be the member with the longest continuous service on the council subject to meeting the following qualification criteria:

- a) They must have served as chairman to at least one committee during their current term of office¹
- b) They must have a good attendance record at both council and committee meetings
- c) They must not have been subject of an upheld grievance or code of conduct complaint within the preceding two years

The length of continuous service for a councillor who serves as Town Mayor shall be reset when the next Town Mayor is elected.

In the event of two or more councillors meeting the qualification criteria the Deputy Town Mayor shall be determined by which councillor's surname comes first alphabetically.

In the event of the Deputy Town Mayor not wishing to be elected Town Mayor they are not eligible to continue as Deputy Town Mayor for a continuous term.

NB: It is not permissible for the Deputy Town Mayor to serve as Consort/Mayoress during his term of office.

¹ At the annual council meeting following the ordinary elections, this shall be read to be his term of office immediately prior.



ANNEX B: THE CIVIC LIST

The Civic List shall be used to invite people to civic functions. The Civic Events Officer shall maintain an up-to-date database, updating it at least every June. All former Town Councillors shall be asked if they wish to remain on the Civic List in the June following ordinary elections. All invitations are to include partners and encourage an alternative representative of the body to attend as necessary. The Town Mayor is entitled to extend invitations to a reasonable number of personal friends and family to Town Council Civic Events.

CIVIC DIGNITARIES

- All current Knutsford Town Councillors
- The Cheshire East Councillors for Knutsford and High Legh wards
- All former Knutsford Town Councillors
- All former Knutsford Town Mayors or their widow/widower
- The Mayor of Cheshire East
- The Member of Parliament for Tatton
- The Lord Mayor of Chester
- His Majesty's Lord Lieutenant of Cheshire
- The High Sheriff of Cheshire
- The Mayors of Alsager, Bollington, Congleton, Crewe, Macclesfield, Middlewich, Nantwich, Northwich, Poynton, Sandbach and Winsford
- The Chairman of the councils for Ashley, Alderley Edge, Chelford, Holmes Chapel, High Legh, Lower Peover, Millington and Rostherne, Mobberley, Mere, Ollerton with Marthall, Pickmere, Peover Superior and Snelson, Plumley with Bexton and Toft, Tabley, Wilmslow
- Recipients of the Knutsford Civic Award

COMMUNITY GROUPS AND ORGANISATIONS

- The leaders of all Knutsford churches
- The heads of all Knutsford schools
- The Inspector of the Macclesfield Local Policing Unit
- The North West Ambulance Service
- The Watch Manager of Knutsford Fire Station
- The leaders of all uniformed youth organisations including the group scout leaders
- The Chairman of the Knutsford and District Branch of the Royal British Legion
- The President of the Knutsford and District Branch of the Royal British Legion
- The President of the Knutsford and District Rotary Club
- The President of the Knutsford and District Lions Club
- The President of the Knutsford District Association of Catenians
- The Patron of Knutsford Heritage Centre
- The Chairman of the Gaskell Society
- The District Commissioner for the Alderley and Knutsford District Scouts
- The Chairman of the Alderley and Knutsford District Scouts Executive Board
- The Chairman/equivalent of Knutsford based community organisations/charities
- The Managing Director of the Forum of Private Business
- The Managing Director of Tatton Estate Management
- A representative of the Manchester Airport Group



ANNEX C: MAYOR MAKING

MEETING FORMAT

The annual council meeting takes place in May each year; the Town Clerk usually sets the date of the meeting in January the preceding year. The meeting is a formal meeting of the Town Council which mixes the annual business of the council (appointment of committees etc) and the civic ceremony around the appointment of the Town Mayor.

FOR THE INCOMING TOWN MAYOR

The first item of business at the meeting is the election of the new Town Mayor and the outgoing Town Mayor will call for a nomination. The Deputy Town Mayor will usually have prepared a proposer and seconder for the meeting, each of whom will give a speech (the seconder giving a significantly shorter speech) outlining why they are proposing them for Town Mayor.

Once elected, the outgoing Town Mayor will remove their chain of office and invests the new Town Mayor.

Following their election, the new Town Mayor will then invest the new Deputy Town Mayor with their medal.

The Town Mayor will announce the appointment of their Mayor's Cadet and invest them with their badge of office.

After some formal business, the Town Mayor will give a speech which will:

- Name their consort/mayoress and present them with their chain
- Announce their chosen charities
- Announce the appointment of their Mayor's Chaplain
- Outline their objectives/theme for the year ahead

After the speech from the outgoing Town Mayor, a vote of thanks will be given and the Town Mayor will present the former Town Mayor with a past mayor's medal.

FOR THE OUTGOING TOWN MAYOR

The outgoing Town Mayor will give a speech which will include:

- Reflecting on their year in office
- Thanking their consort/mayoress, the Civic Events Officer, Mayor's Chaplain and others who have supported them during the year
- Thanking the Mayor's Cadet and presenting them with a past service badge
- Announcing the total raised as part of their charitable fundraising



ANNEX D: THE CIVIC YEAR

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

MAYOR MAKING (ANNUAL COUNCIL MEETING)

The civic year starts and ends with Mayor Making. More detailed guidance on this is provided in Annex C.

THE MAYOR'S BALL

The Mayor's (Civic) Ball is the main fundraising event of the Town Mayor's fundraising calendar and is traditionally held towards the end of their term of office (usually around March). The Ball comprises a civic dinner with around 100+ guests, along with various fundraising activities on the night.

REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY

The Town Mayor leads the civic parade on Remembrance Sunday, gives a reading at the St John's Church service and Centennial Memorial service and lays wreaths at three memorials in the area.

CIVIC SUNDAY

This is usually held on a Sunday in June/early July. It includes a parade where the new Town Mayor is presented to the town and a civic church service led by the Mayor's Chaplain.

CHRISTMAS EVENTS

The Town Mayor will be one of the guests switching on the Christmas Lights as part of the Christmas Weekend.

The following weekend the Town Mayor will host the Crib Service, a community carol service led by local ministers in partnership with the Knutsford Catenians.

The Town Mayor will be invited to a number of Christmas services in local churches.

On Christmas Day the Town Mayor joins the Knutsford Lions for some time to help them with their annual community Christmas meal for those who would be alone.

TOWN AWARDS AND ANNUAL TOWN MEETING

The Annual Town Meeting is usually held in April each year. The Town Mayor chairs this meeting which usually includes presentations from local organisations and an open forum for residents to raise matters.



The meeting starts with the presentation of the Town Awards.

RECEPTIONS

The Town Mayor will host a number of civic receptions during the year including:

- a) Refreshments following Mayor Making for invited guests and the wider public
- b) A reception in December for members and officers
- c) A reception for volunteers who have worked with the council
- d) Refreshments following the Town Awards at the Annual Town Meeting

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