Chepstow Town Council

Mayor’s Handbook / Civic Protocol

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1. Introduction
The role of the Mayor and Chairman of the Council differs from being a Town Councillor, therefore this guidance has been produced as a guide for the Mayor and Deputy Mayor to assist them with their civic role. It also enables Councillors to get an indication of what the role requires should they consider standing for the position of Mayor in the future.

2. Town Mayor
The Mayor is elected by the Full Council at the Annual Meeting in May where the Deputy Mayor is also elected. Both the Mayor and the Deputy Town Mayor sign a Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

Section 245 (6) of the Local Government Act 1972 gives Town Council's the power by resolution to allow themselves the title of Town Council and the Chairman of a Town Council is entitled to the style of "Town Mayor".

The Mayor may choose their own consort who can be either a spouse / partner, fellow Councillor, family member or friend. The consort should be given the same respect and dignity whenever they accompany the Mayor on an engagement.

The Mayor, by virtue of the Office, can and should seek to use their influence and standing in the role to stimulate community pride, encourage business, and promote the voluntary sector. The Mayor is also likely to have many meetings with various other dignitaries, other engagements, and will be in the public eye for virtually the whole year.

The Mayor's term of office is for one civic year and during this time the Mayor continues to be a member of the Council and presides over the meetings of Full Council. In the event of more than one nomination being put forward, the meeting shall select the successful candidate in accordance the Council's Standing Orders.

3. Roles and Responsibilities
The role of the Town Mayor is to undertake Chepstow Town Council's civic and ceremonial duties in a dignified manner so as to uphold and enhance the status of the town and stimulate civic pride.

Responsibilities include:

I. Attend civic and ceremonial functions and local community activates as the Council deems appropriate.
II. Represent the Council at ceremonial events.
III. Promote Chepstow as a place to live and visit.
IV. Host official visitors to Chepstow.
V. Host the Council's annual Civic Service.
VI. Act as Chairman at Full Council meetings in accordance with Standing Orders.
VII. Internal governance, ethical standards and relationships
   - *To promote and support good governance of the Council and its affairs*
   - *To provide community leadership and promote active citizenship*
   - *To promote and support open and transparent government*
   - *To support, and adhere to respectful, appropriate and effective relationships with*

employees of the Council;

- *To adhere to the Members' Code of Conduct and the highest standards of behaviour in public office.*

VIII. Act as a symbol of the Council's democratic authority;

- *As the ceremonial head of the Council, to be non-political and uphold the democratic values of the Council.*

VIIII. To be committed to the values of the Council and public office.

4. Invitations to Events

The Mayor will attend a range of events during the civic year throughout the town and local area. Invitations must be sent through the Office to be a formal engagement. If an invitation is sent directly to the Mayor, the Mayor must pass it on to the Administration Office to ensure that it is included on the Mayors engagements and for insurance purposes.

In the instances that the Mayor is unable to attend an event the Deputy Mayor may be asked to attend to deputise for the Mayor. Should neither the Mayor or Deputy Mayor be able to attend then the invitation will be offered out to Councillors.

A guide to the type of events in a Mayoral Year is attached at Appendix A

5. Regalia

The Council will ensure that the Mayoral Regalia is appropriately insured and will be responsible for the maintenance of the regalia. The Regalia is an historic civic symbol held by the Town Council of which must never been brought into disrepute or disrespected. The Mayor should wear the chain at ceremonial occasions such as Civic Functions, Remembrance Sunday, Royal visits etc. and may wear the chain, when officially invited as Town Mayor, to external functions. The Town Mayor will ensure the following:

i. Sign-in and sign-out the Mayor's chain using the appropriate form;
ii. Store the chain in a safe place;
iii. Take due diligence for the security of the chain, for example, not leaving the chain unattended;
iv. Keep the chain in its proper case;
v. Inform the Office if the chain is lost / stolen / damaged

6. Mayor's Allowance

The Town Council pay a "Civic Head" payment, in line with Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales, to the Mayor for £1,500 to undertake the functions of that office (this payment is processed through payroll). An additional allowance is held by the Administration Office of £1,200 and is used for the Civic Service. There is also a "Deputy Civic Head" payment of £500 for the Deputy Town Mayor. These payments are in addition to the £150 payment for costs and expenses which is mandated to each Councillor unless they opt out.

Although there is no legislation to stipulate how the allowance is spent the list below gives examples of expenditure deemed acceptable:

i. Mileage to and from events
ii. Tickets for events / Raffle tickets
iii. Reasonable clothing allowance for civic events

Chepstow Town Council is committee to accountability and transparency and it is recommended that the Mayor keeps a record of receipts to account for expenditure. Alternatively, if the allowance is held by the Office, the Mayor may apply for recompense of money on issue of a receipt.

7. Receipt of Gifts

In the course of duty of being Mayor, gifts may be offered and 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 requires Members, including Mayors, to register any gifts or hospitality that are received in connection with their official duties as a Member, and the source of the gift or hospitality. You must register the gift or hospitality and its source within 28 days of receiving it.

Receipt of a gift will be a non-pecuniary interest and if a matter under consideration is likely to affect a person who gave you a gift or hospitality then it much be declared.

8. Mayors Civic Event and Reception

The newly appointed Town Mayor will determine the venue and date (historically a Sunday in July - September) in consultation with the Clerk in May. The Administration Office will maintain a standard civic guest list (Appendix B) and the Town Mayor may add their own personal guests to the list of invitees. The Mayor will be required to meet the postal costs of invitations to their personal guests from within the Mayoral allowance. Invitations will be sent by post or email to all invited guests 4 weeks before the date of the event and a list of acceptances with be maintained by the Administration Office.

The Civic Event will generally be open to members of the public and details will be publicised in advance. Members of the public will be invited to apply to the Town Council for an invitation.

The Town Mayor will determine the Order of Proceedings and a standard format for the occasion is available from the Clerk. The reception will normally follow the service with all costs being met from the Mayoral Allowance held by the Administration Office.

9. Civic Christmas Cards

The Town Mayor will select and purchase the Civic Christmas Card from the Mayor's Allowance. The Administration Office will assist with sending the cards to those people on the Civic List (Appendix A).

The Town Mayor may send additional cards to his or her personal acquaintances at their own expense.

10. Press Releases

Civic and other Council press releases will be prepared by the Clerk in consultation with the Chairman.

Copies of all press releases issued by the Council will be retained in the Council's filing system.

Appendix B Sample of annual Civic Events

Other Town Mayor Civic Services

M.C.C. Chairman Civic Service & Charity Dinner

Chepstow Cormeilles Twinning Association A.G.M.

Chepstow Gardening Club (Judging)

Chepstow In Bloom Presentation

Chepstow Round Table Firework Display

Remembrance Services & Parade

Regimental Function

Christmas Switch On Events

Christmas Carol Concerts

St David's Foundation Light Up A Life Service

Lions Club of Chepstow Anniversary Dinner Dance

Chepstow Scouts A.G.M.

ANZAC/Gallipoli Remembrance Day

District Girl Guiding A.G.M.

District Scouts Thanksgiving Service

Appendix B – Civic Guest List

All invitations are to include partners and to encourage an alternative representative of the body to attend as necessary. The Mayor is entitled to extend invitations to a reasonable number of personal friends and family to Town Civic Events.

Civic Dignitaries

Chepstow Town Councillors	All Former Town Mayors
Town Clerk	Staff
Abergavenny Town Mayor and Consort	Caldicot Town Mayor and Consort
Usk Town Mayor and Consort	Monmouthshire County Council Chairman and Consort
Monmouthshire County Councillors representing Chepstow	Forest of Dean Chairman and Consort
Member of Parliament and Guest	Welsh Assembly Members and Guests
Mr B Jones – former Chepstow Town Clerk	Ms S Bushell – former Chepstow Town Clerk

Community Groups and Organisations

Chepstow Chief Librarian	Chepstow Museum Curator
Chepstow Society President / Chairperson	1 Rifles Commanding Officer
British Red Cross branch representative	Bulwark Community Centre Chairperson
Chepstow Fire Brigade Station Officer	Chepstow Lions Club Chairperson
Chepstow Mencap Chairperson	Chepstow Rotary Club Chairperson
Chepstow Round Table Chairperson	Drill Hall Chairperson
Gwent Policy Senior Officer for Chepstow	Royal British Legion Chepstow President
Chepstow Chamber of Commerce President	The Palmer Centre Chairperson
Bulwark Senior Citizens Chairperson	U3A President
Boys and Girls Brigade Captain plus 2 members	Girl Guides District Commissioner plus 2 members
Scout Association District Commission plus 2 members	All Heads of Chepstow Schools plus 2 students
All Chepstow Church Leaders	All others faiths with representation within Chepstow