



Wells City Council

CIVIC REVIEW Document No.16

Purpose	This document has been adopted in order to provide guidance to both Councillors and Staff in the management of civic matters and especially to those wishing to seek the office of Mayor.
Additional Papers	This document should be read in conjunction with: Document 1 Standing Orders
Revised by	Archives & Civic Assets
Adopted	March 2026
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CIVIC REVIEW 2026

MAYORAL RESPONSIBILITIES

General Advice

Prior to commencing their year of office, the Mayor Elect and Mayoress/Consort Elect will have an informal meeting with the retiring Mayor, Mayoress/Consort and the Town Clerk for the purpose of a general discussion concerning Mayoral Duties and hand over. This should be followed by a meeting with the Mayor's Serjeant at Mace to discuss Protocol and the usual calendar of events attended in State.

The Mayor should be fully conversant with the Standing Orders adopted by the Council before chairing their first City Council Meeting.

They should also be aware of the responsibilities of the Chairman of a meeting especially in terms of both using the chairs casting vote but also in only using the Mayor's ordinary vote sparingly.

Invitations to Attend Functions in an Official Capacity

In cases when the Mayor proposes to accept an invitation, a questionnaire can be sent to the person from whom the invitation has been received, to obtain full details as to the nature of the function and what will be required of the Mayor and perhaps Mayoress/Consort.

Invitations to events within Wells should take precedence over those outside the City. Punctuality is very important. Care should be taken to arrive on time – not early or late. It is always desirable that the Mayor should not over-stay his/her welcome and it is very often preferable that the Mayor should leave in advance of the last guests. However, the Mayor should not leave a dinner before the toast to the guests has been proposed and responded to.

Invitations to Civic functions outside of the City; if the chains of office are to be worn, then permission should always be asked of the Clerk of the place to be visited by the Mayor.

Non-civic functions outside of the City of a personal nature; then it would not be appropriate to wear the chain of office. Invitations to weddings should be regarded as personal and not Mayoral; it would not be appropriate for the Mayor, Mayoress/Consort to attend in their official capacity or to wear their chains of office.

Chains or badges may be worn to Buckingham Palace Garden Party though this is a matter of choice and not compulsory.

There will be occasions when the Mayor may be approached with a verbal invitation to attend a function. To avoid confusion this should be strongly discouraged and the person involved requested to write to the Mayor or Town Clerk.

The Mayor is the representative of the City and it is expected that, where possible, the Mayor will accept all invitations that are offered. Accepting all invitations may not be possible and the Mayor should use his/her discretion on those with the greatest importance. Invitations local to the City of Wells should be prioritised over those more distant.

If the Mayor is unable to attend a function the invitation must pass in order of progression to the Deputy Mayor, then to elected councillors in order of seniority. The Mayor should only accept invitations which they believe they personally can attend. Only in extreme circumstances where unavoidable should the Mayor pass an accepted invitation to the Deputy unless agreed with the Deputy and the organisation which has issued the invitation in advance. The Mayor is the person the organisation is wanting to attend.

As all mayoral invites are to the office and not to the individual they relate only to the specific year between one mayor making and the next. Invitation received well in advance must be passed to the future Mayor when the event takes place. This includes royal visits and garden parties and visits such as to our military Freedom holders.

It is inappropriate for Mayors to wear jewellery especially a necklace unless it is for a medical alert function. However, earrings or wrist adornments may be worn with official insignia. Official insignia are exactly that and can only be worn on official engagements or when a specific invitation has been issued to the Mayor and is therefore an official engagement. The official insignia is to be worn only by the person it has been presented to.

In Wells the Mayor is traditionally addressed as 'Mr Mayor' but it is entirely at the choice of the Mayor if they prefer to be addressed as 'Madam Mayor'.

Whilst wearing the chain of office and in the position of Mayor, rather than as a private individual, it is important to maintain the dignity of that office. As such it is advisable to be aware of modern safeguarding guidance when dealing with children and vulnerable adults. Personal space should be observed. Either hugging or picking up children or being over familiar with others, behaving in a loud or unruly fashion or drinking or eating to excess should be avoided.

Mayor's Parlour

The use of the Mayor's Parlour is at the discretion of the Mayor. This is exclusively in the Mayor's control. It is primarily to be used for the receiving of guests, though it can also be the Mayor's workplace. It should at all times be kept primarily for the first of those functions.

Control of contents, artworks etc. and décor, rests with the Council subject to recommendations by the Archives Committee. An inventory of the Parlour contents will be checked at the hand-over period prior to change of Mayor. It has been the practice that the outgoing Mayor leaves a gift; this will be added to the inventory.

Use for weddings and pre-wedding interviews is at the Mayor's discretion and individual agreement. However, every effort should be made to honour bookings

made in good faith in the Council's name; bearing in mind that weddings are frequently booked more than a calendar year in advance.

A list of pre-booked occasions will be provided to the Mayor in advance of Mayor-Making but all future bookings will only be taken after consultation between the Mayor and the Town Hall manager responsible for Town Hall bookings.

The Parlour is the province of the out-going Mayor until the Mayor-Making Ceremony/Meeting but for 24 hours before should be free to enable full cleansing and preparation for the incoming Mayor, and all property and mementos removed. All keys should be handed to the Town Clerk in advance of the start of the Ceremony/Election Meeting.

Salutes

When taking a salute at a march past the Mayor should remove and replace his hat, not wave the hat, as the standards or colours pass and as each section passes. It is not correct for the Mayor to salute. A female Mayor should simply incline her head. When the Council supports the Mayor, Councillors should form a single line either side of the Mayor and should be reminded that this is a formal occasion.

Funerals

Mayors and Councillors in Office, past Mayors and Freemen are entitled to a Civic/State Funeral within the boundaries of the City of Wells if their families so wish.

A civic/state funeral consists of the offer of use of the Town Hall, or another Council building, for the wake, where a building is available. Dates should be mutually agreed. Equally, the council offers the waiving of interment fees for a plot within Wells Cemetery (Note that the plot still requires purchase from the family).

Should the family wish for the civic party to process as part of the funeral cortege, this can also be arranged, but is limited to the place of service and not a parade or road closure of the city.

Black rosettes for councillors, black ribbons on Mayor's chain and Maces should only be worn for funeral services or interment of ashes.

Family wishes must be obeyed and the family take precedence on the day.

The Town Clerk will engage with the family at the appropriate time, based on the individual circumstances, to determine wishes and communicate to all councillors.

Robes

Wherever the Mayor is robed he/she should be accompanied by the Town Clerk and the Mayor's Serjeant at Mace (or if unavailable the Council's Serjeant at Mace).

Special requests may be made through the Archives and Civic Assets Committee and due consideration of the timing of events should be considered.

Deputy Mayor

The function of Deputy Mayor is solely to step in when the Mayor is not available i.e. to deputise.*

The Deputy Mayor may only assist in that capacity at the express request of the Mayor.

In normal circumstances the Mayor will only request the Deputy Mayor to deputise when for some reason the Mayor cannot personally attend a particular function and it is desirable that the Mayor be represented. The Deputy Mayor is not normally requested to represent the Mayor at purely social functions but may do so at the request of the Mayor.

Mayoress/Consort

It is at the choice of the Mayor whether to appoint a Mayoress or a Consort and by which title they shall be known.

The Mayoress/Consort is not elected and does not hold a Civic Office. They cannot officially represent the Mayor; they may attend a function in their own right but *not* wearing their chain/badge.

When a councillor is appointed to be a Mayoress or Consort it is inappropriate for them to wear their councillor's robe with the Mayoress' chain/Consort's badge. They must decide in procession or function whether they are Consort or Councillor and dress accordingly.

When processing, the Mayoress/Consort should always stand on the left of the Mayor.

At the beginning of the Mayoral year the Mayor chooses a Mayoress or Consort to take on that role for the year. It is advisable to consider carefully whether the person can make the time available throughout the year to accompany the Mayor to engagements both during the day and in the evening.

In the event that the selected person cannot attend a function then the Mayor may go alone or invite a fellow Councillor to accompany them. Where the Mayoress/Consort regularly is not going to be available, in special circumstances it can be agreed at the beginning of the mayoral year that another nominated person may be able to undertake the escorting role and may wear the consort's pendant, regardless of gender.

If the accompanying person is a Councillor or only standing in for one or two occasions then that person would not wear the consort's pendant as they have no claim to the official role.

The Mayoress' Chain is only ever worn by a person appointed as Mayoress.

MAYORAL SECRETARIAL & OFFICE SUPPORT; USE OF COUNCIL FACILITIES

Use of the Town Hall

The Town Hall function rooms may be used only for major Mayoral charitable functions, up to four in number, and not as a gift for others, to avoid the “free let to good causes” problem. (*These four events do not include the Mayor-Making reception.*)

Telephone: The telephone is for Mayoral duty only, both official and civic

Postage: Official only - £100 maximum

Christmas Cards: 150 printed and posted or emailed – in-house or sourced externally with costs borne through the mayoral allowance

Photocopying: Copying up to a maximum of 2,000 pages will be undertaken in the office

Opening of Post

All post addressed to any named councillor will not be opened without the express consent of that councillor. The Mayor may choose to have all mail delivered unopened to the Mayor’s Parlour, although it is deemed more efficient for the office to open the post, and any action taken to be recorded.

Office

The office is to reply to invitations and to send out only official occasion invitations. The Mayor should deal beyond acceptance with the organising of personal mayoral events. The office will maintain the definitive diary of the Mayor’s engagements

The Mayor should use the Parlour as his/her meeting place, not the Town Hall office or the Town Clerk’s office.

The prime function of the Town Hall office is to ensure the smooth and efficient running of the Council. As such, both the Town Clerk and the office staff should prioritise the work of the City Council.

The Town Clerk is the professional adviser to the Mayor on the duties of the Mayor and the limitations of the Mayor’s authority.

The Mayor may wish to write a regular diary for the press and public about the civic duties carried out; this should be subject to the Council's Press and Media Policy and to the advice of the Town Clerk; care should be taken not to impinge on comment or reporting of Council functions, actions, policies or decisions.

The Mayor's Serjeant at Mace is the adviser to the Mayor on civic protocol.

The line management of staff is the responsibility of the Town Clerk. The Town Clerk is line managed by the Management Committee, consisting of the Chair of the Finance Committee, Chair of the Staffing & Personnel committee and the Mayor, and operates in line with the Councils Standing Orders and formal delegations.

The Finance Committee and the RFO have the delegated responsibility for the financial conduct of the City Council's affairs. The Mayor has no responsibility for council expenditure outside of the Mayor's allowance.

The Mayor has no special powers in relation to Council expenditure and or decision making, which should proceed through normal decision making channels of the council.

MAYORAL RESPONSIBILITY

The Mayor's Allowance

The Mayor's Allowance is paid in two tranches, the first in advance of Mayor Making and the second in November. This sum includes the previous "Mayor-Making allowance", and includes a sum sufficient to cover one official visit abroad.

(*There can be no Deputy Mayor's allowance; see definition of function of Deputy Mayor Page 2.)

The Mayor's Allowance is subject to income tax but will be paid gross to the Mayor whose responsibility it is to comply with Inland Revenue requirements and provide evidence to the Council of such necessary submissions and spend at the end of their mayoral period to satisfy Council audit provisions.

It is recommended that a bank account be created for the provision of the mayoral allowance and if a charity is being nominated, that a separate charity account for the Mayor's contributions is also opened. Both of which should be managed as business accounts, with receipts being held and justification of income and expenditure being managed. Any tax obligation should be settled before closing the account and returning any surplus funds.

The Mayor's Allowance is reviewed annually and increased by the % by which the nationally agreed settlement for local government employee's salary is increased.

Should there be a remaining balance at the end of the year on closing the account, it should be returned to the Council, and it will be returned to reserves.

The mayoral allowance cannot be offered to the mayoral charity.

Travelling Expenses

Travelling Expenses at the current agreed local Government rate will be paid for the use of private cars, or the cost of public transport if applicable, and will be paid on those journeys outside Wells where the Mayor is required to attend as Chairman and representative of the Council but only up to the budget allocation.

The Mayoress or Consort will be included in the travelling expenses. The Deputy Mayor will only attend an event when invited to do so by the Mayor who may be prevented by a prior engagement or non-availability from attending themselves. In that case, travelling expenses are recoverable if the event is outside the boundaries of the city (but within the UK) and are paid from the budget for members' travelling and expenses.

(This section does not apply to travel abroad).

Hospitality Budget

This budget should be restricted to events of a Civic nature proposed and backed by the full Council and should not be available for expenditure by the Mayor on events which concern only the Mayoralty. For such Civic events a sub-committee of councillors should be set up.

Mayor's Charity

It is up to the incoming Mayor to decide whether or not to support a charity. It should not be seen as a major part of a mayoral year rather as ancillary to the role of being Mayor and must not interfere in their carrying out of their mayoral duties. There is no competition for the most monies raised and for manageability a ceiling of around £10,000 is reasonable.

It is recommended that the Mayor check that causes have accredited charitable status and then make known at the beginning of the Mayoral year which charities are being supported.

The 'Mayor's Charities' account is set up by the new Mayor and overseen by the RFO.

The Mayor is responsible to ensure all charity money from the year is paid into the account and should be able to produce interim statements through the year. The RFO will be able to provide advice on a suitable framework.

At the end of the Mayoral year the account must be emptied and all monies distributed to the Mayor's charities. The account must be cleared and closed then a full auditable set of accounts should be made available to be acknowledged by the Finance

Committee. Please note that the value (if any) returned to council should be following tax deductions.

The Mayor's Charity cannot be continued beyond the end of a Mayoral year. If an outgoing Mayor wishes to continue fundraising for a charity they should do so as a private individual, understanding that it cannot be having the use of council staff or facilities.

CEREMONIAL ROLE OF THE COUNCIL

Robes and Insignia

The Mayor's, Councillors' and Officers' robes, gowns, hats, chains and badges of office are the outward signs of the civic offices they hold – i.e. their insignia.

Care should be taken to ensure that all items are treated with care both because of value and antiquity. Chains should be kept safely and not left in cars or unattended and in clear sight.

The Civic Officers

Officers include the Town Clerk, Serjeants at Mace, Town Crier and Mayor's Chaplain. -The Mayor's Chaplain is purely a voluntary role and agreed annually by the request of the incoming Mayor.

-The Serjeants-at-Mace and Town Crier are voluntary posts which receive an annual allowance.

-The Town Clerk is an employee of the Council.

Robes and Hats

The Civic & Archives Committee budget will cover the cost of replacements when necessary. The responsibility is with the individual councillor/other wearer to be aware of the history and cost of the robes and at all times to maintain them safely and in good condition.

Red Robes will be worn by the four most senior Councillors, with at least five years service to the Council, attending Civic occasions in State.

Where provided, Councillors are expected to wear Hats and Gloves when robed. Hats should be worn horizontally parallel to the ground, if possible.

Guidance on suitable wear for under the robes should be sought from the Serjeant-at-Mace, particularly as it is likely that an official function may be continuing after robes have been removed.

Councillors and Officers should be encouraged to care for their robes by ensuring that they are handled and stored carefully. Robe bags provided must be used to allow the robes to hang and avoid creasing and moth infestation. Care should be taken if robes

become damp or wet; they must be thoroughly dried before storing in the bags provided.

The Town Clerk will arrange for robes and hats to be inspected annually in August and cleaned at the end of each term of office.

Members are required by Standing Orders at the end of each term of office to return their robes, gloves, hats, keys and any other council property, to the Town Clerk.

Mayoral Robes

The badge of office is the Mayoral chain; the robe should only be worn on ceremonial and civic occasions with the Serjeant at Mace and Town Clerk in attendance .

The Mayor's chain and badge are worn with the robes. A white lace stock or jabot is usually worn at the neck; white gloves are worn.

The incoming Mayor should hand in their Councillor robe to the Town Clerk for storage at the Town Hall during their year as Mayor.

The Mayor should arrange for the Mayoral robe to be cleaned at the end of every year office, ahead of Mayor Making ceremony.

The white items must be regularly laundered to retain a good appearance.

The outgoing Mayor should ensure that proper arrangements are made for cleaning and storage of the Mayor's robes, hat and white items they will be handing in.

Mayoral Hats

The hat is worn with robes at outdoor ceremonies, a Black Cocked Hat (male) or a Black Tricorn Hat (female), with gold embellishment.

The male Mayor's Black Cocked Hat or the female Mayor's Black Tricorn Hat, whichever is not in use by the current Mayor, is to be stored safely in the Town Hall until required.

Civic Processions

Careful consideration should be given to the maintenance of the Councils and Citys image when processing.

When processing, consideration should be given to the speed of the march, to ensure all within the civic party are able to safely participate.

The Town Clerk will ensure that suitable provision is made for any member of the civic party to participate wherever possible.

Unless there are exceptional circumstances, if the Council processes out in state it should return in the same manner - as a corporate body, and in formation. Details of which can be found in appendix A.

Processions from the Town Hall to the Cathedral should return to the Town Hall unless all Council members have been informed otherwise in advance.

Councillors should complete their civic duty and not absent themselves before the procession is complete.

Councillors should if possible attend all Civic and Ceremonial occasions. They do so as members of the corporate body regardless of any personally held views.

The Council should take its lead from the Mayor on standing or sitting, sitting/standing only after they have reached their destination.

Councillors should not smoke whilst wearing their civic robes.

Mobile phones should be switched to silent during all council meetings.

Any photos taken by the civic party or for the civic party, should also be offered to the Town Hall to be placed in archives.

Insignia – Civic Dress Code

Event Type	Civic Dress
Special functions at which Royalty is present	Robe, Chain and Badge
Civic Dinners: Reception & Reception	Chain
Civic Reception	Chain
Non-Civic Functions	Chain
Charity Meetings, Fetes, Bazaars etc. within the City	Chain or Badge
Functions outside the City	Robe, Chain and Badge as requested * [see earlier note]

Note: The Mayor should not wear the civic insignia in another area without the express permission of that Council's Mayor or Chairman.

Civic chains should never be worn with a military uniform.

When wearing official robe and hat the Mayor should remove the hat as outlined on pages 133/134/187 – Civic Ceremonial available from the Town Clerk.

Mayors or the Mayoress/Consort should not wear other necklaces when wearing the Civic Chains.

Former Mayor's Badges presented to Outgoing Mayors and Mayoresses should be worn at Ceremonial events and at Civic Functions.

Medals are not worn on robes by councillors or the wider civic party except when the Council attends robed at the Remembrance Day, Battle of Britain Sunday Services, or other official military occasion, when they are worn on the left breast of civic robes.

For example: World War 1 Commemorations; Armed Forces Day

Medals should be restricted to those received by the wearer directly, or a direct family member.

The Deputy Mayor may wear the Deputy Mayor's badge at all ceremonial/civic occasions and when representing the Mayor; also when attending social functions to which they have received an official invitation as Deputy Mayor.

Maces

The Mace is a symbol of the Mayor's authority and is one of the oldest of civic insignia.

The Maces are usually carried before the Mayor in Civic Ceremonial processions. The Mace should only precede the Mayor in his/her own Parish/Borough unless express permission has been granted by the appropriate Mayor or Chairman in whose area the Ceremony is taking place.

Traditionally, when the Serjeants-at-Mace and the Town Crier are escorting the Mayor, the tassels on their hats are unfolded.

The use of the Mace abroad must be approved by the Host Council and customs clearance obtained.

The Mace should precede the Mayor when entering and leaving the Council Chamber and should always repose in front of the Mayor when the Council is sitting.

When the Mayor is seated the Mace rests horizontally before him/her with the crown to his right hand (or in the most important direction if elsewhere than the Council Chamber).

When the Deputy Mayor is taking the Chair at a Council meeting the Mace is not carried in front of the Deputy Mayor but positioned on its stand prior to his/her entry. Likewise, at the conclusion of the meeting it would be appropriate for the Mace to be removed informally following the formal closure of the meeting.

Should the Mayor occupy a stall in the choir of the church, the crown of the Mace should be towards the altar where possible. The Mace should always be reversed (upside down) in the presence of The Sovereign.

When Maces are required for Civic occasions it is the responsibility of the Town Clerk to ensure that they are available.

The Town Clerk is required to ensure that the collection of civic insignia, plate and other valuable items are properly valued, insured and photographed on a regular basis as well as being attractively displayed.

The Council's financial regulations require that the insurance values should be checked annually and updated as and when required to avoid any embarrassment should loss or damage occur. Any damage must be reported immediately to the Town Clerk. Mayors, Mace-Bearers, or any other persons, should not attempt to arrange repairs or cleaning.

The civic insignia include the Maces, the chains of office for the Mayor, Deputy Mayor, the Mayoress and Consort. Chains should be returned to the Town Clerk annually for inspection / cleaning. The Constables' Staves, Town Crier's Bell and Twin Town Keys should also be included in the list of insignia.

If robes or a Mace or any other insignia are presented to the Council such items are to be maintained, insured and repaired at the expense of the Council.

Flags

The City flag is flown according to the national guidelines given – i.e. the day of the Annual Meeting of the City Council, Mayor's Day, whenever the Mayor holds an official reception and on other occasions according to government rules.

The City flag should also be flown at half-mast on the death of a Mayor or a Freeman of the City, from the day of the death until sunset on the day of the funeral.

It is also flown at half-mast on the death of a member of the Council or an ex-Mayor on the day of the funeral until sunset.

(See also City Council Flag Policy)

Armorial Bearings

The grant of arms to Wells was made to "The Mayor, Aldermen and Citizens of Wells". It therefore follows that whilst the use of the arms granted should properly be controlled by the City Council such use should not unreasonably be withheld from representative bodies in the City.

ORDER OF PROCESSION

TOWN CRIER

Some distance in front to clear the way. Step to the side on entering church and then follow up the aisle.

SERJEANT AT MACE

SERJEANT AT MACE

MAYORESS/CONSORT

MAYOR

CHAPLAIN

TOWN CLERK

RED ROBE COUNCILLORS

DEPUTY MAYOR

BLACK ROBE COUNCILLORS

In this order: Total length of service but if equal length of service, then Ex mayors, chronological, then alphabetical. The Senior processing on the right file behind the Mayor. The final two councillors holding staves.

CONSTABLE

CONSTABLE

LARGE PROCESSION e.g. the Legal Service

M.P.

CHIEF CONSTABLE

CHAIR OF SOMERSET COUNCIL

CHAIRS OF UNITARY AUTHORITIES/CHIEF EXECUTIVE

MAYORS, RIGHT WORSHIPFUL

MAYORS, BOROUGH **Alphabetical**

MAYORS, TOWN **Alphabetical**

CHAIRS OF TOWNS **Alphabetical**

LEADER OF Somerset COUNCIL

HIGH SHERIFF

LORD LIEUTENANT

Procession notes

The Mayor always walks on the right (when facing forward), the Town Clerk behind the Mayor; whether male or female; this because it is the Office that is significant, not the holder.

It is usual for visiting Mayoresses and Consorts to process with their partners

Civic Officers should robe when their duties commence

Councillors should robe and disrobe when the Mayor does

Councillors should follow the instructions of the Mace-Bearer when lining up for procession

Only the Mayor and Mayoress acknowledge the altar on behalf of the Council, so as to avoid unseemly delays and irregularity of procession

On arriving in church or similar, care should be taken to enter through pews/seat rows in such a way that the procession will exit the rows in correct order of precedence.

The council is a corporate body and if possible should rise with the Mayor during ceremonies. If the Mayor remains standing then the Council does likewise.

The Mayor ought not to exit from the Cathedral preceding the Maces even if escorted by the Dean/Bishop. Where this is unavoidable, if the host takes the Mayor out, the Deputy-Mayor may step in as head of the Council to process out following the Maces. If the Deputy is not present the most senior Councillor may step in.

Council should return in procession from any civic event, and dis-robe when the Mayor does so.

In the Cathedral embroidered cushions are lodged with the Vergers office for the use of the Mayor and Mayoress / Consort.

ANNUAL CIVIC EVENTS

The City Council attends some fixed annual events at which attendance by the Mayor and Council is expected; these form part of the Council calendar:

- Second Sunday afternoon in January: Bishop Bekynton commemoration at which the City Prayer books are provided (lodged in the Vergers office).
- Third Sunday morning in March: The Legal Service
- First Saturday morning in May: Opening of the May Charter Fair
- Date t.b.a. in May or June: Mayor-Making (Election of Mayor and Deputy)
- Sunday afternoon before 11th November: Remembrance Service and Parade

Civic Visits

From time to time the Council may host a formal visit from for example, a member of the Royalty, Freemen of the City, or visiting Mayor. Such a visit will be proposed and agreed by resolution of the full Council. A budget should be approved and careful preparations made in advance.

CIVIC AWARDS

It is recommended that will any consideration of awards, that all members of full council have an opportunity to partake in private discussion ahead of any formal consideration. Where possible, a brief synopsis should be provided in advance of the meeting, and held in the strictest of confidence by all, thus allowing thoughts and views to be gathered for a meaningful discussion.

It is suggested that the Town Clerk facilitate a full meeting, and should any councillor not be present, then the Chair of council will follow up with any missing party.

Following which, the mayor will advise the Town Clerk of the views of all councillors.

Councillors should be wary, in all award instances, of neutrality and pre determination of decision.

a. Long Service Award

A medal will be awarded to those members of the Council who have given a total of twenty years' service, either consecutive or combined to the City Council as a serving member or as a member of employed staff.

The award will be presented in the first available Full Council Meeting following the anniversary.

b. Council's Award

Additionally, a Council's Award could be made. This would not be annually but once in the life of each Council (every four years) and would be for outstanding and meritorious service to the community. The award would be made at a special reception held in the Town Hall, paid for and hosted by the City Council.

The decision to award the Council Award will be made at a confidential meeting of Full City Council, by a majority vote. Nomination for the award can be presented to a councillor as the term of the council comes to an end.

c. Freedom of the City

Truly exceptional service to the city would be recognised by the conferment of the Honorary Freedom of the City. Any proposal should be considered by an informal meeting of the Council prior to any formal proposal to Full Council.

The proposal must come from a Councillor not a member of the public; Councillors should be cautious when being lobbied.

There is sensitivity in that nominations may well not receive the necessary support of the whole Council. Confidentiality should be maintained by all councillors and officials.

In the event of the Council conferring this honour a committee will be set up to organise the event, which will be accommodated and paid for by the City Council. The event can take many forms and is dependent on the wishes of the recipient, Previous honours of this nature have seen a small church service, with/without a parade from the Town Hall, and a hosted dinner at the Town Hall, for which the guest list is determined by the recipient.

In making the decision, the matter should be tabled as a confidential item on a Full City Council agenda.

The recipient should not know about a proposed award until it has been agreed by the Council; only then should the recipient be contacted to ask if they would like to receive the award.

On the decision of a freedom being awarded, and following the meeting of Full City Council, a small working party should be formed and should address the following matters:

Budgetary impacts which should be advised to the Town Clerk

A citation should be offered within the ceremony, from the Council to the recipient at the Councils cost. Previous examples of the citation can be sourced from the council archives.

In the instance that the recipient is a servicing or previous councillor, in addition to the citation, a freeman badge of office will also be provided at the cost of the council. A badge is not provided to any other party.

Traditionally, the driving of sheep up the High Street towards the Town Hall has been conducted, however, this is discouraged now due to health and safety management and logistical complexities.

Consideration could be given to the following:

1. Exceptional Service to Wells - The candidate should have:

- Made outstanding contributions to the city of Wells over a sustained period, or
- Rendered eminent services that materially benefited the city, its residents, or its institutions. Examples include public service, cultural leadership, education, heritage conservation, or long-term voluntary work.

2. Connection to the City - Strong consideration is usually given where the individual:

- Was born in Wells, or
- Has lived, worked, or served the city for a significant period, or
- Has a demonstrable and enduring association with Wells (including national figures with exceptional impact on the city)

3. Distinction and Merit - The honour is generally reserved for individuals who:

- Have achieved distinction in their field, or
 - Are widely regarded as having acted with integrity, dedication, and civic-mindedness
- Their contribution should be clearly above normal expectations of employment or office.

4. Good Standing - Candidates should:

- Be of good character and reputation
 - Have no conduct that would reasonably bring the City Council or the honour into disrepute
- (This is especially important given the ceremonial and permanent nature of the award.)

5. Non-Political Use - While councillors or public officials may be eligible:

- The award should not be perceived as party-political
- Service should be demonstrably cross-community and non-partisan

6. Rarity and Prestige - To preserve the status of the Freedom:

- Awards should be infrequent
- The contribution should be truly exceptional, not simply long service alone

7. Wells Specific Considerations - Given Wells' identity, particular weight may reasonably be given to:

- Contributions to heritage, conservation, and the built environment
- Service enhancing Wells' standing as England's smallest city
- Work supporting community cohesion, tourism, arts, or civic life
- Contributions connected to the Cathedral, education, or charitable activity within the city

d. Mayor's Awards

The Mayor can make two awards (standard pottery plaques, or similar) funded from the City Council Gifts budget. Any other awards must be funded from the Mayor's Allowance. There are no limits to the number of the awards that can be provided; however, consideration should be made to the risk of de-valuing of the award if it is applied too frequently.

The award can be produced by the City Council administration team. Templates for which are stored.

All awards must be notified to the Town Clerk so that a record can be kept of who has received them. Any giving of awards, and presentation of charity cheques, must be completed within the Mayoral year.

Gifts or awards presented by the Mayor *on behalf of* the Council or City (e.g. Twinning gifts) are funded from the Gifts budget and must be approved in advance by the Town Clerk.

Recognising that the invitation as guests for Mayor-Making are the gift of the incoming Mayor and that is their day. The retiring Mayor should present awards, as they are a personal recognition, at a less formal occasion, arranged previously by them as outgoing Mayor.

Traditionally, gifts are given as follows and paid for through the council's gift budget:

The incoming Deputy Mayor offers a gift of a fish.

The Outgoing Mayor offers flowers or wine to the Mayoress/Consort, and any other party, such as the Mayoral Assistant for their support.

The Outgoing Mayor leaves a gift in the parlour, as a gift to the Town Hall.

The Outgoing Mayor offers a gift to the Chaplain, traditionally a case of wine.

SELECTION OF CANDIDATE FOR THE MAYORALTY

There are no laid down hard and fast rules for the selection and nomination of a councillor for the office of Mayor, only some traditions and particular protocols.

No Councillor should be precluded from taking on the office of Mayor because of party, race, religion, age or sex or financial reasons.

The stipend should suffice to cover the reasonable expense of holding the office of Mayor and carrying out the civic duties required, so that a councillor may not be prevented by personal financial circumstance from attaining that office.

It is normal for councillors to stand for the office of mayor by length of time served on the council i.e. the number of years. Normally at the beginning of a four-year cycle there might be a number of people elected at the same time; it has normally in the past been that those people might meet informally under the guidance of the senior (longest serving) councillor and see if agreement can be reached on which any one might wish to seek to serve as Mayor.

It is helpful if councillors express their wish to stand as Mayor or indeed if they do not wish to do so, either permanently or at least for the length of a particular council. The senior councillor will seek to reach agreement and compromise well before the council meeting at which nominations for the Mayor and Deputy are made.

It is customary for someone to serve a year as Deputy Mayor before seeking to be Mayor but it is not a guarantee of succession or prerequisite of standing for the office of Mayor.

The Mayor Making reception has no set form and is totally at the discretion of the incoming Mayor, but some guidance and tradition is referenced in Appendix B to aid in arrangements.

The guest list to that event is also totally that of the incoming Mayor, though they have to remember that the official part of the meeting (election of Mayor and Deputy-Mayor) is part of an official council meeting and therefore councillors have to attend and that it is a public meeting and as such is open to the public.

In the event that no agreement can be reached then there would need to be a vote at the appropriate council meeting between those wishing to stand.

If no councillor who has not served a term as Mayor expresses a wish to seek election to the office of Mayor, then the opportunity may be offered to councillors who have already served one term as Mayor to express an interest in seeking a further term.

The nomination process is normally carried out at the February meeting of the full Council, in order to provide a smoother transition in the Mayoral diary of engagements.

In an election year, by law the Mayor must be elected within fourteen days after the new council takes office. Traditional Mayor Making will then take place as soon as possible afterwards, in accordance with the wishes of the incoming Mayor.

Traditions

After the Council meeting selecting the Mayor Elect (normally the February Council meeting) the Mayor Elect invites the Council and officers to join them for a drink in a local establishment

After the December meeting of the City Council the Mayor invites Councillors and officers (plus partners at the Mayor's discretion) to the Mayor's Parlour for refreshment.

In the period between Christmas and April a dinner may be arranged for Councillors and partners at which the Loving cup is passed around after the meal in accordance with the conditions attached to its gift to the City Council.

After the final Council meeting before Mayor-Making the Mayor invites Councillors to the Parlour for refreshments.