

SPENNYMOOR TOWN COUNCIL



INFORMATION FOR THE TOWN MAYOR

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1. Introduction

The Information for the Mayoral booklet has been provided to assist Mayors and Deputies to understand their roles and responsibilities and provide some useful information, which may be of assistance when undertaking the civic role.

The Civic Protocol is also included, which assists Mayors and Council staff to apply a consistent approach when dealing with issues connected to the civic function of the Council.

The object of the information is to try to ensure that your civic year runs as smoothly as possible.

Not all eventualities will be covered by this booklet, however, assistance is always available at the Council Offices from the Town Clerk.

2. Background

Town Mayor

Section 245 (6) of the local Government Act 1972 gave Parish Councils the power by resolution to give themselves the title of Town Council and the Chairman of a Town Council is entitled to the style of 'Town Mayor'.

(NB - A Town Mayor has the same rights and duties as a local Council Chairman.)

A Councillor becoming Mayor

Being the Mayor is different from being a Councillor. A Mayor, by virtue of the Office, can use his/her position to stimulate community pride, encourage business, promote the voluntary sector, mould social cohesion etc. A Mayor may also have many meetings with dignitaries, endless engagements, late nights, early mornings and is in the public eye for virtually the whole year.

For those chosen, or who are thinking of putting themselves forward for selection, one thing is clear - being Mayor is most different from being a Councillor, as it has different roles, different working hours, different

restraints etc. However, it is also a hugely enjoyable and rewarding job if entered into in the right spirit.

The Mayor is elected at the Annual meeting in May. A Deputy Mayor is also elected at this meeting. The new Mayor makes the following declaration when accepting the term of office at the Annual Meeting:

"I, having been elected to the Office of Mayor for the Town of Spennymoor, hereby declare that I take the said Office upon myself, and will duly and faithfully fulfill the duties thereof according to the best of my knowledge and ability."

The Mayor's term in office is for one year. During this time, the Mayor continues to be a Member of the Council and presides over the meetings of the Council.

3. Role of the Mayor

During the Civic year, the Mayor supports a wide variety of events throughout the area. The Mayor receives invitations to all kinds of events and every invitation is considered equally. If the Mayor cannot attend a function, the Deputy Mayor may be asked to attend on his/her behalf.

Duties, which the Mayor may carry out, include:

- Organising events to raise funds for the Mayor's chosen charities;
- Acting as host on behalf of the Council at functions organised by the Council;
- Attending functions within Spennymoor and the region as a ceremonial representative of the Council;
- Undertaking official openings or presentations at places throughout Spennymoor and the region on behalf of the Town Council; and,
- Representing the Council during royal visits to the town.

The Mayor will choose his/her own mayoress/consort. This can be either a partner or fellow Councillor, or a family member or friend.

When representing the Town Council, the Mayor and consort will normally wear the official Chains of Office. The Chains of Office will normally be worn at all official functions within the Town. They are also usually worn at functions outside of the town when invited in an official capacity, although there are

some exceptions to this, which are usually specified in the official Invitation.

4. Role Profile – the key skills of a Mayor

Leadership

- Advanced ambassadorial skills to be able to represent the Council in a variety of settings.
- Mentoring to the Deputy Mayor.
- Ability to lead civic ceremonies, promote the civic role and encourage community participation.
- Ability to carry out the role with dignity and gravitas, affording the office of Mayor respect.

Chairing

- Advanced chairing skills, in order to manage the business of full council meetings.
- Organisational skills.
- Ability to plan and prioritise meetings/events and entrust engagements to the Deputy Mayor.

Preparing for the Role: Hints and Tips

Be Committed	There can be a heavy time commitment. In effect you are giving up a year of your life to council duties. Belief and self-motivation are essential.
Get your family behind you	Recognise the likely impact on those close to you, especially your partner and/or any family member you have chosen as your Mayoress/ Consort.
Get advice	Talk to the out-going Mayor about anything and everything to do with the role.
Check and practice your skills	The role requires a different mix of skills from those of a general councillor – particularly in terms of self-presentation and public speaking. Recognise your shortcomings and get some practical training if you think you need it.
Talk to the Officers	They are there to help you and can advise you on most aspects of the role. Invest some time early on in building good working relationships with the Mayoral support staff in particular. They will be crucial to your success.
Read the Council Constitution	This contains detailed guidance on the role, protocols, clothing / dress, giving and receiving of gifts etc. This is essential preparation.
Check your wardrobe	Ensure that you have sufficient clothes of the right kind, including comfortable footwear, for all occasions. Recognise that you may need to budget for these yourself.
Stay healthy	Watch what you eat and drink – the hospitality at civic events and functions can have an adverse impact on your diet and health. Try to pace yourself and plan some time out for leisure and exercise.
Start distancing yourself from controversial matters	Once you are Mayor you will need to be outside of party politics and non-partisan when charring meetings. Do not take on the role if you are not prepared to be apolitical for a year.

Team Working and Relationship Building

- Ability to build strong, effective relationships between the council, its partners and communities.
- Ability to act with political neutrality.
- Tact, diplomacy and the ability to mediate and broker agreement across political groups.

Communication

- Ability to communicate the Council's messages and themes out into the community and to work towards achieving the council's social, economic and environmental aims.
- Advanced listening and public speaking skills and basic speech-writing skills.

Knowledge

- Advanced knowledge of the civic role and responsibilities and the council's Code of Conduct and constitutional arrangements.
- Advanced knowledge and understanding of the customs and beliefs of different cultural groups which make up the diverse community of the council area.

Adapted from Kirklees MBCs role profile for a Mayor/Deputy Mayor.

Extract adapted from 'Joining the Chain Gang' IDEA

5. Chairing Council Meetings

The Basics

Legally, the primary duty as Town Mayor is to act as Chairman in presiding over meetings of full Council. In this role, you must ensure the proper conduct of meetings in compliance with both the law and the Council's own Standing Orders and procedural rules. You are also required to:

- Determine whether or not to call an extraordinary meeting of the Council; and,
- Exercise, if you wish to, a second or 'casting' vote at council in the event of an equal vote on any issues. In the role, you will be advised by the Town Clerk.

During your term of office, you are expected to remain politically impartial, particularly in relation to sensitive political issues. Your political colleagues should support you in this and respect your neutrality, enabling the office of Mayor to be seen as 'above politics'.

Effective Chairing

Council meetings are a mainstay of the political management process and it is your job to ensure that the business of the Council is conducted effectively in the Council Chamber.

There are no hard and fast rules about how you chair a Council meeting. The approach you take and the style you adopt will depend largely on the nature of the meetings, the people involved and your own personality.

One of the key tasks, however, will be to encourage participation and prompt discussion. This is primarily about creating the best conditions for others to engage in debate. Only through dialogue can you understand what people think and where they stand on any given subject.

Chairing Council meetings can sometimes be a demanding process because of the personalities involved. People respond in different, sometimes unpredictable, ways when trying to convince others of their point of view – particularly when this is overlaid with the essential politics of local government. Arguments are common and conflict is not unusual. This is true enough in one to one situations, but is particularly so in meetings.

Recognising that people often behave differently in committees can help you, tactically, to be more effective in chairing meetings. Much of this is about watching and listening to group behaviour and exercising your own judgement about when to intervene and when to sit back as discussions unfold and people exchange views or come into conflict.

For example:

- Who is contributing the most and least to the Council's debates – are they aware of it and could you challenge them?
- Who are the silent members – is their silence about dissent or fear and could your intervention encourage them to be more vocal?
- What is the atmosphere in the council chamber – could you mediate to create more congenial conditions?
- Have the discussions reached a sticking point – could you broker some negotiation or compromise to move things forward?

As well as dealing with the inevitable political wrangling, you must remain impartial in dealing with the personalities involved. By being seen to be firm but even-handed in your chairing role, you should be able to articulate the areas of common ground that can help in building consensus on the contentious issues.

Chairing Council Meetings: Hints and Tips

Be seen as apolitical	Be firm, but fair – with all sides. Look in all directions when inviting contributions and note who is waiting to speak.
Know your Standing Orders	Without having to look them up – particularly those related to the rules of debate, motions, seconders, amendments, voting, points of order and personal explanations.
Keep to time	Be punctual, stick to the agenda and don't let individual members 'highjack' the debate.
Be attentive to the subject under discussion	Prepare well and read the agenda papers thoroughly. Know what the 'hot topics' are and the points of likely contention.
Have pre-meetings with officers	Get to know what is really going on behind the scenes so that you can distance yourself from the contentious issues.
Be human	Keep calm, remain tolerant and be polite. Remember that a sense of humour can help in the right situations. Facilitate don't dominate.
Use the support available	Ask for the advice of your officers if you feel exposed.
Start distancing yourself from controversial matters	Once you are Mayor you will need to be outside of party politics and non-partisan when chairing meetings. Do not take on the role if you are not prepared to be apolitical for a year

6. Personal Assistant (PA) to the Town Mayor

The Mayor is supported in his/her office by the PA to the Town Mayor. The PA to the Town Mayor is an employee of the Town Council who, as well as being the PA to the Town Clerk, assists the Mayor with organising their term in office. This position involves arranging a meeting with the new Mayor once elected at the Annual Meeting to arrange the Civic Year, i.e. dates and venues of functions. Once the Civic Year is arranged, the Chairmen/Mayors of other local authorities are notified of the dates to ensure that no other events take place on the same dates.

The PA to the Town Mayor receives invitations for the Mayor and liaises with the Mayor before accepting/declining invitations, a diary is kept in the Town Council Offices of all events the Mayor is attending and the Mayor will always receive a copy of the invitation for information.

If the Mayor is unsure of anything or requires some guidance, then this should first be raised with the PA to the Town Mayor, who will provide the necessary information, occasionally this may also require the assistance of the Town Clerk.

7. Transport

The PA to the Town Mayor is responsible, where necessary, for arranging transport to the events.

It is normal practice for the Mayor to use their own transport (if available) for appointments. Mileage claim forms should be completed on a monthly basis.

On some occasions it may be necessary to use a taxi for transport to events, this is kept to a minimum but is sometimes unavoidable.

8. Photography

The PA to the Town Mayor is responsible, where necessary for arranging for the attendance of the Town Council's photographer in line with the Photography Policy (APPENDIX A).

9. Mayor's Charity

The Mayor's Charity traditionally raises funds for local charities. It is advisable to choose the charity or charities to be supported at an early stage. The Mayor may decide on either one main charity to support or two or three local charities or good causes.

It is common to announce the chosen charity at the Annual Meeting when the Mayor is elected.

The main contribution you can often make as Mayor is to raise the Charity's profile rather than actually raising money.

Support will be given by the Council's Finance and Administration Team through the PA to the Town Mayor. The Town Mayor is also supported by Council colleagues through the Civic Initiatives and Honours Subcommittee. It may also be appropriate for the Town Mayor to enlist the support of informal groups of helpers.

The chosen charity/charities will be notified, and all funds raised at the events to be held by the Mayor will be donated to the chosen charity/charities at a presentation to be held at the end of the Mayor's year in office.

Funds raised for the Mayor's charities cannot be used for any other purpose other than as a donation to the charity identified when the funds were raised, save for to cover all reasonable costs to raise the funds.

Charity events vary with individual Mayors but will usually include:

- Mayor/Mayoress At Home
- Charity Evening
- Civic Dinner
- The Town Quiz

Other events may be organised by local organisations, clubs or institutions, with proceeds given to the Mayor's Charity. If the Mayor wishes to hold his/her own charity night, then he/she must discuss the proposal with the Lead Member for Indoor Services and Town Clerk to be clear as to the full implications of so doing.

10. Donations

To enable the Mayor to raise funds for local charities, the Council relies on local businesses donating prizes to be used in raffles and tombola's.

Although many businesses do support the Mayor's Charity, there are still those who will not donate prizes. The Mayor often feels it necessary to visit local shops, pubs and businesses around the town to ask for prizes as sometimes the local shop owners/businesses prefer a more personal approach and have in the past been more likely to support the charity.

11. Cheque Presentation

The Mayor announces the total amount raised for his/her charity at the Annual Meeting and presents the cheques to the charities nominated to receive the funds raised throughout the year. Local press are invited to attend but, if absent, photographs are taken and press releases sent to local newspapers for their use.

12. Mayor's Allowance

The Mayor may be paid an allowance to meet the expenses of his office (LGA 1972, ss 15(5) and 34(5)). The Local Government Act does not stipulate the type or category of expenditure for which the Mayor may use the Civic Allowance. However, it is commonly described as recompense for the expenses of maintaining the dignity of the office.

The allowance (£3,500) will be paid following the Annual meeting through the payroll system and therefore subject to PAYE.

Furthermore, general items for which the allowance can be used include:

- Clothing
- Partner's clothing
- Donations to charities
- Collections
- Personal hospitality (including lunches and dinners)
- One-off events held by the Mayor

It should be noted that the purchase of the above items would not qualify the expenditure for tax-deductible purposes; it merely suggests that the items relate to maintaining the dignity of the office.

The Mayor has a number of budget headings within the precept to cover the duties of the Mayor, these are currently:

- Mayor's Allowance
- Civic Ball
- Mayor's At Home
- Civic Service
- Carol Service
- Photography

It is important for the Mayor to plan the use of the allowance over the year. Once the budget level has been reached, no payments can be made or further orders placed by Council staff.

13. Support by Deputy Mayor

The Member elected as Deputy Mayor will support the Mayor throughout the year by representing the Council when the Mayor is unable to.

If the Mayor is not present at a Council meeting, the Deputy Mayor must preside.

In effect, the Deputy Mayor has no standing as Deputy Mayor when the Mayor is present but assumes the precedence and standing of the Mayor when he/she is acting in the absence of the Mayor.

The Deputy Mayor should not wear their Chain of Office in the presence of the Mayor of Spennymoor. (see Civic Protocol - Appendix 'A')

Invitations to the Deputy Mayor should be dealt with as follows:

- Invitations to functions should not be sent to (or solicited by) a Deputy Mayor. The Deputy Mayor should not attend functions in his/her own right but only when deputising for the Mayor
- All invitations should be sent for consideration to the Mayor as First Citizen and if the Mayor cannot attend, it may be appropriate to 'pass down' an invitation. However, this should be by no means automatic or desirable
- On the rare occasion when the Deputy Mayor is invited to a function in his/her own right, there should be a clear procedure whereby the

invitation is shown formally by the PA to the Town Mayor to the Mayor, in order that there is no misunderstanding

14. Civic Insignia

The Mayor's chain of office is the outward sign of the civic office held, i.e. its insignia.

The Mayor should not wear the civic insignia in another area without express permission from the Council of that area.

Civic chains should **never** be worn with a military uniform. However, a Mayor who is a member of the clergy may wear full canonicals with the chain over the gown. Similarly, the chain may be worn over academic dress.

Safety of the Chain – a separate protocol will be issued to the Mayor upon taking up their year of Office.

15. Precedence and Protocol

Town Mayor

A formal distinction has to be made between the style of address of a Mayor and that of a Town Mayor. It is suggested that, at least in the presence of the County Chairman, Town Mayor's should be addressed as 'Mr/Madam Town Mayor'.

NB - a female Mayor is not a Mayoress.

Precedence and protocol for visits and events is often set by custom and practice, with the exception of royal visits.

16. Receipt of Gifts

In the course of the duty of being Mayor, often gifts will be offered to the Mayor. It is suggested that all Members should treat with extreme caution any offer of a gift, favour or hospitality that is made to them personally.

The Code of Conduct requires Members, including Mayors, to register any gifts or hospitality worth £50 or over that are received ***in connection with their official duties as a Member*** and the source of the gift or hospitality.

You are personally responsible for all decisions connected with the acceptance or offer of gifts or hospitality and for avoiding the risk of damage to public confidence in local government.

You must register the gift or hospitality and its source within 28 days of receiving it.

The register to record such gifts will be kept by the Town Council and Durham County Council's Monitoring officer, but it is your duty to complete the declaration.

Be aware that this will now be a ***personal interest***. If a matter under consideration is likely to affect a person who gave you a gift or hospitality that is registered.

Gifts in the form of cash donations towards the Mayor's Charity should always be passed to the PA to the Town Mayor for banking as soon as practically possible and formal acknowledgement and thanks.

Similarly gifts of prizes for raffles/tombolas etc. should always be passed to the PA to the Town Mayor as soon as practically possible for safe-keeping, formal acknowledgement and thanks.

If in doubt, consult the Town Clerk.

17. The Civic Year – Events

Below is a list of typical events, which are organised during the Mayor's Year in Office. These dates are discussed and arranged during a meeting of the Civic Initiatives and Honours Subcommittee at the beginning of each new year to suit the Mayor's diary.

Civic Service

The Civic Service is held in one of the town churches according to the Mayor's denomination. Consultation for the date of the Service is carried out by a meeting with the Vicar/ Father of the church.

The Civic Service is usually held during September.

Civic Dignitaries from the Council's designated list together with colleagues, friends, family and members of the public who have participated in the service, are invited and partake of refreshments at the conclusion of the service.

Mayor/Mayoress "At Home"

This event has normally been the first event in the Mayor's Calendar, held traditionally during June/July.

It takes the form of a reception in the Main Hall to which all organisations are invited to send representations together with Civic Dignitaries and Members of the Public - light refreshments are provided and a tombola/raffle is held to raise funds for the Mayor's Charity Appeal.

Civic Carol Service

This is organised by a representative of the Salvation Army and the Church Council is asked if anyone from the Spennymoor Churches is available to participate in addition, includes an item by a local school of the Mayor's choice. Civic dignitaries, guests and members of the public are invited to join the Mayor to celebrate Christmas.

Following the service, refreshments are provided for everyone who has attended the event.

Civic Ball

The Civic Ball is the highlight of the Mayor's year, is held in the Town Hall, and is attended by Civic Dignitaries, Councillors and Supporters.

The date of the Ball has usually been the first Friday in December.

The Town Quiz

The Town Quiz is an established annual event hosted by the Council and Mayor in conjunction with local businesses and organisations, who compete for the Town Quiz Trophy. This event is typically organised in Spring and is usually the final event of the Civic Year.

Other Events

Various miscellaneous events are attended by the Mayor, examples of which are listed below:

- Fireworks Display
- Switch On of Christmas Lights and Opening of Santa's Grotto
- 50th/60th Wedding Anniversaries Presentation of Flowers/gifts; 80th Birthdays etc.
- Opening of Fayres/Garden Parties/Coffee Mornings Presenting Awards and Prizes to individuals and organisations
- Entertaining guests and visitors at the Council Offices
- Town Council's Allotment Competition – Judging
- Town Council's Front Garden Competition
- Town Show
- Art Exhibitions
- Attending and meeting Royal Visitors to the Town

Miscellaneous Events outside of the Town

The Mayor is invited to a number of events organised by Civic Dignitaries from the surrounding areas (see Appendix 'D') ie:

Events such as:

- Civic Services
- Civic Carol Services
- Civic Dinners
- Charity Evenings (Concerts, Ceilidh, Cabaret Nights)

18. Dealing with Press and Media

The Town Council has indicated in the Press Release Protocol how relations with the media should be conducted (extract below) (full copy APPENDIX E).

Information

There are two types of press release

1) Official Council Press Releases

An official council release is made on behalf of the Council as a whole; it will be written by the Town Clerk and issued by the office. It is non-party political and many include a quote from the Leader or Chairman/Vice-Chairman of the relevant Committee. Any such press release must be agreed with the Leader.

2) Councillor Press Releases

Councillors' press releases are personal and are written and issued by the Councillor responsible, or a nominated person in their party. This release may or may not be political and should NOT include the name of a Council Official or Officer, or a council telephone number as a point of contact. It would be beneficial for copies of intended releases, especially those of a factual nature, to be provided to the Town Clerk for verification purposes.

Councillors seeking advice can either contact the Town Clerk or Monitoring Officer.

If the Mayor wishes to make a statement to the media it should be cleared with the Town Clerk.

Handling the Media – Hints and Tips

Do not respond to press calls out of the blue – ask for background and the deadline – then respond. Identify key messages and good, punchy, quotations that can be presented to the media.

Do not point the finger, complain or consistently say 'no comment' – you may get a bad reputation. Build a long-term relationship with the media, e.g. write features and suggest news stories.

Do not use jargon, council-speak or inflammatory words – these might come back to haunt you. Act quickly and have a consistent approach to media handling – be honest, concise and helpful.

19. Mayor's End of Year

The outgoing Mayor needs to consider a number of matters:

- Thanks to all who have helped during the year, is always welcome
- Thanks to the Mayor's personal support people - partner, family, friends, etc
- Thanks to the Deputy Mayor for support and assistance
- Thanks to the Mayor's Charity supports, those Councillors who have helped - and anyone else
- Talking to the successor, when announced, giving advice and information

The Mayor will also be given a selection of photographs, which have recorded the Mayor's activities over the preceding year, in a folder.

Civic Protocol

Mayor and Deputy Mayor

1. General

- (a) All invitations should be sent to the Mayor at the Council Offices.

If the Mayor cannot attend then he/she will decide whether the Deputy Mayor should be asked to deputise.

- (b) For all events, it is envisaged that there may be occasions when the Mayor is attending one function and the Deputy Mayor could attend another. The Mayor will be consulted on all such matters and will decide whether the Deputy Mayor should attend the other function.
- (c) If an invitation to any function, in or out off the town, is sent directly to the Deputy Mayor then he/she should consult the Mayor and seek his/her views.
- (d) In the event that the Deputy Mayor deputises at an event, the Town Clerk is authorised to make available a reasonable amount from the civic budget to the Deputy Mayor for tickets/collection.

2. Specific Events

As a general rule, the Deputy Mayor will not attend as Deputy at functions at which the Mayor is present, save for those occasions when the Deputy Mayor has a civic role to play. The proposals are set out specifically below:

(a) **Council Meetings**

For all meetings of Council, save for the Annual Meeting, the Deputy Mayor shall sit beside the Mayor but shall not wear the Deputy Mayor's chain.

In the event that the Deputy Mayor deputises for the Mayor in chairing a meeting of the Council, the Deputy Mayor shall wear the

Deputy Mayor's chain.

At the Annual Meeting of the Council, the Deputy Mayor shall sit next to the Mayor, and shall wear the Deputy Mayor's chain

(b) **Remembrance Sunday**

The Deputy Mayor may attend as an ordinary Councillor

(c) **Civic Ball**

The Deputy Mayor has a role in welcoming guests and showing them to the Mayor's Reception whilst the Mayor is with the civic guests.

In such circumstances, the Deputy Mayor will attend formally as the Deputy Mayor, with chain, and will be seated with the other civic guests.

(d) **Civic Service**

The Deputy Mayor may attend as an ordinary Councillor

(e) **Ad Hoc Events**

The Deputy Mayor would not attend as the Deputy Mayor. Whether the Deputy Mayor is invited as an ordinary Councillor would depend on the circumstances.

(f) **Royal Visits**

The invitations will only go to the Mayor. If the Mayor is unable to attend then the Town Clerk will check with the Lord Lieutenant's office whether the Deputy Mayor can deputise. If the Deputy Mayor is able to deputise, then he/she will wear the Deputy Mayor's chain.

(g) **Mayor/Mayoress At Home**

The Deputy Mayor may attend as an ordinary Councillor.
The invitation of civic guests will be at the discretion of the Mayor.

(h) **Charity Nights**

If the Mayor wishes to hold his/her own charity night then he/she must discuss the proposal with the Leader of the Council and the Town Clerk to be clear as to the full implications of so doing.

APPENDIX 'B'

Spennymoor Town Council

Photography Policy

1. Introduction

Photographic images are used by the Town Council:

- to enhance its website, Town Guide and other promotional material
- to mark Civic occasions in Spennymoor
- when the Mayor is representing the Town Council within the Community/opening an event where a formal written invitation has been received
- Then the Mayor is presenting a certificate or gift, or opening an event in the role of Mayor

It is intended that photographic images should be used to highlight activities in the town rather than promote individuals.

Photographs, video and electronic images are classified as personal data under the Data Protection Act 1988.

For the purpose of this Policy, the term *photographic images* are understood to include photography, video and other electronic images.

2. Purpose of the Policy for the Use of Photographic Images

To ensure responsible use of photographic images by Spennymoor Town Council and its partners.

To ensure that only a high standard of photographic images are used on the Council website, Town Guide and other promotional material.

To ensure that all legal requirements are met in the taking and publication of photographic images.

To ensure the appropriate requirements are adhered to regarding photographic quantities and charges.

3. General Principles

Members and Officers will exercise the greatest discretion at all times when selecting photographic images for publication taking into consideration the sensitivities of any situation.

Editorial control will be retained by the Town Council and the Town Clerk at all times in regard to the choice of photographic images used on the Town Council website, in the Town Guide or other materials.

The Photographer will ask the permission of the Town Council to reproduce any images for commercial use or other purposes.

Photographic images focusing on children and vulnerable adults who could be readily identified will not be used without prior permission from parents, carers or legal guardians.

Charges for any hard copy photographs ordered following an event or Civic visit (a maximum of 2 photographs for Mayors celebration visits) will be agreed by the Town Council with the photographer before any order is placed. The photographer will present an invoice to the Town Council for payment upon satisfactory completion of the order.

The Town Council will not be responsible for the sale of photographs to members of the public or other establishments at any time.

The photographer will hold a current DBS but will not be alone with a minor or vulnerable adult at any time.

Any photographic images will remain the property of the person who has taken the photograph as set down in Copyright Law, unless the Town Council purchases the rights to the photographs.

Where a member of the public or other establishment applies for the use of a photograph appearing on the Town Councils website, in the Town Guide or other promotional material, the person or establishment will be referred directly to the photographer responsible for the work.

Persons taking photographs at the request of the Town Council or its Officers will wear an identity badge signed by the Town Clerk at all times and will be required to sign an agreement.

Spennymoor Town Council Press Release Protocol

1. Introduction

The aim of the Protocol is to ensure that the Town Council is seen to communicate in a professional and objective manner.

2. Supporting documentation

The Protocol should be read in conjunction with the following documents, all of which are in the Members Handbook.

- Members Code of Conduct
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Member Officer Protocol
- Employees and Members Guide to internet and email facilities
- Code of Recommended Practice on Local Authority Publicity

3. Information

There are two types of press release

1) Official Council Press Releases

An official council release is made on behalf of the Council as a whole; it will be written by the Town Clerk and issued by the office. It is non-party political and many include a quote from the Leader or Chairman/Vice-Chairman of the relevant Committee. Any such press release must be agreed with the leader.

2) Councillor Press Releases

Councillors' press releases are personal and are written and issued by the Councillor responsible, or a nominated person in their party. This release may or may not be political and should NOT include the name of a Council Official or Officer, or a council telephone number as a point of contact. It would be beneficial for copies of intended releases,

especially those of a factual nature, to be provided to the Town Clerk for verification purposes.

Councillors seeking advice can either contact the Town Clerk or Monitoring Officer.

4) Press Release Protocol

The following forms the Protocol for Council Members and Officers.

- All official Council press releases will include a quotation from the Leader of the Council or the relevant Chair/Vice-Chair of Committee. All official press releases are to be issued by the Town Clerk on the Town Councils letterhead.
- Official press releases will not identify the political party or group affiliation of any Member(s) quoted in the release.
- The Town Clerk in consultation with the Leader is the first line of decision making in terms of what is newsworthy for official press releases, and shall make the final decision on whether a press release shall be issued.
- The Town Clerk has responsibility for checking and issuing all official Council press releases.
- In the years when elections occur, during the periods from the issue of the Notice of Election until the day of Election ('Purdah'). The Town Clerk will issue no press releases. quoting Council Members During 'Purdah', any quotes will be from the Town Clerk if necessary.
- The role of the Town Clerk is to advise and provide support and advice to Council Members in their communications activities.
- Council Members are solely responsible for the writing and distribution of all Councillor press releases and any Editor's letters to the media.
- Council Member releases must not use the Town Councils letterhead or the Town Crest.
- Officers and Council Members must act reasonably and responsibly.
- Council Members are reminded that they must not mis-use Council resources (which include computer equipment) for political or other inappropriate purposes.
- Should the Council receive a Freedom of Information request on a topic on which there is correspondence (e mail or written) from or

with Members, normally that correspondence would have to be disclosed, unless it was exempt. The fact that disclosure of the correspondence may prove embarrassing would not, of itself, prevent disclosure.

- In addition, care should be taken when processing personal data. The Data Protection Act 1998 prevents the use of personal information other than for the purposes for which it was supplied. Members should bear this in mind when using any personal data which may be supplied to them by their constituents. Members are also reminded that they should adhere to the Councils ICT security policy and the guidance on acceptable use of the internet and email.
- In general, the Town Clerk will be responsible for interpretation of the Protocol but may be challenged on its interpretation by Members as they deem appropriate

5) Internet and Email Use Policy for Councillor Sections

This Policy read in conjunction with the Member Code of Conduct defines the purposes for which Members of the Town Council may not use the site. In **summary** these are:

- The introduction of content that may result in actions for libel, defamation or other claims for damages.
- Processing personal data other than for the purpose stated at the time of capture.
- The promotion of any political party or campaigning.
- The promotion of personal financial interests or commercial ventures.
- Personal campaigns.
- Using the site in an abusive or hateful manner.

APPENDIX 'D'

Coat of Arms

A Grant of Arms in 1952 by the Honourable Sir George Rothe Bellew, Knight Commander of the Royal Victorian Order, Garter Principal King of Arms, Sir Arthur William Steuart Cockrane, Knight Commander of the Royal Victorian Order, Clarenceux King of Arms and Sir Gerald Woods Wollaston, Knight Commander of the Most Honourable Order of the Bath, Knight Commander of the Royal Victorian Order, Norroy and Ulster King of Arms, to the Spennymoor Urban District Council, the arms following, that is to say:

Quarterly Gules and Sable a cross Or charged with ten Gutttes de Sang in the first and fourth quarters a Lion rampant and the second and third quarters a Fleur de Lys Gold And for the Crest Standing upon the battlements of a mural Crown a Salamander regardant Sable enflamed proper grasping with the Dexter claw a Sword erect also proper hilt and pommel Or Mantled Gules doubled Or, to be borne and used forever hereafter by the Spennymoor Urban District Council and by its successors constituting each for time being the local authority for and bearing the title of Spennymoor on Seals, Shields or otherwise according to the Laws of Arms.

As a change from the usual run of mottoes with an industrial allusion, which characterise the arms of towns of this kind, a punning motto in the real spirit of allusive heraldry was adopted: Spe Nemo Ruet. This bears a similarity to the name Spennymoor and means 'With hope nobody shall fail'. This has a double significance apart from the pun: it refers to the spirit, which saved Durham at Butcher's Race, and also the faith, which animated the pioneers of Spennymoor industries.

APPENDIX 'E'

A Brief History of Spennymoor

The Town of Spennymoor, which includes the villages of Byers Green, Kirk Merrington and Tudhoe, is delightfully situated on high land above the south side of the Wear Valley between the City of Durham and Bishop Auckland. The superb beauty spots of the North Pennines are within easy travelling distance, as are the busy commercial centres of Tyne and Wear and Teesside.

The township covers an area of 7494 acres and has a population of over 20,000. Since the end of World War II great changes have come to the town. Coal mining has ceased and the industry of the town has developed on three industrial estates to provide a more diverse industrial base than ever before. The major employers in the town include Black and Decker, Electrolux and Thorn Lighting.

The township has extensive modern housing estates, both privately and municipally owned. The villages, too, have been improved and offer pleasant living conditions in a rural setting.

Modern Spennymoor centres around a new traffic-free shopping area close to both free car parks and bus termini. Spennymoor is a flourishing and caring community where continual improvements of the environment and social facilities are of prime importance. This is reflected in Spennymoor's success in winning the Town Section of Northumbria in Bloom 1994. The Town has much to offer the visitor, both in itself and as an ideal base from which to explore the beautiful countryside and attractions of County Durham.