



YEOVIL TOWN COUNCIL CIVIC GUIDE

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TOWN CLERK**

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1 INTRODUCTION

This Civic Guide has been produced to assist the Town Mayor, Deputy Mayor, their escorts/consorts, Councillors and employees to understand the civic roles and responsibilities of the Mayoralty and provide useful information for when undertaking a Civic Role.

2 THE ROLE OF THE MAYOR

2.1 Background

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 the Town Council the title of 'Town Mayor'.

The Mayor is elected by the Full Council at the Annual Town Council Meeting (Mayor Making) in May. A Deputy Mayor is also elected at this meeting. The new Mayor and Deputy Mayor each make the following declaration when accepting the Term of Office.

"I,, having been elected to the Office of Mayor of Yeovil Town, declare that I take that office upon myself, and will duly and faithfully fulfil the duties of it according to the best of my judgement and ability."

The Declaration of Acceptance of Office is signed by both the new Mayor and Deputy Mayor and is witnessed by the Town Clerk.

2.2 The Role of the Mayor as Chairman of the Council

A Mayor has the same rights and duties as a Local Council Chairman. The Mayor is the Chairman of the Town Council and is a member by virtue of being elected to the Office of Mayor (ex officio) of all Council Committees. As Chairman of the Town Council the Mayor may exercise a casting vote in addition to their ordinary vote in decision making by the Full Town Council but otherwise has no additional formal powers to those of other Councillors.

The Mayor will concentrate on representing the whole Town of Yeovil during their term of office whilst maintaining an appropriate and active role in their ward.

The Mayor will act as an ambassador for the Town. The Mayor can expect to be asked for public statements concerning Town Council policies and actions. Any statements given should reflect the agreed policy of the Town Council rather than individual or party political views. The Town Clerk is available for advice on any aspect of Town Council policy. On occasion, the Mayor may need to make it clear whether they are speaking as Mayor, as a Councillor or in a personal capacity to avoid confusion.

2.3 The Civic Role of the Mayor

The office of Mayor of Yeovil is respected and held in high regard by the community because of its service to the community and the dignified behaviour of the successive Mayors and Deputy Mayors. A Mayor, by virtue of the Office, can use their position to stimulate community pride, encourage business, promote the voluntary sector and mould social cohesion. The Mayoralty can also be a

front line focus for the expression of community concerns. The Town Clerk will support and advise the Mayor.

A Mayor will also have many meetings, some with dignitaries, numerous engagements and is the public eye for virtually the whole year. With this mind the mayor needs to exhibit a keen and genuine interest in those they meet, show enthusiasm and commitment to the role, ensure they are non-party political, speak up for the town's interests and always be mindful of the dignity of the Office.

For those chosen, or who are thinking about putting themselves forward for selection it is essential to discuss this with employers and family in advance of accepting the office.

3 INVITATIONS AND EVENTS

Invitations are received from a wide variety of organisations to meetings and events within the Town and outside.

Invitations are considered on their own merits and should be ranked in order of priority:

- State occasions
- Invitations and events within the Town
- Invitations and events within South Somerset District
- Invitations within Somerset
- Other events

The Town Clerk will advise where there is a clash of events or any other issue concerning engagements.

All engagements are arranged through the Town Council office through the Mayors PA. Where the Mayor is approached personally concerning an official Mayoral event, they must advise that contact through the Town Council must be made, either by telephoning, emailing (mayor@yeovil.gov.uk) or writing.

All engagements are reported to Town Council to ensure public accountability and openness.

Neither the Mayor nor Deputy Mayor or any other Councillor must solicit engagements or visits or otherwise obtain favours by virtue of office.

The Mayor should not accept engagements that coincide with Town Council meetings. These engagements should be offered to the Deputy Mayor.

4 MAYOR/DEPUTY MAYOR'S ATTENDANCE PRO FORMA

A copy of the Mayor/Deputy Mayor's Attendance Pro Forma (Appendix A) is sent out to organisers that have invited the Mayor or Deputy Mayor to attend their function. The information returned provides with the necessary information to attend, including function details, the dress code and whether a speech is required. If the pro forma is not completed, the Mayor's PA will contract the organisation to confirm.

5 MAYORESS AND CONSORT

The Mayor may signify an official Mayoress or Consort at the Annual Mayor Making. It is usual for a male mayor to appoint a Mayoress, and if the mayor is female they will appoint a consort. The Mayoress or Consort maybe a spouse/partner, fellow Councillor, family member or friend. The Mayoress/Consort will accompany the Mayor on engagements but other than that has no other civic role and must not undertake engagements alone.

6 MAYOR'S CHAPLAIN

The Mayor may signify a recognised minister of religion to act as Mayor's Chaplain at the Annual Mayor Making. The Chaplain may be invited to provide spiritual support to the Mayor and Council and to act as the religious lead on certain civic occasion such as Remembrance Sunday.

7 MAYOR'S CADET

The Mayor may signify up to two young people to act as Mayor's Cadet(s) at the Annual Mayor Making. The Cadet(s) will accompany the Mayor at certain official functions when invited to do so. At the conclusion of the year of office, it is customary for an outgoing Mayor to present the cadet(s) with a small token of thanks. The Mayor should provide the cadet with a description of their roles and responsibilities.

8 MACE BEARER

The Mace Bearer role is to provide assistance and advice to the Mayor. The Mace Bearer is subject to his own set of rules and must adhere to the guidance within "The Official Handbook of the Guild of Mace Bearers". This handbook supersedes any information held within this Civic Guide unless otherwise advised by the Town Clerk.

9 CIVIC REGALIA

Official chains and badges of office are normally worn for civic engagements within the Town. Permission for the Mayor to wear the chain must be requested if an engagement is in another Town or Parish. Invitations should specify the regalia to be worn. In any case of doubt, clarification on the most appropriate regalia must be sought with the event hosts.

Chains of Office will normally be worn in public places where the Mayor is accompanied by the Mace Bearer. The Mace Bearer is responsible for the Chains of Office.

The maintenance and security of the civic regalia is the responsibility of the Mace Bearer under the direction of the Town Clerk.

Guidance on wearing the chain and badge of office and other items of regalia is set out beneath:

Item of Regalia	Guidance on wearing them
Mayors Chain and Badge	Public places: when accompanied by the Mace Bearer

	Private places (e.g. schools or churches): when not accompanied by the Mace Bearer, with agreement of Town Clerk may be worn without the Mace Bearer present.
Mayoress'/Consort's Chain and Badge	The Mayoress/Consort will only wear the chain when accompanying the Mayor wearing the chain and the same guidance applies.
Deputy Mayors Chain and Badge of Office	May be worn without the presence of the Mace Bearer with agreement of the Town Clerk
Deputy Mayoress' Chain and Badge of Office	May be worn when accompanying the Deputy Mayor and without the presence of the Mace Bearer with agreement of the Town Clerk
Past Mayor's Badge	May be worn at civic events when the Mayor is present and at other occasions when clearly indicated on the invitation or notification.
The Mace	Carried by the Mace Bearer before the Mayor at certain events. Placed in front of the Mayor at meeting of Town Council.

The Council provides insurance cover for the regalia and robes. The chains and badges should be kept locked away between engagements and overnight either in the safe at Town House, unless other secure arrangements have been agreed with the Town Clerk. Where the secure arrangements are situated in the individuals' home, it is the Mayor's and/or Deputy Mayor's responsibility to inform their insurance provider. During any holiday period or where it is likely that the Mayor or Deputy Mayor will be away from home for a long period, the chains should be returned to the Mace Bearer to keep in the safe at Town House.

The Council will be responsible for the maintenance of the regalia and robes, including any damage or wear and tear. However, any should be reported to the Town Clerk as soon as possible.

The Mace is the symbol of the Mayor's authority and the Mace indicates that the Mayor is present in his official capacity. The Mace immediately precedes the Mayor on all official occasion. The Mace Bearer carries the mace over his right shoulder, he walks in front of the Mayor and no one (except a member of the Royal family) must come between the mace and the Mayor. The Mace Bearer should attend any engagement when the Mayor is adorned in the robes and chain.

The Mace is used at official ceremonies, such as Mayor Making and also at Town Council meetings. If the Queen is present, the Mace is reversed, which signifies that the Mayor is surrendering the token of his power. When the Mayor is seated the Mace rests horizontally before him with the crown end to his right hand or in the more important direction. Should the mayor occupy a pew in a church the crown of the Mace should be towards the altar.

At the Annual General Meeting, during the ceremony for the election of the Mayor, the outgoing Mayor, after being handed the mace by the Mace Bearer, then hands it to the newly installed Mayor thus publically displaying the transfer of office.

There may be occasion where the Mayor or the Deputy Mayor attends events out of the country, for example with Yeovil Twinning Association. If the Mayor or Deputy Mayor intends to take the regalia out of the Country, for the purposes of insurance they must inform the Town Clerk. In addition, the Town Clerk will supply the Mayor or Deputy Mayor with a letter of authorisation on behalf of the Council.

10 MAYORAL SUPPORT

Day to day support for the Mayor is provided by the Mayor's PA under the direction of the Town Clerk. The exact nature and extent of support and processes will be agreed with the Town Clerk. The Mayor may expect all diary arrangements and processes to support them in undertaking duties.

The Mayor's PA will be responsible for keeping the Mayoral engagement diary and liaison between the events host and Town Council. The Mayor must refer and agree all such matters with the Town Council office to avoid confusion concerning event arrangements.

If the Mayor is unable to accept an invitation then it may be passed to the Deputy Mayor (if this is acceptable to the inviting organisation).

Once an invitation has been properly accepted it should not be cancelled unless absolutely necessary.

All correspondence for the Mayor is kept in Town House; it will be opened by Officers (as with all other mail) and belongs to the Town Council. Items addressed in error to former Mayors will be redirected by the Town Clerk to the current Mayor. Personal invitations and correspondence to former Mayors will be forwarded as appropriate.

11 CIVIC EVENTS

The Mayor is expected to attend the following Civic Events

- Mayor Making;
- Civic Service;
- Super Saturday including Yeovil In Bloom;
- Clergy Tea Party;
- Armistice Day;
- Remembrance Sunday;
- Mayor's Ball;
- Civic Day;
- Civic Evening;
- Town Crier's Competition; and
- St George's Day Parade (where applicable).

Only in extenuating circumstances should the Deputy deputise for the Mayor, the Town Clerk will advise.

12 MAYOR'S CHARITIES

The Mayor should give some consideration to the charity or charities they propose to support in their Mayoral year. The choice is left to the discretion of the Mayor but tends to be a local based charity. The Mayor may identify the charity or charities of his choice at the Annual Mayor Making.

13 MAYORAL ALLOWANCE

The Local Government Act 1972 allows for the Mayor to be paid an allowance to meet the expenses of his term in office. The Town Council sets the budget for the Mayoral allowance during its budget setting process and is the responsibility of the Policy, Resources and Finance Committee. The Mayoral Allowance is separate from the Councillors Basic Allowance

The provision of the Mayoral Allowance is to allow any 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.

General items of appropriate expenditure may include but not be limited to:

- Clothing for civic representatives to be worn at events
- Donations to charities and collection
- Tickets for events
- Hospitality provided by the Mayor
- Travel to engagements
- Appropriate gifts and/or cards.

The Mayoral Allowance is paid to the Mayor in instalments over the year, with heavier weighting to the earlier months of the municipal year to fund expenditure for Civic Events such as Mayor Making and Civic Service. The Mayor will set up a bank account specifically for Mayoral expenditure and the Mayor's Allowance shall be paid directly into this account.

For purposes of transparency, the Mayor must maintain a spreadsheet expenditure, which is reconciled to the Mayor's Bank Account on a quarterly basis by the Mayor and Town Clerk. A summary of expenditure will be produced and reported back to the Policy, Resources and Finance Committee following the end of the municipal year. Any donations for the Mayor's Charities are asked to be made Payable to Yeovil Town Council and any cash donations are paid immediately to the office at Yeovil Town Council.

14 DEPUTY MAYOR

The Councillor elected as Deputy Mayor will support the Mayor throughout the year and will represent the Council when asked to do so.

If the Mayor is not present at a Council meeting the Deputy Mayor must preside if present. The Mace is never carried in front of the Deputy Mayor. In this instance, the mace is placed before the meeting starts and collected when the meeting is finished.

The Deputy Mayor has no standing in that role when the Mayor is present but assumes the precedence and standing of the Mayor when deputising for the Mayor.

15 MAYOR'S END OF YEAR

At the Annual Town Council which denotes the end of the Mayor's Term of Office, the custom is to invite the outgoing Mayor to make a short speech as response to a vote of thanks for their services

during the year. This normally comprises a short review of their period office, thanks to the organisation and people of Yeovil who extended hospitality and have worked with the Mayor and Town Council during the year and to any other supported.

The new Mayor will present the previous Mayor with a Past Mayor's badge.

Retired Mayors are encouraged to help incoming Mayors to familiarise themselves in the role. It is helpful to avoid confusion by members of the public to ensure that an outgoing Mayor does not attend events which are being attended by the incoming Mayor or Deputy Mayor.

16 MAYORS AWARD

Every year the Mayor will award an individual or an organisation who provides a worthwhile service to the community. The recipient(s) of this award will receive a silver salver as a token of recognition and thanks on behalf of the Mayor and the Town. Their name will also be added to the Mayor's Award Roll of Honour.

**MAYOR/DEPUTY MAYOR'S
ATTENDANCE PRO FORMA**



YEOVIL TOWN COUNCIL

Name of Organisation			
Nature of Function			
Does the invitation include a guest	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	

Date of Function				
Time of Function	Start		Approx Finish	
Full address of venue <i>(Please include directions or location plan if the venue is outside Yeovil)</i>				
Time the Mayor/Deputy Mayor should arrive				
Reserved parking	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>		
Name of person presiding				
Type of refreshments <i>(if applicable)</i>				

	Gentlemen		Ladies	
Dress Code (Please tick as applicable)	Dinner jacket	<input type="checkbox"/>	Evening Wear	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Lounge Suit	<input type="checkbox"/>	Formal Day Wear	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Blazer or Sports Jacket	<input type="checkbox"/>	Informal Day Wear	<input type="checkbox"/>

Chains of Office/Badge	Chains of Office	<input type="checkbox"/>	Badge of Office	<input type="checkbox"/>
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If the Mayor/Deputy Mayor is asked to speak, please give full particulars <i>(if applicable, please include the name of the person who will propose or respond to any toast to which the Mayor is making)</i>	
Names of other principal guests	

Secretary/Organiser	
Address <i>(including email if applicable)</i>	
Telephone Number <i>(including mobile if applicable)</i>	

Please complete IN FULL and return this form (not later than 7 days prior to the function) to:- Lucy Jones, Office Administrator, Yeovil Town Council, Town House, 19 Union Street, Yeovil, BA20 1PQ. Email: mayor@yeovil.gov.uk