



# Tenterden Town Council

## Civic Policy

Reviewed	Adopted
Reviewed by Policy and Procedure sub-committee	28/02/2023
Revised and adopted by Internal Committee	13/03/2023
Policy version reference	Version 1
Next review	March 2025

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## 1. Introduction

This Civic Policy provides guidance to assist the Town Mayor, Deputy Mayor their escorts/consorts and councillors to understand the civic roles and responsibilities of the Mayoralty. This policy should be read in conjunction with the town council's Standing Orders and Code of Conduct. It is not intended that this policy be exhaustive and advice can be sought from the Town Clerk's Office at any time.

Where reference is made to the Town Mayor, this policy will apply equally to the Deputy Town Mayor or their representative. References made to the Town Clerk, should be taken to include the Deputy Town Clerk.

## 2. Status and legal background

The Mayor is elected by the members of the council at the Annual Council meeting and serves for twelve months (Section 15 (1) of the Local Government act 1972). The Mayor and Deputy Mayor must be an elected councillor of the council and they remain in office until the election of their successor, unless they resign, cease to be qualified or become disqualified from holding office with the town council. The Mayor (or their Deputy) represents the town council at ceremonial functions within the parish boundaries or elsewhere. The Mayor, unless through resignation, disqualification or death, continues in office throughout the municipal year and continues in post until the next Annual Meeting of the council when the successor is elected and the appropriate Declarations of Appointment to Office have been signed.

## 3. Duties and roles

The Town Mayor represents the whole town & community of Tenterden during their term of office, this role sits alongside taking an appropriate and active role in their ward. The Mayor (and in their absence, the Deputy Mayor) acts both as Chairman of the town council and through their civic role, as an ambassador for the town.

### 3.1 Role of the Mayor as Chairman of the town council

In this role, their main duty is to Chair full council meetings in accordance with Standing Orders. As Chairman of the Council the Mayor acts as the leader of Council, ensures fair debate and decision making and promotes good working relationships between all members of the town council to enable decisions to be made effectively.

### 3.2 The civic role of the Mayor

Civic duties which the Mayor may carry out include:

- a) attending functions and events within Tenterden, as a ceremonial representative of the town council;
- b) acting as host on behalf of the town council at functions organised by the council;
- c) attendance at Cinque Ports events and meetings;
- d) undertaking official openings or presentations within Tenterden on behalf of the Town Council;
- e) organising events to raise funds for the Mayor's chosen charities.

### 3.3 Representing the town council

The Mayor is seen as a symbol of the town council and of the town, will often be the public face of the council and will act as its representative at official events. They may be asked to speak on behalf of the town council, to the public or press and in such circumstances should only express the agreed views of the council and not their own personal views and at all time must advise the Town Clerk of their actions. The Town Clerk or Deputy Town Clerk is available to provide a briefing on any aspect of Town Council policy. The Mayor should make it clear whether they are speaking as Mayor, as a Councillor or in a personal capacity. The Mayor must not use the prestige of the historic office of Mayor for personal or political advantage.

### 3.4 Invitations and events

Invitations for the Mayor are received by the Mayor's Secretary via the Town Hall. The Mayor will be notified of the invitations and will decide which ones to accept. Priority must be given to events within the parish of Tenterden and to Cinque Ports events.

On occasions the Mayor may be personally approached to attend an event, these requests must always be directed to the Town Hall for action. If the Mayor cannot attend an event, s/he may request that the Deputy Mayor or the Immediate past Mayor attends on the Town Council’s behalf if appropriate. Once it has been confirmed who, if anyone, is attending, an appropriate response will be sent to the host by the Mayor’s Secretary, who will also check on any details regarding the event, e.g. if a speech or any specific duty is required, dress code, insignia preferred, transport, parking arrangements etc. Invitations to functions must not be sent to, or solicited by, the Mayor.

### 3.5 The Mayoral Budget

The Mayoral Budget may be used to cover invitations to cover attendance at events and activities as set out below.

Location or organising body	Budget may be used for:
Tenterden parish	Cost of attendance, but not travel. The Mayor is expected to use their own vehicle when attending town events. Where the Mayor does not have access to their own vehicle, the Mayor’s Secretary will make alternative arrangements in consultation with the Town Clerk.
Cinque Ports Confederation	Cost of attendance and travel to events.
Locations within a 20-mile radius of Tenterden	Cost of attendance and travel to events.
Events organised by Cinque Port member towns	Cost of attendance and travel to events. Dover, Hastings, Hythe, New Romney, Sandwich, Rye, Winchelsea, Deal, Faversham, Folkestone, Lydd, Margate and Ramsgate

Attendance and transport costs associated with events taking place in other localities or organised by other bodies will not be funded by the town council. While the Mayor may attend and represent the town council at these events, costs will not be met or reimbursed by the town council unless agreed by the town council that it is good for Tenterden and is justified on the basis of intended incomes.

It is the responsibility of the Town Mayor with the support of information provided from the Mayor’s Secretary and the Accounts Officer to ensure that costs of events that they attend and organise during their mayoral year, can be met from their annual budget.

## 4. Support to the Town Mayor

### 4.1 Mayor’s Secretary

Day to day support for the Mayor is provided by the member of staff assigned the role of Mayor’s Secretary under the general direction of the Town Clerk. The Mayor’s Secretary is an employee of Tenterden Town Council who, as well as carrying out other duties for the Council, assists the Mayor during their Term of Office where appropriate. The Mayor’s Secretary will arrange an induction meeting with the Town Clerk and new Mayor, once elected at the Annual Meeting of the Town Council, to review the civic year, discuss lines of communication, diary management, and specific support required. Each Mayor may have different needs or preferences in how they wish to be supported and these must be agreed with the Town Clerk.

The Mayor's Secretary receives invitations for the Mayor and liaises with the Mayor before accepting or declining invitations. The Mayor's PA is responsible where necessary for arranging any transport to the events. The Mayor will normally use their own transport to attend civic functions and events taking place within the parish of Tenterden. Transport may be provided for engagements taking place outside of the parish, as shown in 3.5 above.

If the Mayor is unsure of anything or requires some guidance, then this should first be raised with the Mayor's Secretary, who will provide the necessary information, occasionally this may also require the assistance of the Town Clerk.

## 4.2 Town Sergeant

The Town Sergeant (or their Deputy) will liaise with the Town Clerk and the Mayor's Secretary regarding the details for civic events, carrying out their duties as the council Mace Bearer, Mayor's driver (when required) and caring for the civic regalia (including assisting with robing).

## 5. Mayor's Fundraising

The Mayor traditionally raises funds for one or more local charities or good causes. It is advisable to choose the organisations to be supported at an early stage. The Mayor may decide to support as many organisations as they wish, although chosen organisations must operate within the parish of Tenterden. It is preferable to announce the chosen charity as part of the incoming Mayor's speech. The chosen organisation(s) will be notified, and all funds raised at the events to be held by the Mayor will normally be donated to the chosen organisation(s) at the end of the Civic year. Town Hall staff will arrange a cheque presentation and associated publicity. The Mayor will normally announce the total amount raised for their charity at the Annual Meeting.

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 to cover all reasonable costs to raise the funds.

Fundraising events vary with individual Mayors and may include – for example, a fundraising dinner/ball or quiz night. Other events may be organised by local organisations, clubs or institutions, with proceeds given to the Mayor's Fundraising account. Any events the Mayor wishes to organise should be organised with the Mayor's Secretary. Events which require staff input outside of normal office hours, must be approved by the Town Clerk, to ensure sufficient staff resource is available.

## 6. Deputy Mayor

The Deputy Mayor will support the Mayor throughout the year by representing the town council when the Mayor is unavailable or has another engagement. If the Mayor is not present at a Full Council meeting, the Deputy Mayor shall preside.

The Deputy Mayor assumes the precedence and standing of the Mayor when they are deputising for the Mayor. Notwithstanding the presence of the Mayor, the Deputy Mayor is permitted to wear insignia at Council Meetings and Civic Events within the Town.

Invitations to the Deputy Mayor should be dealt with as follows:

- a) Invitations to functions should not be sent to (or solicited by) the Deputy Mayor. The Deputy Mayor should not normally attend functions in their own right, except when deputising for the Mayor.
- b) All invitations should be sent for consideration by the Mayor as First Citizen and, if the Mayor cannot attend, it may be appropriate to 'pass down' an invitation firstly to the Deputy Mayor, then previous Mayor and then another Councillor chosen by the Mayor.
- c) On the rare occasion when the Deputy Mayor is invited to a function in their own right, there should be a clear procedure whereby the invitation is shown formally by the Mayor's PA to the Mayor, in order that there is no misunderstanding.

## 7. Civic regalia

The Mayor's chain is the outward signs of the civic office held. The Mayor should wear the chain at ceremonial occasions, such as Civic Sunday, Remembrance Sunday, and at other town council civic events. The Mayor may also wear the chain, when officially invited as Town Mayor, to external functions.

The Mayor should not be unaccompanied when wearing the chain of office. S/he may be accompanied by the (Deputy) Sergeant at Mace, their Consort, a driver appointed by the Town Hall or a council officer.

The (Deputy) Sergeant at Mace is responsible for the Mayor's Chain and any other town council property and for their safe return to the Town Hall safe at the end of any function attended. Should the Mayor not be accompanied by the (Deputy) Sergeant at Mace or a council officer, s/he is responsible for returning items safely to the Town Hall.

The Mayor should not wear the civic insignia in another area without express permission from the Council for that area. Civic chains should never be worn with a military uniform. However, a Mayor who is a member of the clergy may wear full canonicals with the chain over the gown. Similarly, the chain may be worn over academic dress.

## 8. Forms of address

A formal distinction has to be made between the style of address of a Borough Mayor and that of a Town Mayor. It is suggested that, at least in the presence of the Borough Mayor, Town Mayor's should be addressed as 'Mr/Madam Town Mayor'. A female Mayor should still be termed as Mayor, not a Mayoress.

## 9. Receipt of gifts

In the course of the duty of being Mayor, often gifts will be offered to the Mayor. It is suggested that 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 Town Councillors in general, the Mayor and Deputy Mayor remain subject to the Code of Conduct for Members which is in force at the time. The Code of Conduct sets out the requirements for registration of gifts and hospitality. The acceptance of the gift or hospitality may become an interest declarable in law if connected in any way with a matter under discussion at a town council meeting.

## 10. Mayor's Cadet

The Mayor may signify a young person from a local cadet force to act as Mayor's cadet at the Annual Mayor Making. The Cadet will accompany the Mayor at certain official functions when invited to do so.

## 11. Mayor's Consort

The Mayor may signify an official Consort at the Annual Mayor Making. The Consort may be a spouse/partner, fellow Councillor, family member or friend. The Mayoress/Consort will accompany the Mayor on engagements but otherwise has no civic role and will not normally undertake engagements alone. If the Consort is also a councillor, they may decide to attend civic functions to which they are invited in either role. However, they will not wear the Consorts chain and/or badge when robed as a Councillor.

Where the Consort is not available or has not been signified the Mayor may, in consultation with the Town Clerk invite an appropriate person to accompany them to an engagement.

## Appendix One – Civic Invitees

The Mayor shall advise officers each year which Community Groups should be invited to Civic events in their year in Office. Former Town Councillors shall be asked annually if they wish to remain on the Civic List, should a former town councillor not attend for three consecutive years, their names would be removed from the invitation list.

Invitations to mayors from other organisations will be restricted to those of the Cinque Ports and Ashford Borough Council.

The Mayor is entitled to extend invitations to a reasonable number of personal friends and family to Town Council Civic Events.

<b>Civic Invitees</b>
Confederation of Cinque Ports - Mayors, Lord Lieutenant and Registrar
Lord Lieutenancy & High Sheriff of Kent
Ashford Borough Council Tenterden Ward Members, Mayor, Leader and CEO, Portfolio holders and Directors of Business and Tourism
Kent County Council, Tenterden Ward Member
Member of Parliament for Ashford
Town Council staff (including some former staff)
Representatives from Tenterden schools and charitable/community groups and town organisations
PCSO and Community Warden