

# GODALMING TOWN COUNCIL

Tel: 01483 523575  
E-Mail: office@godalming-tc.gov.uk  
Website: www.godalming-tc.gov.uk

Municipal Buildings  
Bridge Street  
Godalming  
Surrey GU7 1HT

8 November 2019

I HEREBY SUMMONS YOU to attend the **MAYORALTY COMMITTEE** Meeting to be held in The Pepperpot, High Street, Godalming on THURSDAY, 14 NOVEMBER 2019 at 6.30pm.

Andy Jeffery  
Town Clerk

Committee Members:

Councillor Cosser  
Councillor Purvis  
Councillor Rivers  
Councillor Rosoman  
Councillor Stubbs  
Councillor Wardell

## A G E N D A

1. MINUTES

To approve as a correct record the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on the 11 July 2019, a copy of which has been circulated previously.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

3. DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS AND NON-PECUNIARY INTERESTS

To receive from Members any declarations of interests in relation to any items included on the Agenda for this meeting required to be disclosed by the Localism Act 2011 and the Godalming Members' Code of Conduct.

4. PETITIONS/STATEMENTS/QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

The Chairman to allow members of the public to ask the Council questions, or make a statement or present a petition. This forum to be conducted in accordance with Standing Order 5.

5. QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS

To consider any questions from Councillors in accordance with Standing Order 6.

6. MAYORAL ALLOWANCE FOR THE YEAR 2020/21 – ITEM FOR DECISION

One of the functions of this Committee is to recommend to Full Council an allowance for the Town Mayor (see Standing Order 103 iv). The draft budget papers include an inflationary adjustment of +2% (£170) to the Mayoral Allowance increasing the sum from £8,500 to £8,670.

Members are asked what recommendation they would like to make to Full Council.

7. **SYMBOLS OF OFFICE – ITEM FOR DECISION**

On 25 July, following an amendment in relation to the robing of the Mayor at ordinary meetings of the Council, the Full Council resolved to approve the recommendations of this Committee in relation to the wearing of robes by the Mayor and Councillors.

However, the Full Council did not accept the recommendation of this Committee in relation to alternative symbols of office on the cessation of the wearing of council robes. The recommendation of this Committee being that if Full Council agree the cessation of the wearing of robes by Councillors, no alternative symbols of office should be worn. Instead the Full Council agreed a proposal that the Mayoralty Committee be requested to continue to explore options for alternative symbols of office in lieu of robes.

As such Members are requested to consider whether they wish to:

1. Continue to explore options for alternative symbols of office to be worn by Councillors on civic occasions.
2. Determine a process to identify, cost and propose alternative symbols to Full Council.

8. **CIVIC SERVICE – ITEM TO NOTE**

In order to aid planning and avoid conflicts of dates with the Borough and other Towns, Members are requested to approve 21 June 2020 at 3.00pm as the date of the Civic Service. The format of the Civic Service being subject to the wishes of the incumbent Mayor.

9. **PROCESS FOR SELECTION OF THE MAYOR & DEPUTY MAYOR – ITEM FOR DECISION**

The most recent written criteria setting out the process by which this Committee determines a recommendation for the appointment of the Mayor and Deputy Mayor that has been identified by Officers was set in January 2001 (attached for the information of Members). However, on examination it would appear that this document has not been updated to reflect the process used in the more recent past, which has been the 'best available person for the job' approach. In the absence of a credible, transparent written criteria, in order for Members to determine a process they wish the Committee to adopt, a report setting out a number of methods (including the 'best available person for the job' approach) for determining a recommendation for the nomination of the Mayor and Deputy Mayor highlighted in the *Civic Ceremonial – A handbook, History and Guide for Mayors, Councillors and Officers* are set out in the report attached for the information of Members.

Members to consider what method and criteria they wish to adopt for the determining its recommendation.

10. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting of the Mayoralty Committee is scheduled to be held on Thursday, 14 May 2020 at 8.00pm in the Mayor's Parlour.

THE COMMITTEE MAY WISH TO EXCLUDE THE PUBLIC AND PRESS FROM THE MEETING AT THIS POINT PRIOR TO CONSIDERATION OF THE FOLLOWING ITEM BY REASON OF THE CONFIDENTIAL NATURE OF THE BUSINESS TO BE TRANSACTED.

11. **CONSIDERATION OF THE SELECTION OF NOMINEE FOR THE POSITION OF THE MAYOR & DEPUTY MAYOR – ITEM FOR DECISION**

The Committee to consider the selection of a nominee for recommendation to Full Council for the position of the Mayor and Deputy Mayor for the civic year 2020/21. The outcome of the Committee's deliberations to be reported orally to the first Full Council in the new year.

Please note that any further papers required for this meeting will be tabled at the meeting.

# **Criteria for the nomination of the Town Mayor and Deputy Mayor**

## *The purpose of this statement*

1. The procedure for the nomination of the Town Mayor is prescribed in paragraphs 44 – 48 of the Standing Orders (1992 edition). This statement expands on that by setting out guidelines for the Mayoralty Committee to follow in considering candidates for nomination.
2. These guidelines should be followed in all normal situations. But they may be varied, exceptionally, in circumstances for which they do not provide; or where the Committee is satisfied that the Council's interests would best be served by adopting different criteria.

## *Information for the Committee*

3. Before the Committee meets to consider a nomination for the coming year, the Chairman will speak in confidence to all members who are potential nominees under these guidelines; and advise the Committee at the meeting of those members' availability to serve as Mayor in the coming year.
4. The Committee will also have before them information of each member's service on the Council and its committees; and sufficient other information for them to reach a decision.

## *Principles*

5. No member should serve twice as Mayor until every other member has had an opportunity to serve once. If they consider any member for a second term of office as Mayor, the Committee should follow the same guidelines and procedure as if they were considering them for the first time.
6. A member's political allegiance should have no bearing on the decision whether they should serve as Mayor.
7. In general, no member should serve as Mayor during their first term of office as a Council member; but this should not preclude their being considered if no other candidate is available to serve following these guidelines.

## *The order of precedence*

8. Subject to those principles the Committee should consider candidates in accordance with the following guidelines and should expect to nominate the first member they reach who is willing to serve as Mayor in the coming year.

- a. The member with the longest period of unbroken service as a Council member.
  - b. The member with the longest aggregate period of broken service as a Council member.
  - c. Where two members have the same length of service, one unbroken, one broken, the member with the unbroken service takes precedence.
  - d. Ideally a member with broken service should have served on the Council for two years since their most recent re-election before serving as Town Mayor.
9. If the above sequence produces more than one candidate with the same degree of precedence, in making their nomination the Committee will consider a range of factors, including those members’:
- a. Own preferences for service as Mayor in a particular year, taking account of their personal and family circumstances.
  - b. Past and current service as Chairman or Vice Chairman of Council committees.
  - c. Other service on Council committees or as the Council’s appointee on external bodies.
  - d. Service to the town’s voluntary and charitable organisations.

#### *Deputy Mayor*

10. The Committee will normally nominate as Deputy Mayor the member who is serving as Mayor at the time of the nomination. If that member is not able to serve as Deputy Mayor in the coming year, the Committee will nominate another member, normally from among those who have previously served as Mayor.

#### *Election years*

11. In the year of a Council election the Committee will put forward two nominees for Mayor and two for Deputy Mayor, each in order of preference. The second of the pair will serve as Mayor or Deputy Mayor if the first is not re-elected or is for some other reason unable to serve in the coming year.

## 9. CHOOSING THE MAYOR

The Mayor is in a unique position amongst fellow councillors. The Mayor will see more, do more, meet more and have more opportunity than most to make a mark on the area. Although the direct powers of the Mayor have declined over the centuries and some refer today to the post as being merely ceremonial, a Mayor with vision and planning can achieve much. However, it is acknowledged that the job is a demanding one.

There are numerous ways in which a Mayor is selected for nomination at the Annual Meeting. Each Council will have its reasons (traditional, political or geographical) why it chooses its Mayor in a particular way. However, it is increasingly clear that the “traditional” method of selection – “the most senior Member who has not passed the Chair” – is no longer widely practised.

The main options now appear to be:

- The best person
- Seniority
- Political appointment.

Defining the **best person** is necessarily challenging as opinions on this are subjective and person specifications are almost non-existent. One could generally get agreement on essential requirements such as “being able to promote the council in diverse situations” but a good orator at a major event does not always have the “human touch” with a class of five year-olds. Perhaps a real willingness to “do the job” for the right reasons is the best criterion.

The current system, which is based on the ‘Best person for the job’ seeks to identify not only those Members who wish to be considered but also those that other Members consider would represent the Council in a positive manner. If in considering these virtues, the committee identifies a number of potential nominees, recourse to attendance records and seniority have been used to ‘rank’ the order in which the Chair has sought whether or not the nominee wishes to accept the recommendation of the committee.

**Seniority** can clearly have its benefits for civic office. The member knows a considerable amount about the workings of the council and of the town. This knowledge can be used to great effect and with it the status of the office will be enhanced. However, seniority does not necessarily bring with it all the skills needed for civic life. One can also argue that seniority of service could include service to the community as well as to a particular Council. A member who has spent years actively working in the community may be more experienced/suitable than someone who has seen the corridors of power for many years. Care must also be taken not to discriminate in the choice of Mayor.

A scheme for deciding “seniority” amongst members is shown at Annex A.

The civic office as a **political appointment** is not uncommon in selection criteria today. The days of the “neutral” Mayor are being challenged. However, councillors would do well to remember that the general public do still see the office of Mayor as one “above politics” and that it should, therefore, serve all the people. If the office becomes politicised, one suspects that much of its popular appeal and support could disappear. There are arguments for the Mayor to be a member of the ‘ruling’ political party (thereby being sympathetic to the aims and policies of the Council at the time).

In hung (or balanced) Councils one can understand the need for the Mayor to use the casting vote politically.

An example of a “political points system” scheme, whereby points are allocated to each party for each elected member is shown at Annex B.

There are numerous variations of schemes for choosing the Mayor. However, the basic ingredient of any successful procedure is goodwill on all sides. It is, of course, preferable that the decision to choose a Mayor at the Annual Meeting is unanimous and anything that can be done behind the scenes to achieve unanimity should be pursued. The dignity accorded to the office of Mayor is not assisted by selection disagreements in public. Similarly, it is helpful, if possible, to select the new nominee as early as possible as this gives the nominee for Mayor, their family and friends, and the officers time to prepare. It is better to hit the ground running than just to hit the ground.

**At all times and stages of the selection process, one should remember that it is only the Council at its Annual Meeting who can appoint the Mayor – not a selection committee or party group meeting.**

## CHOOSING THE MAYOR – ANNEX A

### Selecting the Mayor – Seniority

1. The member of the Council who is to be elected Mayor shall be determined by seniority. For this purpose, seniority means the length of service as a Councillor. The lengths of periods of broken service shall count as service.
2. If two or more members of the Council have equal seniority, the members concerned shall agree between themselves the order in which they shall become Mayor. In the event of a failure to agree, the eldest member shall be deemed to be the most senior.
3. It shall be for the Chair of the Mayoralty Committee to ascertain from senior members whether or not it is possible to reach agreement in accordance with the above resolution prior to the 31 December in each year.
4. A member who ought to become Mayor by virtue of seniority may postpone the time of becoming Mayor by either one or two years but thereafter shall lose all seniority for the purpose of becoming Mayor and shall be automatically placed at the bottom of the list of Members' seniority.
5. At the first Council meeting in each calendar year, the Chair of the Mayoralty Committee will announce the names of the recommended nominees for Mayor-Elect and the Deputy Mayor-Elect for the ensuing municipal year.

## CHOOSING THE MAYOR – ANNEX B

### Selection the Mayor – Simple Points System

#### Election of Mayor – Method of Election

1. Current points total

Set out below for Members' information are the guidelines for the scheme for the election of Chairman of the Council.

The points for each group for the Local Government Year 2020/21 are as follows:

Independent	1
Labour	2
Liberal Democrats	10
Conservative	3
Green	4

2. The elements of the scheme are:

- a) The points scheme to be applied to all party political groups and to any independent Members that may be elected to the Council from time to time.
- b) Points are accumulated over the period of the administration.
- c) The party political group with the most points at the time of the Annual Meeting to be entitled to take the Chair, in respect of which 20 points will be deducted from the accumulated points total of that group.
- d) Each party political group represented on the Council be awarded one point for each seat held at the date of the Annual Council Meeting.
- e) For the purpose of the scheme, the results of any by-elections held during the year to be disregarded.
- f) In the event of there being any vacancy of the Council at the date of the Annual Council meeting, the point(s) in respect of the vacant seat or seats be awarded to the party political group whose representative held the seat at the time the vacancy arose.
- g) In the event of the party group entitled by the points scheme to hold the Chair refusing to accept the office, 12 points to be deducted from the cumulative points total of that group.



**GODALMING TOWN COUNCIL**

Disclosure by a Member<sup>1</sup> of a disclosable pecuniary interest or a non-pecuniary interest in a matter under consideration at a meeting (S.31 (4) Localism Act 2011 and the adopted Godalming Members' Code of Conduct).

As required by the Localism Act 2011 and the adopted Godalming Members' Code of Conduct, **I HEREBY DISCLOSE**, for the information of the authority that I have [a disclosable pecuniary interest]<sup>2</sup> [a non-pecuniary interest]<sup>3</sup> in the following matter:-

**COMMITTEE:**

**DATE:**

**NAME OF COUNCILLOR:** \_\_\_\_\_

Please use the form below to state in which agenda items you have an interest.

Agenda No.	Subject	Disclosable Pecuniary Interest	Non-Pecuniary Interest	Reason

**Signed** \_\_\_\_\_

**Dated** \_\_\_\_\_

<sup>1</sup> "Member" includes co-opted member, member of a committee, joint committee or sub-committee

<sup>2</sup> A disclosable pecuniary interest is defined by the Relevant Authorities (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests) regulations 2012/1464 and relate to employment, office, trade, profession or vocation, sponsorship, contracts, beneficial interests in land, licences to occupy land, corporate tenancies and securities

<sup>3</sup> A non-pecuniary interest is defined by Section 5 (4) of the Godalming Members' Code of Conduct.