

Documents which support the Constitution

Part K



Civic and Ceremonial Protocol

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 Section 3 of the Local Government Act 1972 states that all local authorities must elect a chairman and vice chairman. The only authorities who can use the alternative term 'mayor' and 'deputy mayor' are those, like Surrey Heath, which have been granted a Royal Charter and given the status of Borough.
- 1.2 The office of mayor is an important element of the Council's governance structure. The role is demanding and governed by complicated rules, regulations, official procedures and etiquette. Whilst the powers of the ceremonial mayor may have diminished over the years, the role has retained its importance in the country's history and cultural heritage.
- 1.3 The Mayor is elected by councillors, usually at the Annual Meeting of Full Council, and has a key role to play in boosting the level of goodwill between the Council and its residents.

2. The Role of the Mayor

- 2.1 First Citizen of the Borough - To act and conduct him/herself as the first citizen of the Borough and as an Ambassador of the Council in promoting the Borough of Surrey Heath
- 2.2 Chairman - To act as a politically impartial chairman of the council, making sure that proper conduct takes place in the Council Chamber during meetings. This is enshrined in Article 5 of the Council's Constitution.
- 2.3 Civic Functions – To preside over civic functions including the Civic Service and civic receptions.
- 2.4 Good causes - To promote good causes, raise the profile and gain publicity for projects and events that are of a charitable or voluntary nature which benefit the citizens of Surrey Heath, particularly smaller organisations.
- 2.5 Mayor's Charity - To raise funds for the charities chosen by the Mayor and to announce at the Annual Full Council a charity or charities which will be supported during the civic year;
- 2.6 Events - To represent the Council at events and funerals of civic dignitaries past and present on behalf of the Council, attend and make speeches as required at community events, clubs, associations and other organisations within the Borough, neighbouring boroughs and other Surrey Councils.
- 2.7 Civic Protocols – To observe civic protocols when undertaking the civic ceremonial role.

3. The Role of the Deputy Mayor

- 3.1 The Deputy Mayor must preside over meetings of the Council in the absence of the Mayor.
- 3.2 He or she is entitled to discharge all the functions of the Mayor in the Mayor's absence and is entitled to the Mayor's right of precedence within the Borough, but does not have the right to wear the Mayor's robes and chain or badge.
- 3.3 The Deputy Mayor, at the direction of the Mayor, will deputise for and undertake the key responsibilities of the Mayor.

4. Non-Political Conduct whilst acting as the Mayor

- 4.1 During the course of his/her Mayoral year, the Mayor should not act in a party-political manner. Whilst he/she will remain a member of any political group or party, he/she should not take a group whip, attend any party-political events or campaign for any political party or candidate other than his/her own re-election as a Councillor. The Mayor should not make party political comments on social media or elsewhere even when acting in a personal capacity.

5. Undertaking Civic and Ceremonial Duties

- 5.1 The Mayor, Deputy Mayor and the Mayoress, Deputy Mayoress, consort or escort, when undertaking their civic and ceremonial roles will:
 - Behave in a manner appropriate and fitting to their position as First Citizens of the Borough when attending any event in their civic and/or ceremonial roles.
 - Keep their expenditure within the budget/allowance allocated by the Council to the Mayor.
 - Not bring the Council into disrepute through abuse of office.
 - Not attend any function or otherwise give support to any organisation or person, whose objectives are contrary to law and/or Council policy.
 - Not solicit engagements or visits at home or abroad or otherwise procure favours by virtue of office.
 - Not use the office of Mayor or Deputy Mayor to promote their business interest.

6. Meetings of the Council

- 6.1 Election - At the Annual Meeting in May every year, the election of the Mayor will be the first item of business conducted by the Council in accordance with the Local Government Act 1972 and the Constitution. The second item of business will be the election of the Deputy Mayor.

- 6.2 Whilst the Council may elect whomever it deems fit as Mayor within the law and the Council's Constitution, Members are advised to take into account the responsibilities of the role.
- 6.3 In recognition of the importance and prominence of the Mayoralty, it is encouraged that, where possible, Councillors may not be considered for the role of Mayor if
- He/she has an unspent criminal conviction.
 - He/she have been summonsed for non-payment of Council Tax or Business Rates in the preceding 12 months.
 - The Council is in formal dispute with him/her or his/her pecuniary interests including his/her employment.
 - He/she have previously been the Mayor and served a full one-year term.
- 6.4 Members should also use their best endeavours to avoid a contest at the Annual Meeting.
- 6.5 The Mayor will be assisted in chairing Council meetings by the Chief Executive, who will provide appropriate support and guidance including (but not limited to) briefing the Mayor prior to the Council meeting on procedural and other relevant issues.

7. The Mayor's Charity

- 7.1 The Mayor may select one or more charities to support and he or she make an announcement to that effect at the Annual Meeting. These charities will normally be registered with the Charity Commission. If, in the opinion of the S151 Officer, the charity is unacceptable for legal or financial reasons, the Mayor will be asked to select an alternative. In addition, the Mayor will not be allowed to choose a charity in which he/she is a trustee, employee or has any other pecuniary interest.
- 7.2 The Mayor's Charity is registered with the Charity Commission Registration No: 105331. A bank account is held and finance officers undertake the day to day administration. All monies raised during the Mayor's year of office will be distributed to the chosen charities as soon as possible after the end of the Mayor's term of office. Only money that has been collected can be distributed.
- 7.3 The trustees of the Mayor's Charity are the Mayor, the deputy mayor, the past mayor, the Chief Executive and the S151 Officer. The Trust is also governed by the Charities' Commission rules and guidance. All administrative functions related to the Mayor's chosen charities must be undertaken by the appropriate officers of the charity in question and not by the Mayor or the Council, or by the Civic Support Office. The Mayor must abide by any guidance issued from time to time by the S151 Officer or the Monitoring Officer in respect of the Mayor's Charities.

7.4 The Mayor's Charity will undertake its own fund-raising activity and its associated administration. The Civic Support Office will provide limited support.

8. Mayor's Chaplain

8.1 Traditionally prayers are said at a meeting of the Council immediately prior to the start of the meeting and the Mayor may appoint a Chaplain to lead the prayers at and to conduct the Civic Service.

8.2 However the Mayor may determine, in accordance with their own conscience or personal religious beliefs the extent to which their religion (Christian or otherwise) shall be involved in their mayoral year, or to have no religious involvement in their mayoral year.

9. Annual Civic Service

9.1 The Mayor may organise and hold an annual civic service at his/her chosen place of worship within the Borough, subject to approval by the Chief Executive.

9.2 The Civic Support Officer will assist where necessary, i.e. with invitations, and may also attend the service together the Mace Bearer.

9.3 This event has traditionally been held at the start of the Mayoral Year and any collection receipts taken at the service are usually shared between the host Church and the Mayor's nominated Charity.

9.4 The cost of refreshments following the service and any other necessary expenditure will be met from the Civic Events Budget.

10. Events

10.1 **Programme of Events** - The Mayor, in conjunction with the Civic Support Office, will produce a programme of events which meets the civic and ceremonial objectives of the Council. The Mayor will take account of the Council's requirements and priorities in determining the programme.

10.2 **The Mayor Making Ceremony** - The Annual Council Meeting includes the Mayor Making ceremony at which the new Mayor is sworn in and the Chain of Office. At this meeting the Mayor will assume the title and responsibilities of the role. The Mayoress or escort/consort will also be appointed at this ceremony and presented with the Jewel of Office.

10.3 The Civic Support Office will prepare the Council's guest list in liaison with the Chief Executive. The incoming Mayor and Deputy Mayor are allowed a limited guest list of family and friends.

10.4 **Civic Engagements** - The Civic Support Office will manage invitations for the Mayor or Deputy Mayor to attend civic/ceremonial events or any proposal for

a civic event or engagement. Attendance at all engagements will be co-ordinated by the Civic Support Office.

- 10.5 **Suitability of Attendance** - The Civic Support Office will liaise closely with the Mayor, conduct any research and advise the Mayor and Deputy Mayor on the suitability of attendance at the events.
- 10.6 **Non-Political Nature** - Events attended by the Mayor should be of a non-political nature and the advice of the Chief Executive should be sought if necessary.
- 10.7 **Outside The Borough** - Delegations or visits led by the Mayor to places outside the Borough should be restricted to neighbouring or Surrey authorities. The visits must be subject to appropriate planning and reporting, and organised by the Civic Support Office.
- 10.8 **Unavailability of the Mayor** - The Deputy Mayor should cover events or engagements which the Mayor is unable to undertake. Where the Deputy Mayor is not available, the Council's representative will be an Alderman or past Mayor. However invitations should only go beyond the Deputy Mayor when it is considered that the lack of civic presence would be seen as detrimental to the Council. The Civic Support Office will decide on this in consultation with the Chief Executive where necessary.
- 10.9 **Mayoress, Deputy Mayoress, Consorts/Escorts** - The Mayoress, Deputy Mayoress, Consorts/Escorts are not authorised to attend ceremonial or official functions or officially represent the Borough on an independent basis, i.e. when not accompanied by the Mayor/Deputy Mayor. They may however accept invitations and attend informal charity events with the permission of the Mayor/Deputy Mayor.
- 10.10 **Conferences, Seminars or Openings** - At events hosted by the Council such as conferences or seminars, the Mayor will normally give a welcome to delegates. At events promoting Council achievements (e.g. opening new facilities), the Mayor will normally undertake ceremonial duties such as cutting of a ribbon, and the appropriate Executive Member will normally make the official speech.
- 10.11 **The Civic Dinner** – is a civic gala event hosted by the Mayor. This event is to show the Council's appreciation to representatives of the community, voluntary sector and the business community and to thank them for their contribution to the Borough.
- 10.12 The event will be arranged by the Civic Support Office. The Chief Executive will consult the Mayor on the arrangements and the guest list. The cost of the event will be met from the Civic Events Budget.

11. Visits Abroad

- 11.1 Any visits planned by the Mayor should be discussed with the Civic Support Office at the earliest opportunity. A detailed proposal must be submitted to and approved by the Chief Executive prior to any financial commitment being made.
- 11.2 Visits should be for official purposes and not of a personal or political nature. An event can usually only be approved if funding has been identified to cover costs.
- 11.3 The proposal should include details of
- The purpose of the visit (such as town twinning), the benefits to the Borough of Surrey Heath and its residents.
 - The names of others who will be accompanying the Mayor.
 - Details of the costs to be incurred and any hospitality expected to be received and from whom.
- 11.4 Invitations should be arranged through the Civic Support Office. The Chief Executive will decide on any logistical or other arrangements necessary or appropriate or ancillary to any visit abroad.
- 11.5 Only the expenses of the Mayor and Mayoress will be met from the Civic Events Budget.

12. Special Responsibility Allowance

- 12.1 Both the Mayor and Deputy Mayor are paid a Special Responsibility Allowance in addition to their basic allowance to reflect personal and incidental expenses, such as mileage, incurred in carrying out the Mayoral function within the Borough. This allowance is taxable.

13. Civic Events Budget

- 13.1 All expenditure incurred by the Mayor whilst carrying out the activities detailed in 13.2 will be met from the Civic Events Budget must be approved in advance by the Civic Support Office
- 13.2 Costs which may be met from this Budget include
- travel outside of Borough, costs of small gifts such as flowers;
 - the cost of attending civic events by the Mayor and consort in Surrey district and other districts which adjoin Surrey Heath;
 - general expenses connected to the Mayoralty, such as the hiring of an official car together or the cost of receptions they wish to host.
- 13.3 The Mayor and the Civic Support Office should ensure that overall spend on the hospitality and civic functions does not exceed the Budget. The Civic

Support Office will provide the Mayor with a monthly statement of expenditure on the Civic Events Budget.

- 13.4 Payment for events which are to be claimed by The Mayor or Deputy Mayor must be paid for by them. A relevant proof of payment, in accordance with the Council's normal accounting procedures, must be provided to the Civic Support Office before reimbursement can be made. Alternatively, The Mayor or Deputy Mayor may also provide a cheque to the Civic Support Office which will be recorded.

14. Use of the Mayor's Office and Parlour

- 14.1 The Council has provided an office and a parlour for use by the Mayor and Deputy Mayor to undertake their duties. The Mayor and Deputy Mayor shall not use this accommodation for any other purposes without the prior consent of the Civic Support Office.
- 14.2 The accommodation is the asset of the Council under the control of the Civic Support Office.

15. Acceptance of Gifts

- 15.1 Personal Gifts – personal gifts received by the Mayor and Deputy Mayor must be declared in accordance with the Members' Code of Conduct at Part 5 Section A of the Council's Constitution.
- 15.2 Ceremonial Gifts – ceremonial gifts presented to the Mayor or Deputy Mayor shall be accepted for the Council and may not be retained by the Mayor or Deputy Mayor either during their municipal year or after. All such gifts shall be passed to the Civic Support Office who shall manage such gifts. Gifts received during the year may be displayed in the Mayor's Parlour.

16. Mayoral Robes and Regalia

- 16.1 The Robes should only be worn on formal civic ceremonial occasions including Council meetings, the annual civic service and at Remembrance Day services. Further advice should be sought from the Chief Executive on the appropriateness of wearing the Robes at other events.
- 16.2 The Robes are to be returned to the Civic Support Office two weeks before Annual Council. On a day to day basis, the Robes and Regalia are to be kept in the office, and only retained overnight when attending a late event and returned to the Office the following day.
- 16.3 Care must be taken in handling the Robes and Regalia. The Robes are to be kept in the suit bag when not being used or being transported for an event. The Robes and Regalia should not be left in a car unattended and should be insured on the Mayor's personal household insurance.
- 16.4 The Robes must not be taken outside of the UK.

17. Use of Images of the Mayor or Deputy Mayor in Election/Political Material

- 17.1 It is considered inappropriate for the Mayor or Deputy Mayor to appear in any electoral material, whether associated with their election, or another candidate in any official robes or regalia. The Mayor and Deputy Mayor should use reasonable endeavours to avoid this occurring.

18. Media

- 18.1 The Mayor will work with the Media and Marketing Team who have day to day responsibility for promoting the Mayor's activities and maximising its effectiveness.
- 18.2 Given the status of the Mayor and Deputy Mayor, all official communication relating to the Council (but not party political or private matters) should be dealt with by the Media and Marketing Team and the Civic Support Office advised accordingly.
- 18.3 The Mayor and Deputy Mayor should be aware that any private/party political communications they issue may bring their office, and the Council into disrepute, and they should always take care and seek advice before doing so.

19. Support from the Civic Support Office

- 19.1 The Chief Executive and the Civic Support Office will provide to the Mayor and Deputy Mayor upon their appointment to office, information on:
- The Special Responsibility Allowances and the tax liabilities of the allowance.
 - The Civic Events Budget and how it may be used.
 - Local charities and regular yearly events and functions.
- 19.2 The Civic Support Office will
- Arrange appropriate events.
 - Provide instructions and guidance on the arrangements for events.
 - Manage the civic diary and ensure arrangements are in place.
 - Receive and follow up invitations.
 - Give advice and briefings as necessary.
 - Manage the Civic Events Budget and provide a monthly Budget Monitoring Statement to the Mayor.
 - Provide such other support as is necessary or appropriate.
- 19.3 The Civic Support Office and other officers work for the Council and are under the managerial control of the Chief Executive.

20. Mayoral Precedence and Civic Etiquette

20.1 Attached at Annex A are the details of the Mayoral Precedence and Civic Etiquette.

21. Application of this Protocol

21.1 This Protocol as adopted by the Council at its meeting on 26 February 2020, will be included as a Document which supports the Constitution.

Mayoral Precedence and Civic Etiquette

1. First Citizen

- 1.1. The Mayor has statutory precedence as First Citizen of the Borough of Surrey Heath, i.e. they rank immediately after Members of the Royal Family, who always take precedence.
- 1.2. As First Citizen, the Mayor takes precedence over any other guest, no matter their title, role or responsibility at functions and events in Surrey Heath not attended by Members of the Royal Family.
- 1.3. The exception is when Her Majesty's Lieutenant (or a Deputy Lieutenant acting for the Lord Lieutenant) is attending in his/her official capacity representing the Sovereign or when any other person is present as the Sovereign's representative.

2. Processions

- 2.1. At meetings of the Full Council, the Order of Precedence for proceeding into and leaving the Chamber, will be as follows:-
 1. Mayor
 2. The Deputy Mayor
 3. The Chief Executive

3. Seating at Civic and Ceremonial Events

- 3.1. At Civic and Ceremonial Events and at other functions (i.e. a luncheon or dinner), unless Royalty (or a representative) is present, the Mayor should be placed to the immediate right of the person presiding. It is customary for those present to rise when the Mayor enters and leaves.
- 3.2. The seating at Civic Functions organised by the Council shall be in accordance with the following order of precedence.
 1. Mayor and Mayoress
 2. The Chief Executive
 3. The Leader
 4. The Deputy Mayor and Consort
 5. The Leader of the Opposition Group(s)
 6. Other Members of the Council
 7. Other Officers of the Council

4. Mode of address

- 4.1. The description for the purpose of printed matter or announcement is "The Worshipful the Mayor of Surrey Heath, Councillor XXXXX" and when the

Mayoress is also present "The Worshipful the Mayor and Mayoress of Surrey Heath".

- 4.2. The correct manner of address for the Mayor is "Mister Mayor or Madam Mayor".

5. Robes and Regalia

- 5.1. The Mayor normally wears their chain and badge of office at functions and events held within the Borough.
- 5.2. It is not normal for the Mayor to wear their robes at non Civic occasions, except in special cases or when the Mayor is visiting a school and it is considered desirable for the children to see their First Citizen so attired.

6. Time of arrival

- 6.1. Unless otherwise requested, the Mayor can be expected to arrive approximately 10 minutes before the time of a luncheon or dinner; and five minutes before a meeting or similar function. They should be met at the door by some responsible person and escorted to the room where the function is being held.

7. Photographs and videos

- 7.1. With their permission photographs and videos of the Mayor/Deputy Mayor attending functions and events can be taken but these must not be used for personal or commercial advertisement purposes.

8. Car

- 8.1. The Mayoral car should be able to draw up without hindrance at the entrance to the building in which the function is taking place. Arrangements for parking the car near the entrance should be made.

9. Speeches

- 9.1. If the Mayor or Deputy Mayor is required to preside at a meeting and/or make a speech, their agreement should be sought in advance. If a speech or toast is involved, then an appropriate speech or guidance notes should be provided at least five days before the function.