

TELSCOMBE TOWN COUNCIL



Mayor & Deputy Mayor's Policy (including Protocol, Duties and Responsibilities)

Introduction

The office of Town Mayor is one of the oldest civic roles in the United Kingdom, with a long and evolving history. While its responsibilities and public profile have changed over time, it remains an important part of local civic life.

This Policy has been prepared to support the Town Mayor and Deputy Mayor in understanding their roles and responsibilities, and to provide practical guidance to assist them in carrying out their civic duties.

Election of the Mayor

In accordance with the Local Government Act 1972, Section 15 (1), The Mayor/Chair shall be elected by the Council at its Annual Meeting from among its elected Members, (not a co-opted member) and shall hold office until the next Annual Meeting, unless they resign or cease to be a Member of the Council. Election of the Mayor for the forthcoming civic year must be the first item on the agenda as per Standing Orders.

Duties & Responsibilities

The primary function of the Mayor is to act as Chairman of the Council and preside over meetings of the Council. If they are present at a meeting of the Full Council, they must preside. When present at the Annual Town Meeting the Mayor must also preside. If the Mayor is not present and the Deputy Mayor is present then the Deputy Mayor must preside.

The Mayor and Deputy Mayor will be full voting ex-officio members of Committees and Sub-Committees and required to attend where possible, all Council functions. At these meetings they are to ensure that the minutes are an accurate and complete record of proceedings. They should also ensure that procedures are followed correctly and that Standing Orders, protocols and agendas are adhered to.

The Mayor should ensure that any Councillors proposing minutes were actually present at the meeting. The Mayor and Deputy Mayor must remain apolitical at all times, especially whilst performing official duties.

Protocol

The Mayor is the First Citizen of the town and should be prepared to take the lead in all matters of concern in the life of the town, e.g. an appeal, as well as leading civic events.

In the event of the Mayor being unable to attend any public function, they may request the Deputy Mayor takes their place. If the Deputy Mayor does this, suitable reimbursements from the Mayor's Allowance should be made to the Deputy Mayor. Should the Mayor, or Deputy acting as a substitute, wish to claim for monies not stipulated in the Mayor's Allowance, these should be discussed and agreed with the RFO prior to incurring them.

The Mayor should not accept an invitation to attend, in his official capacity, a function in another town or parish, district or borough without the consent of the Chairman of the relevant Town or Parish Council and/or District/Borough Council. The Mayor should not, even when such consent has been obtained, wear the Mayor's chain of office without approval from the Mayor/Chairman of the town being visited. There is an agreement (renewable each year) with adjoining town & parish councils that the Mayor may wear the Mayor's chain of office.

The Mayor and Deputy Mayor's chain of office should be worn at Full Council meetings and whenever the Mayor or Deputy Mayor are on official business representing the residents and Council of Telscombe Town. As such, it is important that appropriate clothing be worn on such occasions and that the actions and opinions expressed by the Mayor/Deputy Mayor do not compromise their office. Civic chains should never be worn with military uniforms.

In the absence of the Mayor, the Deputy Mayor is entitled to the Mayor's right of precedence within the town.

In the course of the duty of being Mayor/Deputy Mayor gifts will sometimes be offered. Our Code of Conduct requires all Members including Mayors/Deputy Mayors to register gifts and hospitality worth more than £25. Such gifts and hospitality need to be registered at the Council office within 28 days of receipt.

All offers of gifts, favours or hospitality should be viewed with extreme caution. The Mayor is personally responsible for decisions connected with the acceptance of such offers AND for avoiding the risk of damage to public confidence in local government. Mayors should, therefore, bring before Council any offers that may compromise that position.

If the Mayor is requested to travel abroad as a representative of the Town, it must be agreed by full Council prior to commencement of travel.

Support for the Mayor

Office staff will keep the Mayor's diary of engagements and provide such administrative service as resources will permit. The Admin Assistant is the current point of contact and oversees all mayoral engagements and invitations. A weekly diary of events can be printed or access provided to an online diary if preferred.

Telscombe Town Council has agreed a Civic Allowance of £1,500 to help with the cost of office. See Appendix 1 for a list of agreed valid expenses.

An audit of all monies paid to the Mayor, or Deputy acting as representative, from the Mayor's Allowance should be made available for public scrutiny. At the end of the Mayor's term of office and after any outstanding payments to them from the Mayor's Allowance have been paid, if any monies remain in the Mayor's Allowance they should pass to general reserves. An outgoing Mayor cannot make claims on the Mayor's Allowance after the end of their term of office.

Mayor's Fundraising Monies

The Mayor can nominate a maximum of 3 charities that benefit the parish and surrounding neighbourhoods. One or more should be announced upon their election at the Annual Council meeting and the remaining charities should be announced within 3 months.

In the interests of transparency and best practice and to avoid potential conflicts of interest, a charity, group or organisation that has a Councillor member or Trustee should be excluded.

All monies in the Mayor's charity fund must be allocated by the outgoing Mayor prior to the end of their term of office or they will be carried forward to the incoming Mayor's charity fund. An audit of all monies raised by anyone for the Mayor's Charity fund should be available for public scrutiny. All monies raised for the Mayor's Charity fund should be paid into that fund within five working days of receipt. If such monies are raised by individuals or bodies other than the Mayor, an official receipt of their presentation to the Mayor's Charity fund should be issued to the fundraiser.

Past Mayor's Badge

Past Mayors are given a badge in recognition of their service to the town. The cost of this is included in the Council's budgets. Any Insignia relating to past mayoral terms of office are personal mementos only and do not indicate any official representation of the Town or its Council. After the Mayor's term of office has ended, there will be no requirement to officially represent the Town or Council.

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Policy	Mayor's Policy
Review Cycle	Every 3 years, or earlier in the event of legislative changes
Date Last Adopted	20 th May 2026
Previous Adoption Dates	15 th September 2021, 18 th September 2024
Responsibility	Policy & Resources Committee and then adoption by Full Council

Appendix 1

Mayor's Allowance

Section 15(5) of the Local Government Act 1972 provides that Parish and Town Councils may pay its Mayor "for the purpose of enabling him to meet the expenses of his office such allowance as the council think reasonable."

The Mayoral Allowance is expected to defray the cost associated with the office of Town Mayor and payments for the following are allowed:-

- Travelling to functions that the Mayor has been invited to in his/her capacity as Mayor
- To cover other costs of attending functions, e.g. purchase of raffle/draw tickets
- To cover tickets for events
- Making monetary contributions to local charity and community organisations
- Supporting the Mayor's chosen charity/charities
- Hospitality/reception costs
- To provide Civic gifts
- One off events held by the Mayor
- To provide suitable outfits to wear to official functions