

Civic and Ceremonial Protocol

A Member will be elected by Full Council each year to hold the office of Chairman. The Chairman of the Council will be known as the Mayor when carrying out his/her civic and ceremonial role. The responsibilities of the position will be carried out in accordance with the guidance contained in this Protocol. This Protocol should be read in conjunction with the Civic Handbook – The Role of the Mayor and Sheriff.

Key responsibilities of the Mayor

1. To chair meetings of the Council effectively.
2. To preside over civic functions, including but not limited to the Remembrance Service, the reception following the annual meeting and to promote the City of Southampton Awards Scheme.
3. To act and conduct him/herself as the first citizen and ambassador of the Council in promoting the City of Southampton and the Council's aims including its vision.
4. To lead the community in support of the Council's values and visions, to provide community leadership and to proactively engage with the Council, its priorities, aims and objectives and the partners of the Council (including, but not limited to, the local strategic partnership) in supporting the City and its citizens.
5. To assist the promotion of good causes. To promote, raise the profile and gain publicity for projects and events that are of a good charitable or voluntary nature that benefit the citizens of Southampton, particularly smaller organisations.
6. To attend funerals of officers who die in service and civic dignitaries past and present.
7. To raise funds for the charities chosen by the Mayor, and to announce to the AGM Full Council a charity or charities that will be supported during the Civic Year that will benefit the citizens of Southampton. The Mayor will report the amount raised to the AGM.
8. To give a summary of activities / achievements during the year at the AGM.
9. To represent the Council at events, including any international visits which should promote the Council's aims, values and/or vision.
10. To encourage citizenship and participation in the life of the City.
11. The Deputy Mayor will undertake a similar role as the Mayor and will be known as the Sheriff when carrying out his/her civic and ceremonial role. The Sheriff and the Mayor will work together in developing a programme that would successfully fulfil the above roles.
12. To observe civic protocols when undertaking the civic and ceremonial role.

Key responsibilities of the Sheriff

1. To deputise for the Mayor, when appropriate, and undertake the key responsibilities of the Mayor, at the direction of the Mayor.
2. To chair Court Leet and Beat the Bounds.
3. To attend the Annual Sheriffs' Conference.

CIVIC PROTOCOLS

Definitions

In these protocols:

- 'The Mayor's Office' is the office and staff designated by the Service Director: Legal & Governance as supporting the Mayor and Sheriff.

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Mayor, Sheriff and their escorts / consorts, when undertaking their civic and ceremonial roles, shall:
 - 1.1.1 not bring the Council into disrepute through abuse of office;
 - 1.1.2 follow any instructions issued by the Mayor's Office;
 - 1.1.3 not attend any function or otherwise give support to any organisation or person, whose objectives are contrary to law and/or Council policy,
 - 1.1.4 not solicit engagements or visits at home or abroad or otherwise procure favours by virtue of office; and
 - 1.1.5 not overspend the budget / allowance allocated by the Council to the Mayor.
 - 1.1.6 it will be the Mayor and/or Sheriff's responsibility to ensure that, in attending any event or initiative on behalf of the Council when undertaking their civic and/or ceremonial roles, that the Mayor and/or Sheriff and their escorts / consorts, shall behave in a manner appropriate and fitting to their position as First and Second Citizens of the City, and any breach of this protocol may constitute a breach of the Code of Conduct for Members.

2. ANNUAL MEETING OF THE COUNCIL / COUNCIL MEETINGS

- 2.1 The Annual Meeting includes the Mayor Making ceremony. The Mayor's Office will prepare the Council's guest list in liaison with the Service Director: Legal & Governance. Traditionally the incoming Mayor and Sheriff are allowed a personal guest list of approximately 10. These are usually family, friends and work colleagues whom the Mayor invites to the Mayor Making Ceremony and the parlour for refreshments after the meeting.
- 2.2 The Mayor will be guided and supported in chairing Full Council meetings by the Service Director: Legal & Governance, who will provide the Mayor with appropriate support, guidance and assistance including (but not limited to) briefing the Mayor prior to the Council meeting on procedural and other relevant issues.

3. THE ELECTION OF THE MAYOR

- 3.1 The election of a Chairman of the Council (Mayor) shall be the first item of business conducted by the Council in accordance with Local Government Act 1972 and the Constitution. The process shall be that required by law and the Constitution. If making nominations and undertaking this process, members shall take account in nominating any prospective candidate of the responsibilities of the job as set out in this Protocol, and Members shall, subject to the inherent discretion of the Council to elect whomsoever they deem fit as Chairman / Mayor within the law and the Council's Constitution use their best endeavours to avoid a contest at the Annual General Meeting.

4. SUPPORT TO CHARITIES

- 4.1 The Mayor must abide by any guidance issued from time to time by the Service Director: Legal & Governance and/or the Chief Financial Officer in respect of the Mayor's charities and/or the budget allocated to the Mayor by the Council.
- 4.2 The Mayor may select one or more charities that s/he shall announce at the Annual General Meeting, which s/he shall support. These charities will already be established and registered with the Charity Commission. If, in the opinion of the Chief Financial Officer, any charity is unacceptable for legal or financial reasons, the Mayor shall select an alternative.
- 4.3 All administrative functions related to the Mayor's charities must be undertaken by the appropriate officers of the charity in question and not by the Mayor or the Council, or by officers.

The Mayor's Charity

- 4.4 It is expected that the charity will undertake all fund raising and its administration, as the Council does not have the staffing resources to support this type of activity. However, officers are happy to advise the charity as to the suitability of events, appropriate procedures and matters of protocol if required. .
- 4.5 The Mayor's Charity has been registered with the Charity Commission. All monies raised during the Mayor's year of office will be distributed to the chosen charities as soon as possible after the end of the Mayor's term of office.

5. APPOINTMENT OF CHAPLAIN

- 5.1 The Mayor may appoint a Chaplain, and in accordance with the Council's values and visions maintain the establishment of the panel of religious advisers established since 2003. The Mayor's Office shall advise any incoming Mayor on these issues and options.
- 5.2 To encourage a deeper and broader relationship between the Council and faith communities, the religious advisers will act as a 'sounding board' to advise on effective engagement with faith communities, and the impact of Communities and Local Government policy on faith communities.

6. ANNUAL CIVIC SERVICE

- 6.1 The Mayor may hold an Annual Civic Service in June at the place of worship determined by the Team Rector of the City Centre Parish. Alternatively, the Mayor may hold an alternative event which will enhance the Council's understanding of, and engagement, with faith communities in the City. Such events must be inclusive of all sections of the community and open to all faiths. .

7. EVENTS

- 7.1 The Mayor should work with officers to produce a proactive programme, which meets the Civic and Ceremonial Portfolio objectives. The Mayor will take account of the Executive's requirements and priorities in determining the programme. All invitations to civic / ceremonial events to be undertaken by the Mayor and/or Sheriff or any proposal for a civic event or engagement, however arising, will be processed through officers who will liaise closely with the Mayor, conduct any necessary research and advise the Mayor and/or Sheriff on their suitability. Attendance at all engagements will be co-ordinated by officers. Events attended by the Mayor should be of a non-political nature. The advice of the Leader and/or Service Director: Legal & Governance should be sought if necessary. Delegations or visits led by the Mayor to places outside Southampton should be subject to appropriate planning, budget and reporting, and must be organised by officers.
- 7.2 The Sheriff should cover events / engagements that the Mayor is unable to undertake. Where the Sheriff is not available, the Council's representative should be a Councillor (with priority for former Mayors). Invitations should only go beyond Sheriff when it is considered that the lack of civic presence would be seen as detrimental to the Council. Officers should decide this in consultation with the Service Director: Legal & Governance when necessary. As the consorts / escorts of both the Mayor and Sheriff have no legal status, they should rarely attend functions independently of the Mayor or Sheriff. Consorts / escorts must never attend an event / engagement as a representative of the Council.
- 7.3 At events hosted by the Council, such as conferences and seminars, the Mayor will normally give a welcome to delegates. At events promoting Council achievements (eg opening new facilities) the Mayor will normally undertake ceremonial duties such as cutting of a ribbon, and the Leader or appropriate Cabinet Member will normally make the official speech.

8. VISITS ABROAD

- 8.1 Any planned visits abroad should be discussed with officers who will refer the issue to the Service Director: Legal & Governance if necessary. Visits should be for official purposes and not of a personal or political nature.
- 8.2 If the Mayor proposes such a visit, as a guide it will be necessary to consider the following:
- 8.2.1 the purpose of the visit, the benefits to Southampton and its residents and how it will contribute to the city and/or detailed itinerary;
 - 8.2.2 the names of others who will be accompanying the Mayor, details of the costs and any hospitality that will be received and from whom;

- 8.3 Invitations abroad should be arranged through officers. The Service Director: Legal & Governance will decide on any logistical or other arrangements necessary or appropriate or ancillary to any visit abroad, eg whether or not officers of the Council should accompany the Mayor.

9. ADMIRAL OF THE PORT

- 9.1 As Admiral of the Port, the Mayor has no formal powers as such associated with this particular office. However, in view of the historic relationship between the City Council and particularly the Mayor as Admiral of the Port and port-related activities and because of the significance of the port to Southampton's life, the Mayor shall maintain, promote, enhance and support those links, whether in the business, leisure, tourism or other aspect of the City's life.

10. ALLOWANCE

- 10.1 Both the Mayor and Sheriff are paid an allowance during their term of office to reflect expenses incurred. This is to cover general expenses and receptions they wish to host. The Mayor and officers should ensure that overall spend on the civic purse, civic hospitality and civic functions is within budget. The Mayor should abide by any rules of guidance issued from time to time by the Service Director: Legal & Governance and/or the Chief Finance Officer in respect of the budget allocated to the Mayor by the Council.

11. USE OF THE OFFICIAL CAR

- 11.1 The Mayor and Sheriff are provided with transport for official functions via an external service where it is deemed difficult or unsuitable for them to drive themselves. The transport should not be used by the Mayor and Sheriff other than in the civic and ceremonial capacity of these offices. Instructions to the chauffeuring service are given by officers. It is normal for the Mayor or their escort to be collected from the Mayor's residence; where this is not practical, arrangements shall be agreed in advance with officers.

12. USE OF MAYOR'S OFFICE AND PARLOUR

- 12.1 The Mayor and Sheriff may use accommodation (the Mayor's office and parlour) provided by the Council to undertake their duties. Use of this accommodation is managed through officers. The Mayor and/or Sheriff shall not use this accommodation other than for civic and/or ceremonial purposes without the prior consent of officers. The accommodation is the asset of the Council under the control of officers.

13. ACCEPTANCE OF GIFTS

- 13.1 Personal gifts received by the Mayor and Sheriff must be declared in the normal way. Gifts presented to the Mayor and /or Sheriff (in his/her ceremonial capacities as first or second citizen for the City) shall be accepted by the Mayor or Sheriff for the city / Council, may not be retained by the Mayor or Sheriff either during their municipal year or after and shall be passed to officers who shall manage such gifts on behalf of the Council. Gifts received during the year shall be displayed in the Mayor's Parlour. In exceptional circumstances, the Service Director: Legal & Governance may decide that it is appropriate for them to retain a gift (for example, when the gift is of nominal value and/or similar gifts are presented to and retained by other Members and/or officers).

14. USE OF IMAGES OF THE MAYOR AND/OR SHERIFF IN ELECTORAL MATERIAL

- 14.1 It is considered inappropriate for the Mayor and/or Sheriff to appear in any electoral material, whether associated with their election, or another candidate's election, in any official regalia or robes. The Mayor and Sheriff should use all reasonable endeavours to avoid this from occurring. Any such occurrence may well be reported to the Governance Committee depending upon the circumstances.

15. MEDIA

- 15.1 Given the status of the Mayor and Sheriff as First and Second Citizens of the City, any dealings with the media should be conducted via Public Relations and officers should be advised. The Communications team is responsible for dealing with the press and media on behalf of the Council. Therefore, all official communication relating to the Council (but not party political or private matters) should be dealt with by the team. The Mayor and Sheriff should be aware that any private / party political communications they issue may bring their office into disrepute and should always, therefore, seek advice before doing so.

16. SUPPORT FROM OFFICERS

- 16.1 Officers will provide to the Mayor and Sheriff upon their appointment to office information on:

16.1.1 The different allowances and how they may be used;

16.1.2 Awareness of tax liabilities of allowance

16.1.3 Local charities and regular yearly events and functions;

- 16.2 During the Civic year, officers will:

16.2.1 manage the civic diary and ensure arrangements for chauffeur are in place;

16.2.2 receive and follow up invitations;

16.2.3 arrange occasional events;

16.2.4 give proper briefings and advice as necessary;

16.2.5 manage the budget, in consultation with the Service Lead: Elections & Democratic Services;

16.2.6 prepare necessary reports for the Council / Committee etc;

16.2.7 provide such other support as is necessary and appropriate.

- 16.3 Officers are under the managerial control of the Service Lead: Elections & Democratic Services and ultimately the Service Director: Legal & Governance.

17. SUPPORT FROM THE REST OF THE COUNCIL

- 17.1 During the course of the Mayoral year, the Mayor and the Service Director: Legal and Governance will liaise regularly. Officers will take steps in order to enable regular briefings to take place, and will liaise with the Service Director: Legal & Governance to ensure this happens.

- 17.2 At the commencement of the Mayoral year, the Mayor will have meetings with the Chief Financial Officer and Service Director: Legal & Governance, so the Mayor may be briefed and aware of issues of interest. The Mayor's role will include supporting the council's corporate priorities and the key themes that the Mayor wishes to adopt should be explored to ensure they match the council's corporate plan. In this way, all of the engagements and initiatives that the Mayor undertakes will be supportive of the work of the council.
- 17.3 During the Mayoral year the Mayor may wish to be briefed by officers on other issues of interest to the Mayor or on issues that arise relevant to the Mayoral duties. Meetings may also be arranged on behalf of the Sheriff.

18. END OF YEAR REPORT

- 18.1 At the end of the Mayor's municipal year, the Mayor will have the opportunity to review the year with the Service Director: Legal & Governance and the Service Lead: Elections & Democratic Services. The views of the Mayor will be taken into account in making changes to this protocol, the work of officers and in the planning of future initiatives. A report on the work of the Mayor will be included on the Mayor's web page.

19. CIVIC EVENTS CO-ORDINATION

- 19.1 Following identification of the key themes that the Mayor wishes to adopt, a meeting will be held with the Leader of the Council to set a programme for the co-ordination of events. The meeting will ensure that appropriate Members and Officers represent the Council according to the type of function and will advise external organisations to whom representative invitations should be addressed. The programme of events will be reviewed by the Service Director: Legal and Governance as appropriate to ensure that the programme continues to match the council's corporate objectives.