

THETFORD TOWN COUNCIL



CIVIC POLICY

Introduction

This Civic Policy has been produced to provide as much information and guidance as possible to Thetford Town Councillors, Officers and staff in order for them to carry out their civic duties to the highest standards.

Within this policy are roles and responsibilities, protocols, and guidance for processions which serve to highlight the importance of the Mayoralty to Thetford Town.

In the W.B Faraday book “the English and Welsh boroughs” it is stated that the first “Mayor Town” in England was Thetford which established its Mayoralty in 1199. London, Winchester and Exeter were granted the same privilege by royal charters later in the 13th Century.

The Great Mace and Sword of State were donated to the town by Sir Joseph Williamson who was MP for Thetford (1669-1685) and are carried by the Civic Officer and Mace Bearer at Civic Events.

The civic regalia is described in full in Annex A

THETFORD TOWN COUNCIL - OFFICE OF THE CLERK

Town Clerk's Role and Responsibilities

The Town Clerk is the Council's Proper Officer, the clerk is a qualified officer providing both professional advice concerning the laws of governance and administrative support to the Council. Answerable only to the Town Council as a body, the Clerk takes action to implement council decisions and acts as its finance administrator.

The Local Government Act (**LGA 1972 S112**)ⁱ as amended empowers local councils to appoint a Town (or Parish) Clerk. In Thetford this Officer is also the Proper Officer (in Law), and the Council's Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) according to **LGA 1972 S151**ⁱⁱ. The Clerk is appointed by Full Council to:

- Be aware of changes in legislation or developments that affect this Council. The Clerk is responsible in consultation with the Mayor to ensure the Council and its Councillors operate within the Law, Standing Orders and Code of Conduct.
- Work with Councillors in an unbiased manner. The Clerk will give clear unbiased advice to the Council to ensure decisions are made fairly and legally.
- Deal with the press, the public and all correspondence as the Council's spokesman.
- Implement policy: Delegated powers have been given to the Town Clerk in Thetford (LGA Part VI para 101)ⁱⁱⁱ allowing him/her to take action to implement council decisions, and act upon the behalf of Thetford Town Council. This is reflected in the Council's Financial Regulations and Standing Orders.
- Send summons, set agenda in conjunction with the chairman of the relevant committee, and be responsible for the minutes of the meeting. It is the Clerk's responsibility in law to issue a signed summons/agenda to each Councillor at least three clear days before the meeting (LGA 1972 Schedule 12, Paragraphs 10(2)(b))^{iv}. A summons reminds Councillors of their duty to attend. The agenda must specify the business to be discussed and therefore the Council cannot make a decision on any matter that has not been specified. It is a legal requirement that the Clerk signs the agenda, and therefore the clerk takes responsibility for its format and content.
- Manages the staff structure as approved from time to time by the Council.
- The Deputy Clerk supports the Clerk in statutory and financial responsibilities while the Civic Secretary supports the clerk in all Civic matters.

THETFORD TOWN COUNCILLORS

Thetford Town Council has 16 Councillors representing 6 wards

Councillors Roles and Responsibilities include:

- Attending meetings of the Council
- Participating in the decision-making process of the Council, through properly constituted committees.
- Adhering to the Standing Orders of the Council
- Monitoring the Council's financial Regulations and staff policies and procedures.
- Monitoring the Council's responsibilities in law including Health & Safety
- Keeping up-to-date on relevant information to enable informed decision making.
- Monitoring the annual spend of the Council and setting the budget for Council.
- Making Policy decisions.
- Working with the Town Clerk as the Council's Proper Officer and Responsible Finance Officer.
- Suggesting new initiatives or development of existing policies.
- Fulfilling their duties as a ward Councillor to deal with issues raised by their constituents.
- Ensuring that the views of the community are put to the relevant persons or bodies and that the special interests of the community are safeguarded or promoted.

Town Councillors' work on behalf of the community voluntarily and receive no remuneration. They have a duty to act properly and to abide by the adopted code of conduct; to attend meetings of the Council; to register interests as appropriate. (LGA 2000 part 111, Statutory Instrument No. 1159, The Local Authorities (Model code of Conduct) Order 2007); and to represent the electorate as a whole, not just their own voters.

To stand for election on a parish council you must:

- Be a UK or Commonwealth citizen or;
- Be a citizen of the Republic of Ireland;
- Or be a member of another Member state of the European Union;
- Be at least 18 years old at the time of the election.

To be eligible to stand for an election for the parish of Thetford you must be an elector of the parish or:

- For the whole of the previous 12 months have occupied (as owner or tenant) land or other premises in the parish or;
- During the previous 12 months have worked in the parish (as your principal or only place of work) or;
- For the whole of the previous 12 months lived in the parish or within 3 miles of the parish boundary.

Potential candidates may stand for election as the representative of a political party, or as an independent Councillor. Elections are held every four years.

The Town Council forms a corporate body with a legal existence separate from that of its members. It is accountable to the electorate and it can be taken to court: as a body it is responsible for its actions.

All Town Councillors are eligible to serve on the Towns Council's committees and/or represent Thetford Town Council by attending meetings of outside bodies such as Citizens Advice Bureau. Councillors are also eligible to be considered for the position of Mayor And Deputy Mayor. The Mayor also acts as Chairman of the Council.

These appointments must be ratified by a meeting of the Full Council usually at the Annual Town Meeting (Mayor Making). Councillors will be expected to attend all committee meetings to which they have been appointed, or to make an apology prior to the meeting that may be accepted by other members of the committee/council. All Councillors are also expected to attend the Annual Town Meeting each May, which is organized by the clerk's office on behalf of the Mayor and is for the people of Thetford.

THETFORD TOWN MAYOR

Legislation

Any candidate for the post of Mayor must be a serving member of the Council as set out in Section 3(1) of the Local Government Act 1972.(LGA 1972)

The election of Mayor is the first item of business at the Annual Meeting after prayers and apologies,(LGA 1972 Section 4).with the election being decided by a majority of members present and voting on the matter of the meeting(LGA 1972 Schedule 12 paragraph 39(1)).

The primary duty of the Mayor is to preside over meetings of Council (LGA 1972, Schedule 12, Paragraph 5(1)), ensuring meetings are conducted in a seemly manner in accordance with the procedure laid down in the LGA 1972 and Standing Orders. If the Mayor is not present the deputy Mayor has to preside over meetings of the Council.

The person presiding at the Council meeting may have a second or casting vote in the event of an equality of votes, even if he/she did not vote in the first instance. (LGA 1972, Schedule 12, Paragraph 4.)

The Mayor may call an extraordinary meeting of the council subject to proper procedures being followed (LGA 1972, Schedule 12, Paragraph 4)

The Office of Mayor may become vacant in the following circumstances:

- The Mayor dies in Office.
- Resigns in accordance with LGA 1972, section 84.
- Ceases to be qualified as a Member for reasons set out in, sections 80 and 81 of Local Government Act 1972.
- Failure for 6 consecutive months, to attend any meeting of council, its committees or sub committees etc, as set out in LGA 1972 section 85.
- If the Office does become vacant for any of the above reasons, an election for the post must be held not later than the next ordinary meeting of the council, after the date the vacancy occurred.

If the outgoing Mayor in an election year loses his/her seat at the Polls before the Annual Meeting, that person will still preside at the Annual Meeting until a successor has been elected and has made the necessary declaration of acceptance (LGA 1972, Section 3(2) and 3(3)).

Criteria for selection of Mayor and Deputy Mayor (Agreed by full council 640/14 Nov 15)

Under normal circumstances the Mayor and Chairman of the Council will be a re-elected Councillor. The Deputy Mayor is open to all Councillors who have served three years on Full Council; the expectation will be the Mayor Elect would have served a year as Deputy Mayor. The selection of Mayor-elect and Deputy Mayor-elect should take place each year at the February Council meeting. The nominations and voting for Mayor-elect and Deputy Mayor-elect should be taken above the line. The voting for Mayor and Deputy Mayor should be recorded by a show of hands. If there are 3 or more nominations for Mayor and Deputy Mayor and if there is no clear majority after the first vote then the lowest recorded candidate would drop out of the process, and the process repeated until there are 2 candidates remaining. In the event of tied vote the Chairman has an additional (casting) vote. In an election year a New Council is not bound by the selection made by the previous Council. In such cases an early special meeting of the new Council will be called if requested and/or if either the Mayor-elect or Deputy-Mayor elect fails to be re-elected to the Council.

Mayor Making

Mayor making is a special meeting that is called by the Town Clerk specifically to elect the Mayor (Chairman of the Council), as a Town Council the chairman may be a designated Mayor (LGA 1972 S 245(6))ⁱⁱⁱ). Mayor Making is traditionally held on the first Tuesday in May (except for in an election year) and this is directly followed by the Annual Town Meeting.

The following are the customary agenda items for the Mayor Making Ceremony.

- Election of Town Mayor
- Apologies and absences
- Declarations of interest
- Appointment of the Mayors chaplain.

Councillors/spouses/partners are usually invited to attend. All electors have the right to attend the annual town meeting.

Office of Mayor

The Mayor is enabled to receive an allowance which Thetford Town Council refers to as the Mayor's Responsibility Fund to help them meet the expenses of being in office (LGA 1972 s 15(5))^{iv}). The Council determine in advance a maximum amount referred to as the Mayor's Responsibility Fund. Any functions and events held by the Mayor

over and above the civic diary occasions are the responsibility of the Mayor and must be of no cost to the public purse.

In office the Mayor has several levels of responsibility and will be expected to manage their time and that of their civic secretary accordingly. To avoid miscommunication all Mayoral engagements at any level must be organized through the civic secretary. If there is any area of doubt the Town Clerk as the Responsible Finance Officer and Proper Officer is to be consulted to provide professional advice and to protect the Council. The Mayor will also have the support of the Civic Officer and Civic Secretary at all times.

Responsibilities of the Mayor include:

Chairman of the Council

- The Mayor's main responsibility is to chair the meetings of the Full Council for the duration of the civic year.
- The Mayor is to ensure that Town Council meetings are conducted in a business like fashion, and that Councillors adhere to the Council's Standing Orders and Code of Conduct.
- When the Mayor stands, anyone speaking must stop speaking and sit down.
- The Mayor has responsibility to ensure that all councillors receive adequate and appropriate information enabling everyone to make informed decisions.
- The Mayor has a responsibility to ensure that all councillors are treated equally with dignity and respect, and allowed to express their views without fear or favour.
- The Mayor is expected to work with the Town Clerk and Council Officers to ensure the Town Council is operating within the legal financial framework and that Councillors abide by the code of conduct.
- The Local Government Act (LGA 1972 s 15) states that a Council must appoint a Chairman who must also be a member of Council. They are elected at the Mayor making ceremony and this is the first item on the agenda. On Thetford Town Council the Chairman is also the Mayor.
- During a full Council meeting the Mayor manages discussion, summarises debate and uses the agenda to help the meeting run smoothly and on time. Thetford Town Council Standing Orders contain a guide for those presiding at

meetings of Thetford Town Council and these may be referred to if there are procedural difficulties during a meeting. Some of the Standing Orders are statutory as they are laid down in Acts of Parliament and cannot be amended or suspended; these are highlighted in bold font.

- The Mayor should plan priorities and targets with the Town Clerk for their year in office, and consider how they will work with the Council and community to achieve these aims. The Civic Secretary is the main contact for advice and guidance on Mayoral duties, procedures and responsibilities.

The Civic Secretary co-ordinates the civic diary to ensure that the Mayor and Deputy Mayor are well organised, and to avoid duplication of their duties.

The Town Clerk has the final say on the style and content of the agenda for Full Council meetings, and is responsible for finalising the minutes of meetings for Full Council to consider.

The Town Clerk is the Responsible finance Officer and the Proper Officer for the Council, and as such must ensure that the democratic process is maintained; no individual Councillor, including the Mayor may make individual decisions on behalf of the Council unless given delegated authority by Full Council usually in consultation with the clerk; and no individual Councillor or group of Councillors may exert pressure on the office of the Clerk.

Civic Host

This is the second most important responsibility of the Mayor. The Mayor will be expected to host functions and events in the Councils' venues. The Mayor will be supported by the Civic Officer with assistance from the Town Clerk if deemed necessary.

The Mayoral year is extremely busy with many engagements, often entailing a social life not of their making or choice. It should be noted that if an organization has taken the time to invite the Mayor, it is often that the function they have been invited to is the organizations most important one of the year. Therefore the Mayor needs to research details of the organization or individual to be visited, in order for them to be prepared to say a few words if necessary and to be able to engage fully with the hosts about their organization or event. The Town Clerk may be able to assist with speech writing if requested.

The Mayor should use all events as an opportunity to build rapport with the residents enabling them to receive insights and opinions from the community. Similarly this is an opportunity for the Mayor to take the Councils vision and messages out to the community

The Mayor is often the public face of the Council, representing the Council in a civic

capacity and sometimes speaking on behalf, but as stated above, no Councillor, including the Mayor, may make decisions on behalf of the Council unless given delegated authority.

Anyone wishing to become Mayor must take into account the effect of their role upon their families (especially the Mayoral Consort/Mayoress) employment, non-council interests, political interests and their relationship with other Councillors and constituents. The Mayor should consider with great care any acceptance of office (other than traditional or honorary) for other local organisations during their Mayoral year due to the amount of time their Mayoral duties will take up. They should also not give patronage to any appeal or society unless satisfied of its relevance to the area, its non-party political nature and its propriety.

The office of Mayor is a public institution and does not belong to the individual who occupies the role. The tradition and formality of the role is often of great importance to the community and must be respected as such (even if the individual does not agree with its role or importance).

The Mayor should uphold the highest standards in all aspects of public life. The Mayor must act to enhance the Council's reputation as their behavior can bring both respect and disrespect to the Town. It is actually a duty upon all elected members not to bring the Council or Town into disrepute.

The Mayor has a duty to lead the citizens in an appropriate and dignified manner. When in an official capacity (and whenever in robes and or the Mayoral chain) the Mayor should always act with decorum and dignity and be of smart appearance. The Mayoral partner whether Mayoress or Consort will also be expected to conform to agreed rules and procedures. In order to do this there are procedures to be followed (protocol). The role of protocol is to enable events to proceed smoothly within known constraints. Many of these procedures are laid down in national etiquette and civic ceremonial. Local amendments may be made due to local customs and traditions or the needs of safety and security (e.g. processing along public highways).

The Mayor enjoys precedence only in their own civic area (Thetford Town parochial boundaries). If invited to attend functions in neighboring areas consent should be obtained from the civic head of that area. This is usually a formality, but courtesy and protocol dictate that permission must be sought and obtained. Mayoral robes and chains may not be worn outside of the parochial boundaries without the approval of the appropriate civic head.

During the year there are many events held within Thetford set out by local or National custom. Some of these events require a reception to be held by the Mayor. When the event is a civic event the expense is incurred from the Council's civic budget. Other events, at the discretion of the Mayor, should be of nil cost to the Council, with costs covered by income from the event itself or the Mayor's own finances.

It is recognised that the relative wealth of an individual should not be a hindrance to them taking on the role of Mayor, and Thetford Town Council has a tradition of allocating a Mayor's Allowance each year which comes out of the Council's Civic budget. The Mayor's Allowance becomes an income of the Mayor, which the Mayor may then use to fund events such as the Mayor's Ball, which are at the discretion of the Mayor.

As well as assisting in holding events within Thetford, the Mayoral Allowance may also contribute to costs associated with attending events held by other organisations/authorities both within and outside Thetford.

As a gesture of goodwill it is hoped that the Mayor is able to attend at least one civic event from each neighbouring authority during their civic year. However, in recent years there has been an increase in the number of fundraising events held. Attendance of these is at the discretion of individual Mayors, and must be paid for from the Mayoral allowance. Where there is a clash of dates, the decision to attend a local or neighbouring civic event is to be taken by the Mayor. If advice is needed they should always refer to the Town Clerk.

Dignitary and Ambassador of the Council

The Mayor is expected to represent the Town Council at functions and events to which the Mayor has been invited. The Mayor must be attended by the Civic Officer (or a Councillor in the absence of the Civic Officer) if the Mayoral chain and robes are worn. If neither Civic Officer nor Councillor is available the Mayor may still attend, but must wear the Mayor's pendant (day chain) instead of the Mayoral Chain.

Organiser of the Mayor's fundraising events.

The Mayor may organise social functions and fundraising events if they wish to do so. It is customary for the Mayor to aim to raise money to be given to the Mayor's designated causes at the end of the civic year. It is also customary for the Mayor to organise a Mayor's Ball but not compulsory.

The Mayor will be responsible for fund raising events throughout their Mayoral Year. The net profits of which will be allocated at the end of each year by the Mayor. The Mayoral fund may be of benefit to local and/or national organisations having a local presence.

Calling and chairing of the Annual Town Meeting.

The Council must by law hold an Annual Meeting to which all the citizens (parishioners) of Thetford are invited (*LGA 1972 s9(1)*)^x. It is the Mayor's responsibility to call the meeting and to send out the agenda (through the Clerk's office).

Mayoress/Consort

It is usual for the Mayor to identify the person who will accompany them to all or most of the civic and social activities which they attend in their official capacity as Mayor. If

the Mayor is married/has a partner, then they become the Mayoress. If the Mayor is female and married/has partner then they become the consort. If the Mayor chooses a friend or associate to assist with their Civic duties then they become the consort.

Role

The role of the Mayoress or Consort is to accompany and assist the Mayor.

The Mayoress/Consort is an unelected position and they will therefore play no part in the administration or role of the Council. Any requests from the Mayoress/Consort must be delivered via the Mayor to the Officers.

Mayor's Chaplain

It is customary, but at the Mayor's discretion, for the incoming Mayor to appoint a chaplain of their choice. The traditional role of the Chaplain is to offer spiritual guidance, but they now often help with arrangements for the Civic Service, say grace at civic dinners, and may be asked to say prayers at ceremonial council meetings.

Even though the individual Mayor may not belong to any religion or be a non-believer, it should be acknowledged that the office of Mayor relates to the role not the individual filling the post. It is recommended that the Mayor has a Chaplain to act as a liaison with the local religious community, and it can be important to have this link in understanding and supporting all sections of the community. As with the office of Mayoress, the Mayor's Chaplain (or other similar title) has no legal status.

Office of Deputy Mayor

As well as Town Mayor this Council is authorised to elect a Vice-Chairman, to be known as Deputy Mayor **(LGA 1972 S15(6)(7)(8)(9)).^x**

To be considered for Deputy Mayor, you must be a serving Councillor **(LGA 1972 S15(6)).^{xi}**

The Deputy Mayor receives no allowance, although it is custom and practice for the Deputy Mayor to deputise for the Mayor and attend functions and events in the absence of the Mayor. The Deputy Mayor has a chain of office and has the duty and responsibilities of the Mayor whilst acting in the Mayor's absence, in addition to his/her normal responsibilities as a Councillor. There is also a Deputy Mayor's Consort Chain. These are kept in the safe and, when needed, the Deputy Mayor will need to arrange access to the safe during office hours, or by negotiation. It is generally accepted that the incoming Deputy Mayor will be treated as Mayor Elect for the following year. However at February Full Council both positions will still be voted on.

MAYORAL/CIVIC

Mayoral Allowance

Although Thetford Town Councillors receive no remuneration, it is custom and practice for the Mayor to receive an allowance to assist in carrying out his/her duties throughout the civic year according to **(LGA 1972 s15(5))**; the amount of the allowance is decided as part of the annual budgeting process and confirmed by Full Council.

The Council determine in advance a maximum amount referred to as reasonable. A Mayor who manages this aspect of budget prudently may use up to 20% of the annual allowance in furtherance to the Mayor's designated causes.

There is a budget for Civic Expenses, which must be agreed by Full Council, from which amount the Mayoral Allowance is drawn. The Civic budget is strictly managed by the Town Clerk. In the case of motor mileage any mileage will be reimbursed at the Inland Revenue approved rate. It must also say that they are responsible for entering these expenses claims on their personal tax returns at the end of each year in order that any tax may be reclaimed as appropriate".

All other costs incurred as a consequence of Mayoral activities are to be borne by the incumbent Mayor.

Mayoral Diary

It is essential that the official diary is organised and maintained through the Town Council office. This is to avoid confusion, double booking, and embarrassment. It is recognised that the Mayor will be personally acquainted with many local individuals as well as Mayors/Chairmen and that there is a risk of informal arrangements being made for events to take place. Please avoid the temptation and ask that all arrangements are made formally, in writing, through the Clerk's office.

It is essential that all engagements are received in the Clerk's office in writing (or by email) and are coordinated through the Civic Secretary and not made 'ad hoc'. ***This point cannot be stressed strongly enough!***

The diary entries are organised with liaison between the Mayor, Civic Officer, and Deputy Mayor. The overall maintenance of the diary is the responsibility of the Civic Secretary. Responses by the Mayor should be timely so as to give the Civic Secretary sufficient notice in order for responses to be returned in time when RSVP dates are to be taken into account.

If no invitation has been communicated to the Town Council office the Mayor is not allowed to wear the Chain of Office at the function.

Civic Robes and Hats

The Robes for Councillors, including the Mayor and Mayoress, are 'one size fits

all'. If further robes or hats are required, or any repairs or alterations are necessary, these will be organised by the Civic Officer and Town Clerk and paid for from the civic budget.

Robes must be worn on all nominated civic and ceremonial occasions, failure to do so will result in the individual being refused participation in the ceremony, event or meeting. When wearing robes suitable, smart dress must be worn as clothing beneath robes is clearly visible. During indoor civic events and meetings all Councillors should wear hats and once prayers have taken place and before the full agenda commences the Mayor can give permission for Councillors to remove their hats if they wish to do so. Headdress is to be worn perfectly straight (not at an angle) with the ribbon at the back.

There are some events when the Mayor wears the full robes in addition to the chain. At Certain civic events the Town Clerk, Macebearer and the Civic Officer are also expected to wear full Civic dress. Smart dress code is expected of all other Councillors. Ladies may wear hats (daytime events). Past Mayors should wear the Past Mayor's pendant. Decorations may be worn. The robes may be worn at other occasions if deemed appropriate by the Town Clerk in consultation with the Mayor.

Annual Town Council fully robed events:

Ceremonial Full Council	February
Commonwealth Day	March
Mayor Making	May
Civic Service	June
Battle of Britain Service	September
Remembrance Sunday	November (Sunday closest to 11 th)
Ceremonial Full Council	November
Other Annual Mayoral events	
Annual Town Meeting	
Civic Reception	
Mayor's Ball	
Christmas light switch on	
Mayor's Carol Service (if applicable)	
Civic events and functions organised by other councils and organisations	
Other fundraising events for the Mayor's charities.	
Mayors Ball and other formal events hosted by the Mayor	

It is customary for events be held at a Town Council venue and at any time of the year at the discretion and convenience of the Mayor.

It is customary to invite other civic heads and other special guests to attend. No civic funds should be used for these occasions other than the Mayor's allowance. All expenses are customarily covered by ticket sales or financed by the Mayor. Any surpluses are customarily contributed to the Mayor's charity fund.

On receiving guests the Civic Officer will establish the identities of the guests and announce them. The Mayor, Mayoress/Consort should greet the guests as they enter in full Robes and Insignia, and may be accompanied by Deputy Mayor/Consort.

The Loyal Toast is always proposed by the Civic Officer. NB: The Loyal Toast is simply "Ladies, Gentlemen – The Queen"

The Mayor replies to the speech given by the guest speaker (if there is one). It is also usual for the Mayor to propose the toast to the Town of Thetford.

A thank you on behalf of the guests is usually given by a distinguished guest who has been briefed by the Civic Officer.

Mayoral Insignia

It is the responsibility of the Town Council, through the Civic Officer, to ensure that there is an adequate insurance policy, and for the Town Clerk to check that the security for the use of the chain complies with the terms of the insurance policy.

It is the responsibility of the Civic Officer to ensure the safety of the chain(s) and any other insignia; their own personal safety; and the safety of the Mayoral party, at any events or functions where the Civic Officer is in attendance. It is the responsibility of the Mayor/Mayoral party to enable the Civic Officer to discharge their responsibilities by not placing unreasonable demands that may jeopardise his/her safety. The Mayoral chain and any other insignia must be returned to a secure location when not in use.

When the Mayor is undertaking official engagements and is wearing full robes and insignia, the Civic Officer should always be in attendance.

It is the responsibility of the Civic Officer to take charge of the insignia following each event and to ensure its safe return to the Town Council or Mayor.

Overseas Visits

The Mayor will be allowed one overseas visit to one of our Twin Towns per year and this will come out of the International Civic Links budget. If the Mayor wishes to exceed this then the cost must come out of the Mayoral Allowance.

In the event of the Deputy Mayor standing in for the Mayor on an overseas visit this will be paid for from International Civic Links (assuming that the Mayor has not already been on one overseas visit already during his term of office. If the Mayor has been on an overseas visit during his term of office then the Deputy Mayor's expenses would have to come out of the Mayor's Allowance).

SECTION E

THETFORD TOWN CIVIC OFFICER

Civic Officer Roles and Responsibilities

The Civic Officer is line managed by the Town Clerk, and has responsibility to:

- Manage the Mayor's day-to-day diary in partnership with the Civic Secretary, and to ensure that the electronic diary and responses to invitations are up-to-date and accurate.
- When Mayoral invitations are received information must be passed to the Civic Secretary. After consultation with the Mayor; if the response is a no, the invitation is passed onto the Civic Secretary for action.
- Help the Mayor to organise and provide all necessary help and support for all Mayoral functions and events that are civic duties.
- Attend the Mayor at functions and events to which the Mayor is invited in the Thetford parochial boundaries (if the Mayor is wearing the robes and chains of office); if the Civic Officer is unavailable this duty may be carried out by a Councillor or Officer of Thetford Town Council.
- Attend the Mayor at functions and events to which the Mayor is invited outside of the Thetford parochial boundaries (if the Mayor is wearing the robes and chains of office); if the Civic Officer is unavailable this duty may be carried out by a Councillor or Officer of Thetford Town Council.
- Help the Mayor to organize, and works with the Mayor to run charity, and social, functions and events. The Mayor (and Councillors) are asked to note that the Civic Officer has duties over and above that of attending on the Mayor (see Annex B).
- If the Civic Officer is unable to undertake duties within normal working hours (averaged over an agreed period – agreed by the Town Clerk as the Civic Officer's line manager) then the Mayor is advised that they may make use of the services of other Officers (to act as Civic Officer).
- Attend upon the Town Mayor and Consort (and if required drive them in a vehicle appropriately insured by, Thetford Town Council) to and from any such functions deemed appropriate for the wearing of the Mayoral chains;
- Prepare the Council Chamber for all civic occasions and meetings, ensure that the premises are maintained, available and are secured following their

use;

- Be responsible for the regular and efficient cleaning and minor maintenance of the civic insignia and for ensuring the safe custody of the insignia at all times;
- Care for all the civic robes and deal with any necessary repairs and alterations; and assist Town Councillors when they are worn;
- Carry out any other reasonable tasks within the remit of the Town Council on the lawful instruction of the Town Clerk that are to be carried out within the normal working week (averaged over a calendar month of 37 hours per week).
- The Civic Officer has a series of other responsibilities and the Mayor is asked to ensure, wherever possible, that the Civic Officer is able to spend sufficient time in the office to enable him/her to carry out the other responsibilities of his/her post without incurring additional working hours. Where possible the Mayor is asked to invite other Councillors to act as Civic Officer for occasions where the Civic Officer time is at a premium.

Thetford Town Civic Secretary

Civic Secretary Roles and Responsibilities

The Civic Secretary is line managed by the Deputy Town Clerk, and has responsibility to:

- Manage the Mayor's day-to-day diary in partnership with the Civic Officer, and to ensure that the electronic diary and responses to invitations are up-to-date and accurate.
- To liaise with the Mayor when Mayoral invitations are received, deal with all responses, arrange for the Civic Officer to drive/attend (if necessary)
- Help the Mayor to organise and provide all necessary help and support for all Mayoral functions (Mayor Making, Civic Reception, Civic Service, Battle of Britain Service, Remembrance Sunday, Carol Service and Mayor's Ball) and events that are civic duties.
- Arrange permission for the Mayor to wear the Chain of Office if he is attending a function outside the Thetford parochial boundaries.
- Dealing with correspondence from our Twin Towns and arranging visits to them when the request comes in.
- Help the Mayor to arrange and send out Christmas cards.
- No Mayoral correspondence must be removed from the office unless the Town Clerk or Civic Secretary give permission. A duplicate copy can be given to the Mayor if requested.
- Carry out any other reasonable tasks within the remit of the Town Council on the lawful instruction of the Town Clerk that are to be carried out within the normal working week (averaged over a calendar month of 37 hours per week).
- Maintain the civic database. To be reviewed at least annually and including the Mayor of the day personal invite list.

CIVIC PROCESSIONS

The Civic Officer will be responsible for ensuring that everyone is present who is to join the procession, and placing participants in the correct order and maintaining the correct order of procession. It is expected that all will proceed in a dignified manner. The Civic Officer will moderate the pace of the procession to ensure that the least able attendees are able to keep up without undue stress. Bandmasters should be informed by the Civic Officer of the need to set a slow pace.

A police presence is not guaranteed for security, or traffic management. The Town Clerk, as Responsible Officer, has a duty to uphold Thetford Town Council's legal responsibility to ensure any public events are properly managed. The Civic Officer has a duty to support him/her in this. Any dignitaries that join us who are not specifically included below must be placed in the order dictated by the order for formal processions.

The order of processions is made up of national protocols.

Mayoral Party

Sword Bearer (Civic Officer)

Mace Bearer

Mayor and Mayoress/Consort

Town Clerk

Deputy and Deputy Mayoress/Consort

Councillors who are past Mayors

Councillors in order of seniority

NCC Chairman

BDC Chairman

Other guests

Mayor's Cadets

Civic Party

Sword Bearer (Civic Officer)

Mace Bearer

Lord Lieutenant (Queens Representative)

Mayor and Mayoress/Consort

High Sheriff

Town Clerk

Deputy Mayor and Mayoress/Consort

Freeman of the Town

Members of Parliament

Town Councillors who are past Mayors

Councillors in order of seniority

Visiting Mayors

Chairman of NCC

Chairman of BDC

Invited guests

Mayor's Cadets

The Regalia

The Mayor's Badge and Chain



The Mayor's Badge and Chain is made in silver gilt.

The badge is formed as the borough seal, the double chain with three Tudor roses, two letters T and a portcullis is at the centre.

The back of the badge is engraved with the inscription 'For the use of the Mayoress of the Ancient Borough of Thetford, given by Laura Fison, 1930'.

The Great Mace



The Great Mace was donated to the town of Thetford by Sir Joseph Williamson (1633-1701) who was M.P. for Thetford from 1669 to 1685. He was also Secretary of State in 1674 and Recorder of Thetford in 1682. He served as the President of the Royal Society and was an intimate friend of Samuel Pepys.

The mace is of standard Restoration form, the shaft chased with roses and thistles in arcading and divided by two spirally fluted knobs.

Four-scroll brackets surmounted by female busts below the head, the vase-shaped end with acanthus foliage and engraved with the arms of the borough, those of the donor and an inscription.

The head is chased with the national emblems and Cypher C.R. divided by caryatid figures jointed by foliage festoons, with fleur-de-lys and cross patté cresting and beaded arches with orb and cross enclosing the Royal Arms of Charles II, maker's mark only, R.M. in monogram, possibly for Richard Morrell - 53 ins long.

The inscription on the Mace reads:

“In usum Majoris et Burgensium antique Burgi de THETFORD D.D. JOSEPHUS WILLIAMSON Eq: Aur: Sac: Reg: Mat1 a Consiliis intimis et Primarius Secretarius Status A.D. 1678”.

The Sword of State



The Sword of State was also donated to the town by Sir Joseph Williamson.

A German Solingen blade engraved at the ricasso with panels of scrolling foliage and bearing the 'running wolf' mark and two other marks; a crowned Z and a horn.

It has a silver-hilt with a spirally fluted grip and matted quillons terminating in boldly modelled lion's masks, the large pear shaped pommel chased with figures of Justice and Wisdom.

The cartouches between the quillons are engraved with the arms of the donor and an identical inscription to that of the Great Mace.

The red velvet sheath with silver gilt locket decorated with the applied arms of Charles II and the borough on matted ground chased with foliage.

Two smaller lockets have applied national emblems and chape with applied crown and cypher C with acorn finial - 52 ½ ins long.

The mounts for the sword are unmarked, circa 1678.

It seems probable that the sword was mounted by the same maker as the mace.

Sergeant-at-Arms Maces



A pair of Sergeant-at-Arms maces with slender cylindrical shaft divided by a compressed knop and with iron six-flanged termination, the plain circular head with

fleur-de-lys and cross patté cresting, one with applied Royal Arms of the Stuart period, the arms on the other missing and the head repaired with copper, unmarked, early 17th century. 17 ¾ ins long.

The Staff of Office



The Staff of Office, a blackwood tapering cane with plain silver top spreading to the domed cap engraved with the seal of the borough and below with the inscription 'The Worshipful James Mingay Esqre. Mayor 25th December 1800', 'The Most Noble Augustus Henry Fitzroy Duke of Grafton Recorder', and 'Henry Thompson Esqre., Coroner', in three oval panels with brass ferule, by T. Phipps and E. Robinson, 1800. 7 ft long.

The Loving Cup and Stand



A William III silver gilt two-handled cup and cover on a circular gadrooned foot, the lower part of the body repousse and chased with spiral fluting and engraved above with the arms of the borough and that of the donor in festooned baroque cartouches.

The cover has a gadrooned border and spirally fluted domed centre in a border of punched leaf motifs and with boldly modelled acron finial. 9 ins high.

The stand is of centrally footed salver form with similar gadrooned borders to the cup. The centre is similarly engraved with the two coats of arms. By Anthony Nelme 1697 – 12 ¼ ins diameter.

The Stand is engraved on the underside with the inscription 'Ex dono Jacobi Sloane Armigeri unius hujis Villae 1697'. The cup is engraved below the base with 'Prosperity to Thetford'. The arms are those of James Sloane, eldest brother of Sir Hans Sloane Bart. He was a barrister-at-law and also M.P. for Thetford who died in 1704.

A plain oblong ink stand



On four claw-and-ball feet with reeded rim, two silver mounted cut-glass bottles and an oval box. In the centre, engraved with the inscription; 'Given by John Vavasseur Fisher Mayor of Thetford 1962-63'. 8 ins wide.

An American plain circular dish



With depressed centre and moulded borders. Engraved with the inscription; 'To Thetford Birthplace of Thomas Paine, August 6th 1952'. 9 ½ ins diameter.

Appendix B – Mayoral Handbook

Minute Number 998/17

This is the content of the bound booklet which is A3 size

The purpose of this handbook is to help support the Mayor and Deputy Mayor in their role and to assist their understanding of the role and responsibilities it entails.

Please, never hesitate to ask either the Officers or past Mayors if you are unsure about process or duties; Thetford Town Council wants your year as Mayor to be as enjoyable as possible.

Points that should be considered when becoming Mayor:

- Effect of being Mayor on career or employment
- Effect on political career
- Effect on personal and /or religious beliefs
- Effect of being Mayor in relation to protocol
- Effects on non-council interests
- Effect on partners and family life
- Effect on relationship with fellow councillors
- Effect on relationship with constituents and officer
- The impact on the Mayor themselves.

There are two distinct elements to the position of Mayor:

- Chair of Thetford Town Council
- First citizen of the Town

The Mayor should encourage citizenship and participation in the life of the Town whilst promoting the Town and Council at all functions attended. The Mayor is effectively the 'shop window' of the town.

The role of the Mayoress/Consort is clearly defined in the Civic Policy and their behaviour and manner should be appropriate at all times and not bring the council into disrepute. Both the Mayor and the Mayoress/Consort must follow the advice and guidelines issued by the Mayor's Office and should not attend any functions or otherwise give support to any organisation or person whose objectives are contrary to Law and Council Policy. Nor should they solicit engagements or visits or otherwise procure favours by virtue of the office. (*Civic Policy pg6*)

The role of Deputy Mayor is effectively that of 'Mayor-In-Waiting' where they have the opportunity to learn and understand the details of the office. By default, they are also the Deputy Chairperson of the Town Council and as such will step in when the Mayor is unable to fulfil their obligations. However, in terms of engagement

attendance, they are not automatically considered a substitute and consultation with the Civic Secretary must take place to ensure protocol is observed.

History of Mayoralty

Thetford lays claim to one of the oldest mayoralties in the country and celebrated 800 years of the office in 1999. Thetford is also noted as having Britain's first black Mayor: Dr Allan Glaisyer Minns (1904-1906).

The Mayor's Badge and Chain

The Mayor's Badge and Chain is silver gilt and was made by Mappin Brothers. The back of the badge is inscribed "Presented to the Mayor, Aldermen and Burgesses of the Borough of Thetford by Walter Cornell Fison, Mayor 1902. The design of the Mayoral chains has a heavy Tudor influence, probably as a result of Thetford's first charter being granted in 1573 during Elizabeth I's reign. It is worth noting that it is likely that some form of badge of office would have existed prior to the 1902 chain given that The Great Mace and The Sword of State both date from the 17th century. This would be supported by evidence from a press cutting which states that the reason Fison paid for the 1902 chain was because Thetford was the only Borough at King Edward VII's coronation in Westminster Abbey, 9 August 1902 without a chain! The article claims that legend has it that an earlier mayoral chain existed but was buried by one of its holders in his garden during the Napoleonic threat! Perhaps there is more Thetford Treasure to be unearthed?

The symbolism:

- The **portcullis** was the heraldic badge of the House of Beaufort, and the first Tudor king, Henry VII, who was of matrilineal Beaufort descent, adapted both the portcullis and the **Tudor rose** as the Tudor badge. The family was descended from John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster who held the manor of Thetford in the 14th century.
- The **letter T** for Thetford is in the Tudor style.
- **Castle** depicts the image of the castle that once stood at the top of Castle Hill. The image is taken from the seal of the Borough of Thetford.
- The Badge, or Pendant, bears what is considered to be the earliest form of common seal of the Borough, probably dating from 1148.

The wording states "SIGULLUM COMMUNE BURGENSIVM DE THETFORD" translated as "The common seal of the Borough of Thetford"

Civic Allowance

The Mayor's Responsibility Allowance is used for assisting the mayor in carrying out their duties throughout the year. Note, any overspend should be covered by the mayor themselves and not from the council purse.

Ways the Office of Mayor can be used

The Mayor is the figure head and embodiment of the Town Council. That said, ultimately in legal precedence, they are only the chairperson of the Council and apart from this, they have no further powers or rights than any other town councillor.

It is important to remember that it is how the Mayoral office is perceived through the actions and representations of the Mayor that will set the tone for their period of office and will reflect on the Council as a whole. These representations may take many forms such as attending Community engagements, engagement and liaison with other elected bodies such as County and District Councils at their civic functions and ultimately being the representative of all the citizens of Thetford. This is a fantastic opportunity to share just how great Thetford is and how much it has to offer. It is certainly a hugely enjoyable and rewarding job if entered into in the right spirit; to encourage citizenship and participation in the life of the town and to promote the town at all opportunities.

The Mayor has 1 'free' hire of the Carnegie Rooms where the objective of the function must be fundraising for the Mayor's Charity. It is in the Mayor's gift to be able to provide this, should there not be a Mayoral Charity event appropriate for the venue, to a charitable organisation whose ethos supports the Mayoral focus that year.

Guidance on the wearing of regalia

The chain cannot be worn outside of Thetford without permission. The civic secretary will provide guidance on this.

Consideration should be given to the use of the Full Chain as opposed to the 'Day' Chain. Consultation with the Mayor's secretary will ensure that the event is appropriate for the choice of regalia.

In respect of the wearing of the Deputy Mayor's chain, guidance should be sought from the Mayor's secretary to also ensure that the event is appropriate for the choice of regalia. The Deputy Mayor would be expected to wear their Chain at Annual Town Meeting, Mayor Making, Civic Service, Civic Reception, Battle of Britain Service and Remembrance Sunday as well as at the Ceremonial Full Council meetings. Ultimately, if Thetford Town Council is hosting a Civic event then both Mayor and deputy Mayor should attend and wear their regalia.

Support for the Mayor

As Mayor, you have a fantastic team to support you in your tasks for the year.

Town Councillors are generally expected to support the Mayor if the Town Council is hosting an event. Councillors are expected to act as hosts ensuring that guests are not ignored and are introduced to fellow Councillors etc. The Mayor should, during the course of a hosted event, aim to at least meet and or greet each of the guests and introduce them in turn to other Councillors or guests. For events in King's House, visitors should be encouraged to sign a visitor's book.

The Civic Secretary, also known as the Mayor's secretary, is your first port of call for everything. All invitations and events should be sent in the first instance through the Civic office. Here the Mayor's and Deputy Mayor's Civic Diary is held to ensure that there are no clashes and all invitations are responded to in the appropriate manner. To assist in this process, there is a Mayoral Booking form available on the TTC website. (Appendix 1) This must be used for the booking of all engagements and will permit follow ups in the issue of the Customer Satisfaction forms. (Appendix 2)

Customer Satisfaction Forms should be sent out after each event, encouraging hosts to review the following points:

- How well did the Civic Office deal with invite?
- How useful was the Civic engagement pro-forma?
- Did the Mayor arrive on time?
- How well was the speech delivered?
- Any comments?

The Mayor's Officer has to attend any functions where the Mayor is required to be fully robed. The Mayor's officer will also assist the Mayor in the process of robing and un-robing. They are also the Sword Bearer and are required to be robed themselves. The Mayor's officer has also acted as chauffeur and offers guidance in Mayoral customs and procedures.

The Civic Committee are also there to support and promote the Mayoralty of Thetford as well as the International Civic links. They are able to offer guidance in Civic procedures and policies.

Civic Ceremonial Handbook: There is a copy of this guidance held in the Council Offices. Both the Mayor and Deputy Mayor will be provided with a copy as will the Chair and Vice Chair of the Civic Committee. Please take the opportunity to review this especially as Thetford is specifically mentioned on page 2.

Events and Expectations

There are 'fixed' events which are referred to in the Civic Policy, pg. 13.

Listed below are examples of typical events that invitations may also be received for in the Mayoral year. (Civic includes Town, District, County, High Sheriff and Lord Lieutenant). This is by no means exhaustive or definitive but is provided to give an indication of the variety:

- Civic services in Norfolk and Suffolk
- Civic receptions in Norfolk and Suffolk
- Civic Charity events (optional)
- Military events in Norfolk and Suffolk
- Police, Army and Air Force Cadet events
- Town Twinning events including overseas invitations
- Local Museum events
- Anglo-Sikh Heritage events
- School visits and events
- Invitations from local Church and service organisations
- Thetford Business Forum
- Open Gardens and Allotment Club
- Thetford Municipal Charity visits (pre-Christmas)
- Christmas day visits to care homes and on-duty emergency services
- Shop and factory openings
- Thetford Festival events
- Music and Drama Performances
- RBL and RAFA concerts
- Wildlife and BTO events
- Staniforth Trust events

Support and Guidance in Responding to Civic Charity and other Invitations

Civic leaders hold a variety of Charity and fund-raising events.

Simple guidance would be to accept at least one such invitation in respect of any particular Civic Body.

Attendance at such events would not normally take precedence over attendance at a formal Civic occasion.

The decision on whether to invite the deputy Mayor to attend an event is purely a decision for the incumbent Mayor, the more local an event the more desirable it is to have a Thetford representative.

If an invitation is to the Mayor and Councillors then it is the Civic Secretary who should collate the response to an invitation.

All invitations marked RSVP should be responded to before the date given for responses in the invitation.

Where the Mayor is unable to attend apologies should be sent.

Presentation and receipt of Gifts

The presentation of gifts is normally undertaken when we receive visiting Mayors from our Twin Towns or when we visit reciprocate. Ideally these should be kept under a certain value (i.e. £50.00) and ideally should be locally produced; being representative of Thetford. Liaison must be made with the Civic Secretary for gifting history to prevent duplication.

All gifts received should be handed in to the Town Council unless they are specifically accompanied by a letter stating that this is a personal gift and not a civic one. However, should the gift be a personal one, this will still need to be reported to the Town Clerk as soon as reasonably possible.

Preparation of Speeches

It should be remembered that the Mayor's speech may be in response to a moment of triumph, celebration or crisis. Please do use the Town Council Officers as a means of support in speech writing, using their specialist knowledge relevant to the event being attended.

Appendix 1



Thetford Town Council Mayor's Office Booking Form

Invitation from.....

Function title.....

Function venue.....

Function date.....Function time.....

Is the invitation for the Mayor Mayor & Consort Deputy Mayor

Is the Mayor or Deputy Mayor required to make a speech? Yes/No (If yes please indicate the length of speech and subject, plus details of particular points you wish him to raise. If you have any additional information about the event or the organisation, please return with this sheet)

Contact Details

Name.....

Address.....

Telephone number.....

Email.....

- Due to high demand it may not be possible to attend every event to which the Mayor or Deputy Mayor is invited.
- Please be advised the Mayor generally accepts invitations on a first come first served basis.
- To avoid disappointment, the more advance notice you give the better.

Please return the completed booking form by post to:

Miss Kerry Leader
Civic Secretary
Thetford Town Council
King's House
King Street
Thetford
Norfolk IP24 2AT

Or by email to kerryleader@thetfordtowncouncil.gov.uk

Appendix 2



Thetford Town Council Customer Satisfaction Survey Form for the Civic Officer

Please show by ticking the appropriate box, how much you agree with the following statements:

1. Invitation

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Opinion
The email/letter of invitation was responded to promptly	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Enough guidance and information was given to assist with the engagement	<input type="checkbox"/>				
The Civic Office staff were courteous with regard to enquiries, letters and phone calls	<input type="checkbox"/>				
The information received was clear and useful	<input type="checkbox"/>				

2. Civic Pro Forma

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Opinion
The Civic Pro Forma was helpful with regard to guidance given	<input type="checkbox"/>				
The Civic Pro Forma asked the correct questions to ensure the event went smoothly	<input type="checkbox"/>				
The Civic Pro Forma was easy to understand	<input type="checkbox"/>				

3. Engagement

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Opinion
The Mayor/Civic Party arrived at the correct time	<input type="checkbox"/>				
The Mayor/Civic Party carried out the required duties	<input type="checkbox"/>				
The Mayor/Deputy Mayor's speech was well delivered with the appropriate content	<input type="checkbox"/>				
The Civic staff on duty were helpful and polite	<input type="checkbox"/>				
The Mayor/Civic Party did not out stay their welcome	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Having the Mayor/Civic Party in attendance met expectations	<input type="checkbox"/>				

4. Overall

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Opinion
Overall the service given by the Civic Office was satisfactory	<input type="checkbox"/>				
We would ask the Mayor/Civic Party to attend a future engagement	<input type="checkbox"/>				

5. Your Comments

Please provide any comments or suggestions you may have on improving the Civic Office's service.

NOTE:

Your response will be treated in confidence but it would be useful to know whom the completed survey is from and the date of the engagement. We may need to contact you if we need to discuss anything further. This will enable us to make any appropriate action from the comments made.

.....
Name

.....
Day Time Telephone Number

.....
Representing

.....
Date of Engagement

Data Protection:

The information you have given on this form will be used only for the purposes of providing the staff feedback. It will not be passed to a third party without your written consent.

Thank you for taking the trouble to complete this questionnaire. Please would you return it to the Civic Office, Thetford Town Council, King's House, King Street, Thetford, Norfolk. IP24 2AT or it may be e-mailed to KerryLeeder@thetfordtowncouncil.gov.uk

If there are any queries please ring 01842 754247