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CIVIC CEREMONIAL PROTOCOL

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GOVERNING BODY: HYTHE TOWN COUNCIL, TOWN COUNCIL OFFICES, OAKLANDS, 1 STADE STREET, HYTHE, KENT.
CT21 6BG



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Summary

This protocol has been prepared to provide general guidance for incoming Town Mayors / Deputy Mayors regarding their roles and procedures when undertaking approved Town

Council Civic functions, engagements and attending meetings of Full Council

The information in this document is not exhaustive and only covers key points. Advice can be sought from the Town Clerk, the Town Sergeant / Mayor's Secretary as appropriate at any time.

1 Status and Legal Background

1.1 Elections

The Town Mayor and Deputy Mayor must be an elected Councillor of the Town Council and he / she remains in office until the election of his / her successor unless he / she resigns, ceases to be qualified or becomes disqualified from holding office with Hythe Town Council.

1.2 Representing the Town

The Town Mayor is the proper person to represent the Town Council on all ceremonial functions within Hythe Town Council's boundaries or elsewhere.

1.3 Period of Office

The Town Mayor, unless through resignation, disqualification, or death, continues in office throughout the municipal year and continues in post until the next annual council meeting when the successor is chosen and the appropriate declarations of appointment to office have been signed.

2 Requirements of Office – Duties and Roles

There are four important roles for the Town Mayor:

2.1 A symbol of Authority

The Town Mayor is clearly seen as a symbol of the Hythe Town Council, with the insignia of the civic mace, robes, and chains of office etc.

2.2 A symbol of Open Society

The office symbolises an open society with the appointment being made from any qualifying Councillor as the town's first citizen. The Town Clerk is the second citizen.



2.3 An expression of Social Cohesion

The many and varied social engagements that are undertaken by the Mayor provide cohesion to life within the town, linking various bodies and organisations as he / she visits.

In this way the Council's aims and objectives can be conveyed to social, community, educational and economic bodies in Hythe.

2.4 Chairman to the Council

The Chairman / Mayor is elected by the members of the Council at the Annual Council Meeting and serves for twelve months (Section 15 (1) of Local Government Act 1972)

3 Effective and Lawful Decisions

3.1 Expressing an agreed view

The chairman will often be the public face of the Council and will represent them at official events. He / she may be asked to speak on behalf of the Council.

Under such circumstances they should express only the agreed views of the Council and not his / her personal views.

4 Deputy Mayor

4.1 Invitations to the Town Mayor

Invitations to functions should not be sent to (or solicited by) a Deputy Mayor. The Deputy Mayor should not attend functions in his / her own right, but only when deputising for the Town Mayor, unless invited to do so with the Mayor's agreement.

4.2 Not an automatic pass down

All invitations should be sent for consideration of the town mayor (as first citizen). If the town mayor cannot attend, it may be appropriate to pass down an invitation. This should not be automatic or necessarily desirable, particularly bearing in mind the available civic budget. It is the decision of the town mayor in liaison with the town mayor's secretary. With over 300 potential civic functions each year, it is inevitable that the town mayor will need to decline a proportion of functions to undertake this substantial workload. When attending civic events at which Hythe Town councillors are present, the deputy mayor will head the group of Hythe Town councillors in appropriate robes.



5. The demands of being Hythe Town Mayor /Deputy Mayor

5.1 Being a Town Mayor is different to being a Councillor. Consequently, before taking on this demanding role, Councillors should consider how their life might be affected during their year in office:

- The effect on family and friends
- The effect on a career or job
- The effect on a political career
- The effect on personal and religious beliefs
- The pomp, circumstance and protocols that are involved
- The effect on non-council interests
- The effect on the Mayoral partner
- The effect on the Town Mayor's relationships with other Councillors
- The effect on the Town Mayor's relationships with his / her constituents

5.2 The Civic Year

During the civic year, the Mayor supports a wide variety of events throughout the area. The Mayor will receive invitations to all kinds of events, functions and engagements and each invitation is considered equally. Invitations to functions should not be sent directly to (or solicited by) the Mayor. If the Mayor cannot attend a function, the Deputy Mayor may be asked to attend on their behalf.

Expected Duties of the Hythe Town Mayor (as a minimum)

Event	Location	Purpose	Dress code	Requirement from town mayor	Date
ASM/Mayor Making	Hythe Town Hall	Election of new Town Mayor	Full robes and chain	Speech from Town Mayor. Assure Council that they will be unbiased and diligent	Second Thursday in May unless it coincides with Cinque Ports Annual Meeting
Annual Meeting of the Standing Joint Committee of the Confederation of the Cinque Ports	Rotates on a septenary. It was last in Hythe in 2022, the next occasion will be 2029	Annual meeting of the governing body of the Confederation of the Cinque Ports	Smart business attire	Attend and consider proposals from the constituent towns. Accompanied by Town Clerk.	Usually in May but can change if the Host Town decides otherwise.
Civic Sunday	St Leonard's Church, then reception at the Town Hall	Celebrate inauguration of the new town mayor / civic life	Full robes and chain	Involvement in arrangements. Meet representatives of other organisations	Normally last Sunday in June
Armed Forces Day	Undercroft then reception at the Town	Support for the Armed Forces	Full robes and chain	Short speech from undercroft. Take the	Last Saturday in June. In alternate years, Last



	Hall	Community		salute of the Parade Master.	Saturday of Hythe Festival
Hythe Festival	Various	Promote Hythe to residents and tourists with a showcase of local culture	Attire depending on event	Various short speeches. Congratulate volunteers	Starts on second Saturday in July
Hythe Venetian Fete	South bank of Royal Military Canal	Promote Hythe to residents and tourists with a floating procession	Full robes and chain	Short speech. Entertain Cinque Ports mayors, twin Town Mayors and other guests	Third Wednesday in August on alternate years. Procession starts early evening.
Cinque Ports Speaker's Day	Rotates on a septuary. It was last in Hythe in 2015, the next occasion will be 2022	Showcase the Host Town and raise the public profile of the Confederation	Full robes and chain	Parade through Host Town with Consort, Town Sergeant and Town Clerk	Late September or early October
Remembrance Sunday	Town Hall, then War Memorial, followed by a reception in the Town Hall	Remember and Honour those who have sacrificed themselves to secure and protect our freedom	Full robes and chain	Parade from Town Hall to war memorial. Attend service and present wreath on behalf of the council. Meet with guests in the Town Hall afterwards.	Second Sunday in November

5.3 Speakership of the Confederation of Cinque Ports

It is a great honour to be elected as Mayor in a year in which the Speakership of the Cinque Ports rests with Hythe.

You will be required to host and attend considerably more events during your term of office as Speaker



5.4 Other Town Mayor duties may include:

- Acting as host on behalf of the Council at functions organised by the Council
- Attending functions and engagements in Hythe and on occasion outside the town, as a Ceremonial Representative of the Council
- Undertaking official openings or presentations on behalf of the Council
- Organising events to raise funds for the Town Mayor's chosen charities
- Representing the Council during Royal, Celebrity or VIP visits to the town

5.5 Town Mayor's Escort

The Mayor may choose his / her own escort who can be a spouse / partner, fellow councillor, family member or friend. If the escort is female she will be referred to as the Mayoress if male, he will be referred to as the Consort. The escort is entitled to equivalent respect and dignity whenever accompanying the Mayor on civic engagements.

5.6 Support for the Town Mayor

Day to day support for Mayor is provided by the Town Mayor's Secretary under the general direction of the Town Clerk. The Mayor's Secretary is an employee of Hythe Town Council who, as well as carrying out other duties for the council, assists the Mayor during his / her term of office.

5.7 Induction Meeting

The Mayor's Secretary will arrange an induction meeting with the new Mayor following his / her election at the annual meeting of Hythe Town Council. The purpose is to review the civic year, discuss lines of communication, diary management, and specific support required. Each Mayor will have different needs or preferences in the way they wish to be supported by the Town Mayor's Secretary.

5.8 Invitations

The Town Mayor's Secretary receives invitations via post, phone, or email at the council offices. As soon as is practically possible, the Mayor will be notified of the invitations. A programme of confirmed events will be distributed regularly. On occasions Mayor may be personally approached to attend an event. These requests should be directed to the Town Mayor's Secretary to avoid confusion or double bookings.

5.9 Responses to Invitations

The Mayor should respond whether he / she wishes to attend and advise whether they will be taking his / her escort. If the Mayor cannot attend, he / she may request the Deputy Mayor or another Councillor to attend on his / her behalf.

Once it has been confirmed who is attending, an appropriate response will be sent to the host by the Town Mayor's Secretary who will also check on any details regarding the event, eg if a speech or any specific duty is required; dress code; insignia preferred; transport; parking arrangements etc.



5.10 Town Mayor's Correspondence

All correspondence for the Mayor is kept in the council offices. It is courteous to send a letter of thanks to his / her host after the event.

5.11 Liaison for Civic Events

The Mayor's Secretary / Town Sergeant will liaise with the Town Clerk regarding the arrangements for civic events, carrying out his / her duties as the Council Mace Bearer, Town Mayor's driver and caring for the civic insignia. The Town Sergeant will collect the Mayor and his / her consort from their home address.

As with all Town Council staff, the Mayor's Secretary / Town Sergeant is responsible to the Town Clerk, not an individual Councillor including the Mayor.

6.The Town Mayor's Charities

6.1 Local Good Causes

The Town Mayor traditionally raises funds for local charities in Hythe. It is advisable to choose one main or two / three smaller charities and other good causes.

The incoming Mayor should advise the Town Mayor's Secretary of their nominated charities/good causes at the induction meeting. The chosen charities will be formally notified by the Mayor's Secretary and all funds raised at events will be held in the Town Mayor's charity account and presented at the end of the year in office.

6.2 Fund Raising Events

During the Mayor's term of office, it is recommended that he / she hold a main fundraising event for his / her nominated charities such as:

- A ball
- A dinner or dance
- Something specific to the town mayor's trade or profession

Often the Mayor will also host two or three smaller events such as:

- Car boot fair on Hythe green
- An auction
- A concert
- A quiz or race night

6.3 Cost Neutral

Events must be cost neutral to the Council. The Mayor's Secretary will be able to give advice on suitable events. Funds raised for the Mayor's charities cannot be used for any other purpose than as a donation to the agreed charities, except to cover reasonable costs associated with raising the funds.



6.4 Cheque Presentation

The Mayor will announce the total amount raised for his / her charities at the end of the term of office and may wish to present cheques to them at the annual town meeting. It is advisable to invite local press to any presentations.

7 Civic Allowance and what Expenses can be Met

7.1 Purpose of Civic Allowance

Hythe Town Council agrees the civic allowance in its annual budget resolution. The civic allowance may be used to meet related expenses for the costs of being in office including the reasons below, all of which are subject to the approval of the RFO.

- Clothing specifically required for activity as Town Mayor (Robes)
- Collections
- Sending flowers
- Donations to charities
- Purchase of raffle tickets
- Purchase of tickets for Mayoralty events (limited to one guest)
- Personal hospitality (including drinks, lunches, and dinners) in pursuit of civic duties
- One-off civic events to meet travel costs or fund-raising events tickets

Costs of items can only be claimed if the recipient warrants that he / she will declare the full cost to HMRC as a benefit in kind.

7.2 Declaring Receipt of Gifts

The Kent Code of Conduct adopted by Hythe Town Council requires all Councillors including the Town Mayor to make declarations of any gifts or hospitality over the value of £100, whether accepted or declined. The record book for the declaration is kept by the Town Clerk. The declaration should be made before the end of 28 days beginning with the day of receipt / acceptance

8. Transport

8.1 Vehicle

The Town Sergeant is required to demonstrate to the Town Clerk that he/she has a valid driving licence and appropriate insurance to drive a vehicle for the purpose of driving the Mayor and / or the Deputy Mayor as requested to appropriate civic events, engagements, and functions. Most engagements will be local with occasional visits to other Cinque Ports.

8.2 If the Town Sergeant is not available

In the event of the Town Sergeant being unavailable and if civic insignia is not required, then the Town Mayor or Deputy Mayor can make their own travel arrangements with any travel costs being charged to 'Travel'. If civic insignia is required security protocols insist a substitute for the Town Sergeant must be found, else the trip cannot proceed.



9. Civic Insignia, Robes, Chain, and Maces

9.1 Separate Robes

The Mayor and Deputy Mayor each have separate robes of office, chains, and badges. The Deputy Mayor must not wear the Town Mayor's robes or chains.

The Deputy Mayor may only wear civic insignia with the town Mayor's approval.

Robes and chains may only be worn when the Mayor or Deputy Mayor are accompanied by the Town Sergeant, or a Hythe Town Council approved attendant.

9.2 Rules Governing Civic Dress Code

Occasion	Town Mayor	Deputy Mayor
If maces are used, it is normal Cinque Ports civic protocol for all Town Councillors and the Town Clerk to be robed.		
Special and public functions connected with the business of the Council at which royalty is present	Full robes / chain and maces	Full robes / chain
Civic Dinners	Chain and robes at reception	Chain and robes at reception
Civic Reception	Chain or badge	Chain or badge
Non Civic function within the town at which Royalty is present	Chain (and robes if requested)	Chain (and robes if requested)
Non Civic event within the town at which royalty is not present	Chain or badge	Chain or badge
Charity meetings, fetes, bazaars etc in the town	Chain or badge (robes if requested)	Chain or badge
Any function outside the town, subject to meeting the guidelines specified in Section 6 of this protocol.	Robes, chain, or badge, as requested by the organisers and agreed by the Mayor or Town Mayor of the area, where the function is held, subject to travelling in the civic vehicle	Robes, chain, or badge, as requested by the organisers and agreed by the Mayor or Town Mayor of the area, where the function is held, subject to travelling in the civic vehicle



9.3 Civic Insignia Outside Hythe

The Town Mayor or Deputy Mayor should not wear any civic insignia in another town, district or parish without the express permission of that Council.

Permission should be obtained by the Town Mayor's Secretary.

9.4 Removing Hats/Bowing

When wearing official robes and hats the Town Mayor/Deputy Mayor should remove their hats and females should bow:

- To acknowledge salutes
- During the playing of the National Anthem
- In the presence of a member of the Royal family
- As each section passes the salute
- When the Colours pass

9.5 Badges of office for past Mayor/Mayoress

It is traditional for outgoing Town Mayors and Mayoresses to be given a past Mayor's / Mayoresses badge of office. These badges may only be worn:

- When the Town Mayor is in robes at a Council meeting
- When the Town Mayor asks for such badges to be worn
- At invited Ceremonial events when robes are worn
- When invited to do so in another authority's area

