

## LYDD TOWN COUNCIL

### CIVIC PROTOCOL

#### **Background**

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 Chairman 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 and is elected by the full Council at the Statutory Annual Town Council meeting in May. A 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.

Nominations are submitted in advance except for election year and must be seconded by another Councillor with the vote taking place at the Annual Mayor Making in May.

#### **Role of Mayor**

The role of the Mayor is to undertake Lydd Town Council's civic and ceremonial duties in a dignified manner so as to uphold and enhance the status of the town and encourage civic pride. This is of significant importance and should be kept in mind when the Mayor carries out their duties throughout the year and in deciding what initiatives they choose to undertake.

During the year the Mayor is invited to support a wide range of events in the Parish of Lydd and receives invitations to many events, functions and engagements. If the Mayor cannot attend a function the Deputy Mayor may be asked to attend on his/her behalf.

Duties which the Mayor may carry out include:

- Hosting functions organised by the Council
- Attending functions and engagements in the Parish of Lydd and outside as a ceremonial representative of the Council
- Official openings or presentations on behalf of the Council
- Organising events to raise funds for the Mayor's chosen charities
- The Mayor will choose to appoint his or her own consort for the Mayoral term who should be given equivalent respect and dignity when accompanying the Mayor on Civic engagements.

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

- If present at the 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 (with the Town Clerk) that the Council makes legal decisions
- The Mayor has a duty to ensure that the agenda is followed correctly

#### **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. The Mayor's Secretary is an employee of Lydd Town Council who as well as carrying out other duties for the Council assists the Mayor with organising their Term of Office.

This position includes arranging a meeting with the new Mayor, once elect at the Annual Council meeting to arrange the Civic year, discuss lines of communication, diary management and the specific support required. The Mayor is provided with an I-Pad for use throughout their Term of Office. This must be returned when they relinquish the role of Councillor

The Mayor's secretary receives both Civic and Social invitations for the Mayor usually by post or email, any verbal invitations to the Town Mayor must be confirmed in writing to the Mayor's secretary before being included on the list of invitations for the Mayor to consider.

The Mayor's secretary following providing this information to the Mayor will respond on their behalf to the Organisers of the function in a timely manner.

**This process will be reviewed when the Councillor in the role of Mayor changes.**

The current Mayor Cllr Bob Jones was invited to meet with the Town Clerk and Mayor's secretary on Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2025 to discuss and refine the procedures around management of the Mayor's diary so as not to cause unnecessary workload and printing and discuss the boundaries around attendance at functions and events for the forthcoming Mayoral year

Cllr Jones confirmed that he only wishes to receive invitations from all organisations falling within the Parish of Lydd, the Councils which fall within the boundaries of the Cinque Ports geography and will include all Civic and Ceremonial events relating to the Cinque Ports outside of this geography and events arranged by the Lord Warden.

***This geographical area to be reviewed following Devolution and Local Government reorganisation or a Local Government Boundary Review.***

All invitations arriving within the agreed boundary will be sent to the Mayor by email so that these may be considered. The Mayor's secretary to ensure that all details including menus, parking arrangements etc are sent to the Mayor with the invitation if available.

The Mayor to respond to the Mayor's secretary within 7 days with an **Accept or Decline** response so that these can be dealt with in a timely manner.

Any invitations outside the scope detailed above will receive an immediate response of **Decline** to be sent by the Mayor's secretary and will not be shared with the Mayor or their consort for their consideration.

The Mayor's secretary **will not print** any paperwork until a response to accept the invitation has been received from the Mayor. The Mayor will return any menu choices to the Guild Hall for action by the Mayor's secretary.

The Mayor should include when accepting an invitation whether he/she will be taking their consort. If the Mayor cannot attend, they may request that the Deputy Mayor attend on their behalf. The cost of this will be covered by the Mayoral allowance as set out in the Councils agreed budget head.

Once it is confirmed who will be attending the appropriate response is sent to the host organiser by the Mayor's Secretary who will check on other details such as dress code, Chains of Office or badges, transport and parking arrangements and refreshments.

Only the confirmed events are entered into the Mayor's office diary detailing as much information as possible. This information is to be shared with the Mayor.

If an event is offered to the Deputy Mayor who then declines the invitation then an appropriate response to the organiser will be sent by the Mayor's Secretary.

All correspondence for the Mayor is kept by the Mayor's Secretary in the Guild Hall. It is courteous of the Mayor to send a personal thank you letter to the host after the event.

The Mayor's Secretary will also support the Mayor in responding to letters sent to the Guild Hall for their attention by providing letterhead, envelopes and stamp and posting or arranging hand delivery of the Mayor's replies. The Mayor's Secretary does not have the specific authority to respond on behalf of the Mayor but may assist at the Mayor's request. All civic engagements are arranged through the Town Council Officers and should be reported to full Council to ensure public accountability and openness.

Where the Mayor is approached personally concerning an official Mayoral event they must advise that the Town Council office is the only route through which an engagement is authorised.

### **Mayor's Charity**

The Mayor's charity traditionally raises funds for local charities in the Parish of Lydd or the local area. It is advisable to choose the charity as soon as possible after election and to

make a public announcement. The Mayor may decide on one main charity or support two or three local charities which will be published on our website. The Annual Town Meeting (Parish Assembly) is an appropriate time to present the cheques to the nominated Charities.

### **Mayor's Allowance**

The Mayor has the use of an annual allowance from the Council as agreed in the Town Council's budget. The allowance can be used for expenses such as:

To meet the expenses of hosting official functions

To cover the expenses of attending official functions and event such as food and travel expenses

There is a separate Mayoral Scheme which sets this out in more detail.

Payment for tickets etc for functions being attended by the Mayor will be made from the allowance when the Mayor's Secretary accepts the invitations.

The Mayor must keep accurate records of other expenses incurred and provide receipts to ensure these are in line with the approved budget and guidelines adopted by the Council.

### **Mayor's Robes and Chains**

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

The mayoral chain can only be worn at mayoral engagements. It must not be worn when entering a neighbouring authority unless permission granted by the Mayor of that authority. Similarly, Mayors visiting Lydd will ask permission to wear their chains. On other occasions the badge of office only will be worn.

The Chains and Regalia are listed on the Asset Register and insured by Lydd Town Council. We are obliged to inform our insurers if the protocol in relation to the safe keeping of the Chains is not adhered to.

The Chains are stored in the safe which has been approved as a secure place by our insurers who have received photographs and details of the Guild Hall safe which has been confirmed to meet their requirements for the insurance to be valid.

Lydd Town Council keeps a book into which each movement of the Chains is recorded to satisfy the audit trail for our insurers.

The Chains must be signed out of the Guild Hall and signed back in on their return

If the Chains are needed out of office hours, then the Town Sergeant has responsibility to collect and return the Chains to the safe.

The Chains may not be removed from the Guild Hall to be worn unless the Mayor's Secretary has accepted an invitation to an event on behalf of the Mayor and it is confirmed and recorded in the Mayor's diary so that we know the whereabouts of the Chains at all times.

If the Mayor is attending a local event without the Town Sergeant present in the Town and Parish of Lydd, they may wear the Chains on the understanding they are kept with the Mayor at all times and they are not handed to anyone else. It is the responsibility of the Mayor to insure the Chains whilst in their home or car/van etc and be in their possession at all times. The Mayor must insure the Chains for the value as in the Asset Register at the time and provide a copy of that insurance to the Mayor's secretary. The Mayor may collect and return the Chains to the Guild Hall if the event is taking place during Guild Hall working hours. If the event is outside the Guild Hall working hours the Chains must be collected and returned under arrangements with the Town Sergeant. If the Town Sergeant is not available due to holiday etc the Mayor must ensure that the Chains are kept in a secure locked safe which meets the requirements of our insurers at the time and return to the Guild Hall at 9am on the next working day.

During an event with the Town Sergeant in attendance the Mayor should take advice from the Town Sergeant for the security of the Chains, particularly when outside of the Parish of Lydd. The Mayor should not remove the Chains at an event without the

prior knowledge of the Town Sergeant who will then take responsibility for the Chains. If travelling abroad the Chains must be in the hands of the Town Sergeant or Town Mayor at all times and never checked in the hold on an airplane. The Town Sergeant is the guardian of the chains and the Mayor should defer to the Town Sergeant advice in relation to the wearing and safety of the Chains. The security of the Chains will be discussed on the change of Lydd Town Council insurers and the insurers will be consulted from time to time and the protocol and policy reviewed as necessary in accordance with their guidance.

### **Civic Events**

There are a number of Civic events during the year which the Mayor is expected to attend and the Town Sergeant has dedicated hours set aside to accompany the Mayor at these events. Examples of these are (but not limited to):

Annual Council meeting Mayor Making

Mayor's Sunday

Annual Town Meeting (Parish Assembly)

Confederation of the Cinque Ports Standing Joint Committee, Speaker's Day, Walmer Castle Remembrance Sunday

Twinning Events

Honorary Freeman Ceremonies

Lydd Club Day

Christmas Band Concert

Other Council Civic Services, Civic Events etc

**Civic events will require the wearing of robes (on occasions) and the Chains of Office and the Town Clerk and Town Sergeant will normally be in attendance at these events. Confederation of the Cinque Ports events may also specify the attendance of the Deputy Mayor or Cinque Port Champions and on these occasions their black Council robes should be worn.**

The Mayor's secretary will ensure that copies of invitations and all paperwork will be provided without delay for the Town Clerk, Deputy Mayor and/or Cinque Port Champion for these occasions.

### **Transport to functions and events outside the Parish of Lydd**

Where an event requires the wearing of robes by the Mayor, Deputy Mayor, Town Clerk etc then the Town Sergeant should be in attendance and act as the driver and custodian of the regalia. This will fall under his Civic duties for which the honorarium is given.

For Official social functions sanctioned by the Town Council the Mayor may use another driver such as car share with other Mayors or a registered Taxi service where the cost may be claimed from the approved Mayoral allowance on production of an invoice or receipt.

### **Non official functions**

The Mayoral chains must not be worn during non-official functions or personal events such as:

Private gatherings

Social events not sanctioned by the Town Council

Any event where the Mayor is not representing the Town Council in an official capacity

### **Review**

This protocol will be reviewed regularly to ensure it remains relevant and effective,