

Elloughton cum Brough Town Council

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CIVIC PROTOCOL

Document History

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Town Clerk

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This Civic Protocol booklet has been produced as guidance to assist the Chairman and Vice Chairman to understand their civic roles and responsibilities and provide some useful information, which may be of assistance to those assisting them in their civic functions.
- 1.2 Not every eventuality is covered in this booklet, but assistance is always available from the Town Council Office.
- 1.3 Section 245 (6) of the Local Government Act 1972 gives Parish Councils the power by resolution to give themselves the title of Town Council and that the Chairman of a Town Council is entitled to the style of 'Town Mayor'. However, it should be noted that the titles of 'Town Mayor' or 'Deputy Town Mayor' are not currently used by the Town Council.
- 1.4 Instead those elected to the position of Chairman (as per Section 15 & 24 Local Government Act 1972) and Vice Chairman at the Annual Meeting of Council are expected to undertake a civic role.
- 1.5 The new Chairman makes the following declaration when accepting the Term of Office at the Annual Meeting of the Town Council [as per the Local Elections (Declaration of Acceptance of Office) Order 2012, SI 2012 No. 1465]:
"I [insert name of office holder] having been elected to the office of Chairman of the Town of Elloughton cum Brough declare that I take that Office upon myself, and will duly and faithfully fulfil the duties of it according to the best of my judgment and ability."
- 1.6 The Chairman and Deputy Chairman, by virtue of the office, can use the position to stimulate community pride, encourage business, promote the voluntary sector, mould social cohesion, have meetings with dignitaries, attend engagements, and be the public face of the Town Council.
- 1.7 The Chairman and Deputy Chairman's term in office is for one year and during this time they both continue to be a member of the Council, with the former carrying out the statutory duties of a Chairman and the latter those outlined in Standing Orders.

2. Civic roles and functions

- 2.1 During the civic year, the Chairman supports a wide variety of events throughout the Town Council's area. If the Chairman cannot attend a function, the Vice Chairman may be asked to attend on his/her behalf.
- 2.2 Duties which the Chairman may carry out include:
 - Organising events to raise funds for charity;
 - Acting as host on behalf of the Council at functions organised by the Council;
 - Attending functions within the Town Council's area, or on occasions outside the town as a ceremonial representative of the Council;
 - Undertaking official openings or presentations within the Town Council on behalf of the Town Council;
 - Representing the Council during royal visits to the town.

- 2.3 The Chairman should at all times act with dignity and integrity and should do nothing to bring the office into disrepute.
- 2.4 Where possible and practical, the Chairman should be prepared to accept invitations to engagements. It would be advisable not to have conflicting interests or other duties which interfere with the duties of the Chairman.
- 2.5 A Chairman may prepare a brief biography (no more than around 500 words) for use by the media and in connection with official visits.
- 2.6 When representing the Town Council, the Chairman and Vice Chairman may wear the official Chains of Office. The Chains of Office may be worn at all official functions within the Town.
- 2.7 Chains of Office are usually worn at functions outside of the town when invited in an official capacity, although there are some exceptions to this which are usually specified in the official invitation.
- 2.8 The Regalia (Chain) should not be passed on for someone else to wear if the Chairman is unable to fulfil an engagement or visit without the express permission of the Town Clerk.

3. Support

- 3.1 Day to day support for the Chairman's civic role is provided by the Town Council office, under the general direction of the Town Clerk. The Chairman should be able to expect support from fellow Councillors.
- 3.2 The office receives invitations and civic engagements and liaises with the Chairman before accepting or declining invitations. A diary is kept in the Town Council Office of all events the Chairman is attending and he/she will always receive a copy of the invitation for information.
- 3.3 If the Chairman is unsure of anything or requires some guidance, then this should first be raised with the office, which will provide the necessary information.
- 3.4 The Member elected as Vice Chairman will support the Chairman throughout the year by representing the Council when the Chairman is unable to.
- 3.5 If the Chairman is not present at a Council meeting, the Vice Chairman will preside.
- 3.6 The Vice Chairman should not wear the Vice Chairman's Chain of Office in the presence of the Chairman.
- 3.7 Invitations to the Vice Chairman should be dealt with as follows:
 - Invitations to functions should not be sent to (or solicited by) a Vice Chairman. The Vice Chairman should not normally attend functions in his/her own right, except when deputising for the Chairman, and;
 - All invitations should be sent for consideration by the Chairman and, if the Vice Chairman cannot attend, it may be appropriate to 'pass down' an invitation. However, this should be by no means automatic.

4. Civic insignia

- 4.1 The Chain of Office are an outward sign of the civic office held, i.e. its insignia.
- 4.2 The Chairman may wear the chain of office at ceremonial occasions, such as the Civic Service, Remembrance Sunday and Royal Visits.
- 4.3 The Chairman should not wear the civic insignia outside of the Town Council's area without express permission from the Chairman of the Council for that area.
- 4.4 Civic chains should never be worn with a military uniform. However, a Chairman 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.

5. The civic year

- 5.1 Below is a list of typical events which are organised for or attended by the Chairman during their year in office.
- 5.2 **Annual Parish Meeting.** This is not the Annual Meeting of the Town Council. It is a legal requirement that all Parishes (and Town Councils) in England hold an 'Annual Parish Meeting' to which all local electors are entitled to attend. The meeting is organised and chaired by the Chairman. It must be held between 1st March and 1st June each year.
- 5.3 **Remembrance Sunday.** Remembrance Sunday is held on the Sunday nearest to the anniversary of Armistice Day which is on November 11th at 11am. The Service of Remembrance is led by the vicar, following which the Chairman will lay a wreath in memory of those men and women who gave their lives for their country.
- 5.4 **Miscellaneous events within the Town Council's area.** Various miscellaneous events are attended by the Chairman, examples of which are listed below:
 - Opening of Fayres / Garden Parties / Coffee Mornings;
 - Presenting Awards and Prizes to individuals and organisations;
 - Entertaining guests and visitors at the Town Council Offices;
 - Art Exhibitions and presentations at local schools;
 - Visits to schools, residential homes, scouts and guides groups etc., and;
 - Attending and meeting Royal Visitors to the Town.
- 5.5 **Miscellaneous events outside of the Town Council's area.** The Chairman is invited to a number of events organised by Civic Dignitaries from the surrounding areas which may include:
 - Civic Services;
 - Civic Carol Services;
 - Civic Dinners, and;
 - Charity Evenings.

6. Allowance and gifts

- 6.1 A Mayor may be paid an allowance to meet the expenses of his office (LGA 1972, ss 15(5) and 34(5)). It is commonly described as recompense for the expenses of maintaining the dignity of the office.

- 6.2 However, it should be noted that Elloughton cum Brough Town Council at this time does not use the title 'Town Mayor' and as such no allowance will be made by the Town Council.
- 6.3 In the course of official duties and functions, often gifts will be offered to the Chairman. 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.
- 6.4 The Code of Conduct requires Members to register any gifts or hospitality worth £50 or over that are received in connection with their official duties as a Member, and the source of the gift or hospitality.
- 6.5 The gift or hospitality must be registered and its source recorded within 28 days of receiving it. If in doubt, please consult the Town Clerk.