

ALCESTER TOWN COUNCIL

Mayor's Protocol



Adopted by Full Council – 2nd November 2021
Review date – November 2023

1 INTRODUCTION

This Mayor's Protocol booklet has been produced to assist the Town Mayor and Deputy Mayor to understand their roles and responsibilities and provide some useful information, which may be of assistance when undertaking the civic role.

The Mayor's Protocol also assists Mayors and Council staff to apply a consistent approach when dealing with issues connected to the civic function.

The object of the information is to try and ensure that the civic year runs as smoothly as possible. Not all eventualities will be covered by this booklet but remember that assistance is always available at the Council Offices.

2 BACKGROUND

Town 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 Chair of a Town Council is entitled to the style of 'Town Mayor'. A Town Mayor has the same rights and duties as a local Council Chairman.

The Councillor becoming Mayor

Being the Mayor is different from being a Councillor. A Mayor, by virtue of the Office, can use their decision to stimulate community pride, encourage business, promote the voluntary sector and mould social cohesion.

A Mayor may also have many meetings with dignitaries, evening engagements, late nights, early mornings and is in the public eye for the whole year. With this in mind, the Mayor will need to exhibit a keen and genuine interest in those they meet, show enthusiasm and commitment to the role, ensure that they are non-party political when on civic duty, speak up for the town's interests and always be mindful of the dignity of the Office.

The Mayor is elected by Alcester Town Council at the Annual Town Council Meeting in May. Unless they have ceased to be a Councillor, the Deputy Mayor automatically becomes the Mayor at the next Annual Town Council meeting. A new Deputy Mayor is also elected at this meeting.

The Mayor's Term of Office is for one year and during this time the Mayor continues to be a Member of the Council and presides over the meetings of the Council.

The Mayor will choose their own Consort who can be either a spouse/partner, fellow councillor, family member or friend. The Consort should be given equivalent respect and dignity whenever they accompany the Mayor on civic engagements.

When representing Alcester Town Council, the Mayor and Consort will usually wear the official Chains of Office. The Chains of Office will normally be worn at all official functions within Alcester and they can also be worn at functions outside of the town when invited in an official capacity, although there are some exceptions to this which are usually specified in the official invitation.

The Mayor also has a number of statutory functions which are set out below:

- If present at an Alcester Town Full Council meeting, the Mayor must chair the meeting
- The Mayor has a casting vote in the event of a tie

- The Mayor should ensure, together with the Town Clerk, that the Council makes legal decisions
- The Mayor has a duty to ensure the agenda is followed correctly

3 SUPPORT FOR THE MAYOR

Day to day support for the Mayor is provided by the Mayor's Secretary, under the general direction of the Town Clerk. Regular meetings are held with the Town Clerk.

All correspondence for the Mayor is organised by the Mayor's Secretary (Sarah Duran).

4 MAYOR'S CHARITY

The Mayor may appoint a charity or charities to support during their time in office.

Funds raised for the Mayor's charities cannot be used for any other purpose other than as a donation to the charity identified when the funds were raised, save for covering all reasonable costs to raise the funds.

5 MAYOR'S ALLOWANCE

The Mayor may be paid an allowance to meet the expenses of their office. This allowance may be agreed as part of the annual budgetary process. This is commonly described as recompense for the expenses of maintaining the dignity of the office. The allowance may alternatively be used to pay for tickets, travel and other incidental expenses in attending civic engagements and functions. This avoids the need for the allowance to be processed through the ATC payroll.

6 SUPPORT BY DEPUTY MAYOR

The Councillor elected as Deputy Mayor will support the Mayor throughout the year by representing the Council when the Mayor is unable to attend. If the Mayor is not present at a Council meeting, the Deputy Mayor must preside.

7 CIVIC INSIGNIA AND REGALIA

The Mayor's chain and badge of Office are the outward signs of the civic office held. The Mayor should not wear the civic insignia in another capacity without express permission from the Council.

8 PRECEDENCE AND PROTOCOL

It is suggested that Town Mayors should be addressed as 'Mr/Madam Mayor'. NB - a female Mayor is not a Mayoress.

Precedence and protocol for visits and events is often set by custom and practice, with the exception of Royal visits.

9 RECEIPT OF GIFTS

In the course of the term of Office, gifts may be offered to the Mayor. It is suggested that all Councillors should treat with extreme caution any offer of a gift, favour or hospitality that is made to them personally. Standing Orders require Councillors, including Mayors, to register any gifts or hospitality that are received in connection with their official duties as a Councillor, and the source of the gift or hospitality. The Town Council's Gifts and Hospitality Policy 2018 provides that this applies to gifts or hospitality over £30 in value. You must register the gift or hospitality and its source with the Clerk within 28 days of receipt.

Be aware that this will now be considered a personal interest- if a matter under consideration is likely to affect a person who gave you a gift or hospitality that is now registered.

10 THE CIVIC YEAR - EVENTS

Below is a list of typical events which are organised during the Mayor's year in office. These dates are discussed during a meeting with the Mayor, the Town Clerk and the Mayor's Secretary at the beginning of each new year to suit the Mayor's diary.

Annual Town Meeting

This is not the Annual Meeting of the Town Council. It is a legal requirement that all parishes in England hold an 'Annual Town/Parish Meeting' to which all local electors are entitled to attend. In Alcester, the meeting is chaired by the Mayor. The meeting must be held between 1st March and 1st June each year and is generally held at Alcester War Memorial Town Hall.

Remembrance Sunday

Remembrance Sunday is held on the Sunday nearest to the anniversary of Armistice Day which is on November 11th at 11am. The parade is organised by the Town Council in conjunction with the Royal British Legion. The Mayor is always invited to the service and will lay a wreath on behalf of Alcester Town Council in memory of those men and women who gave their lives for their country. The Mayor is also invited to lay a wreath on Armistice day.

Civic Service

The Civic Service is generally held in September at St Nicholas' Church.

Civic Dinner

The Civic Dinner is held in the Spring usually at Alcester War Memorial Town Hall.

Awards Evening

The Awards Evening to celebrate the achievements of individuals and organisations throughout the year in Alcester. This is held in the Winter and usually held at the Eric Payne Community Centre.

11 END OF MAYORAL YEAR

At the Annual Town Council Meeting (Mayor Making), which notes the end of the Mayor's Term of Office, the outgoing Mayor can make a short speech of thanks.

The new Mayor will present the previous Mayor with a Past Mayor's badge. This meeting is then adjourned for refreshments. A further Annual Town Council meeting is held a week later to complete remaining council business.