



Wokingham Town Council

Town Hall, Market Place, Wokingham, Berkshire RG40 1AS
Tel: 0118 978 3185 www.wokingham-tc.gov.uk
Town Clerk: K. Hughes

**This Council Meeting is open to the Public and Press
Please notify the Officer or Chair if you wish to record the meeting**

13th June 2023

Dear Councillor

You are hereby summoned to attend the meeting of the **Civic Committee** to be held in the **Council Chamber, Town Hall, Wokingham** at **7.30pm** on **Monday 19th June 2023** for the purpose of considering and resolving upon the subjects and matters set out in the agenda below.

Yours sincerely

K Hughes
Town Clerk

Contact Officer Nikki Payler, Civic Officer
Direct line: 0118 974 0882 Email: civic@wokingham-tc.gov.uk

AGENDA

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

2 MEMBERS' INTERESTS

To receive any declaration of interests from Members on the business about to be transacted.

3 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL OR PUBLIC

The Chair to answer questions raised by members of the Council or public.

This is an opportunity for the people of Wokingham to ask questions of, and make comments to, the Town Council. Members of the public are requested to restrict their questions and comments to three minutes. Questions which are not answered at this meeting will be answered in writing to the person asking the question. To ensure an informed response, please send your questions to the Town Clerk at least three working days prior to the meeting.

4 CIVIC OVERVIEW

To receive the Civic Officer's report 1/2023-24 dated 6th June 2023, providing an overview of the Civic Committee

5 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

- 1) To receive and resolve the Minutes of the proceedings at the meeting of this Committee held on 20th March 2023 (pages 16706 to 16708), copy attached, as a true and correct record.
- 2) To receive and resolve the Minutes of the proceedings at the meeting of this Committee held on 4th April 2023 (pages 16718 to 16720), copy attached, as a true and correct record

6 MONITORING REPORT

To receive the Monitoring Report dated 13th June 2023 (copy attached), for information.

7 COMMITTEE'S BUDGET

To receive an update on the Committee's budget as of 31st May 2023 (copy attached).

8 MAYOR'S SUNDAY FEEDBACK

- a) To receive, for information, a copy of a thank you letter from the Deputy Lieutenant who attended on the day, expressing his thanks and appreciation.
- b) To receive, for information, a copy of a thank you letter from the High Sheriff of Berkshire who attended on the day, expressing his thanks
- c) To discuss and share feedback about all parts of the day so it can be considered in future planning.

9 CEREMONIAL FLAGS REQUEST

To receive and consider the Town Clerk's report 15/2023-24 dated 26th May 2023.

10 INFORMATION ITEMS

- a) The Town Council newsletter will be distributed to all households within the town boundary from 26 June.

11 COMMITTEE INFORMATION

- a) To receive information items raised by members
- b) Identify any specific items for marketing purposes

Civic Committee: Cllrs Adrian Betteridge, Rachel Bishop-Firth, Phil Cunnington, Warren Dixon, Maria Gee, Alwyn Jones (Vice-Chair), Keith Malvern, Adrian Mather (Chair) and Margaret Lucey.

In order to comply with the Data Protection Act 1998, all persons attending this meeting are hereby notified that this meeting will be recorded. The purpose of recording proceedings is that it acts as an aide-memoir in assisting the clerk of the meeting in the compilation of minutes. The recordings are held in a secure location and deleted once it has been resolved that the minutes are a true and correct record.

In accordance with The Openness of Local Government Bodies regulations 2014, persons attending this meeting may make their own recordings of the proceedings subject to the Council's Policy on Filming, Recording & Reporting on Council and Committee Meetings (copy available on request).



Wokingham Town Council

Civic Officer's Report 01/2023-24

To: Civic Committee

Date: 6 June 2023

Subject: Civic overview

1 REASON FOR REPORT

- 1.1 To provide background and information to the new members about the work of the civic committee.

2 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Council's principles are noted on each monitoring report as a useful reference for members in discussions at Council meetings and they should always be considered. The key principles for Civic are currently distinctiveness and inclusivity but these will of course not be exclusive, and the committee will take all of them into consideration when making decisions.
- 2.2 WTC is committed to maintaining and sharing its history and traditions with the town and its residents, whilst balancing any new requests for change.
- 2.3 The Civic Officer is responsible for the following:
 - 1.1.1. Mayoral support
 - 1.1.2. Management of Macebearer/Mayor's Attendant (staff member) and Honorary members
 - 1.1.3. Mayoral regalia
 - 1.1.4. Civic events and activities
- 2.4 A yearly budget is allocated to Civic to support its activities. A copy of the most recent expenditure will be included as reference at each meeting.
- 2.5 The civic committee may be required to make decisions on matters relating to any of these topics.
- 2.6 The Civic Ceremonial handbook, history and guide offers a useful source of reference to the Civic Officer, for many of the traditional civic elements:
<https://cc.naco.uk.com/index.html#page=1>

3 MAYORAL SUPPORT

- 3.1 Works closely with the Mayor and Deputy Mayor with regards to all incoming engagements for the Mayor to attend. This requires management and co-ordination of the Mayor's diary of approx. 100 engagements per calendar year. If the Mayor is not available, the Deputy Mayor will be asked to attend and if they are unable to attend, a Past Mayor (who is a serving Councillor) may be asked to attend and represent the Council, if the organiser is in support of this.

Agenda item 4

- 3.2 Communicates with a number of individuals, community groups, schools, etc, and other Councils where permission needs to be sought if the Mayor makes a visit out of the town boundary.
- 3.3 Liaises with press and writes relevant press releases (and for civic events & activities)
- 3.4 Shares key information about mayoral activities on social media (and for civic events & activities)
- 3.5 Liaises with the Mayor's Chaplain/Celebrant, if appropriate
- 3.6 Liaises with the Mayor's Charity, as required
- 3.7 Supports the Mayor with the production and distribution of Christmas cards

4 MANAGEMENT OF MACEBEARER/MAYOR'S ATTENDANT & HONORARY MEMBERS

- 4.1 Works closely with the Macebearer/Mayor's Attendant, who accompanies the Mayor to mayoral engagements and civic events
- 4.2 Provides clear instructions and guidelines to honorary staff members (noted below) as required to support civic occasions, with the exception of the honorary Meteorologist who takes daily weather readings and reports accordingly:
 - 1.1.5. Honorary Town Crier
 - 1.1.6. Honorary Constables
 - 1.1.7. Honorary Bugler
 - 1.1.8. Honorary Parade Marshal
- 4.3 Each Honorary member is given an annual honorary allowance of £200 each year for their support and commitment.

5 MAYORAL REGALIA

- 5.1 Civic maintains the following which includes cleaning, alterations and new purchases:
 - 4.1.1. Mayor's robes
 - 4.1.2. Deputy Mayor's robes
 - 4.1.3. Councillors' robes
 - 4.1.4. All hats, ties, jabots, gloves and other accessories
 - 4.1.5. Mayoral badge and chain of office
 - 4.1.6. Deputy Mayor's badge and chain
 - 4.1.7. Mayoress/Consort badge and chain and Mayor's Escort badge and chain
 - 4.1.8. Deputy Mayoress/Consort badge and chain
 - 4.1.9. Uniform for the Honorary Constables, Mayor's Attendant and the Town Crier
- 5.2 Civic purchases Town Council badges, Past Mayor's badges and gifts, as required.
- 5.3 Civic maintains the Mace, Mace Rest, War Memorial and other artefacts or significant pieces in WTC's collection.

6 CIVIC EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES

MAYOR'S SUNDAY (also known as Mayor Making, Mayor's Inauguration and Mayor's Installation)

The first part of the afternoon is a statutory meeting which is required to take place in May of each year. It is the first meeting of the 'new' Council and municipal year. At this traditional ceremony, the current Mayor retires and officially hands over the position of office to the new Mayor who will make their declaration of office. Dignitaries and key guests attend.

The second part of the afternoon is the Church Service which marks the strong historic links between the Council and the Church. This offers guidance and support to the Council and personally to the incoming Mayor (if they wish) for the forthcoming year. The historic links date back to 1894 when parish councils were first established as a number of its responsibilities were separated from the Church. A relationship remains strong between the Council and our local Churches as we share a lot of key aims in supporting our community, e.g. during the covid pandemic they were instrumental in reaching out to others in the community and they offer safe places for our vulnerable residents whatever one's faith is.

If an incoming Mayor has a preference for a particular Church or other religious venue, this will always be taken into account (with the exception of an election year, when it is not known who the incoming Mayor will be, and plans have to be made in advance).

It is of course absolutely recognised that society has changed since 1894, and religion doesn't have the same place as it did for everyone, but it is also recognised that the churches are adapting to this change in different ways too, including creating more community spaces for the wider community, e.g. the 'Space for All' project at All Saints, and a Muslim prayer group regularly meets at St. Paul's Parish rooms thus demonstrating different faiths working together in the community

Churches Together in Wokingham acknowledge that not everyone has a Christian faith or indeed any faith, but all guests are welcome in their Churches.

In the past, the Church Service was originally held two or three weeks after the Mayor was inaugurated as a stand-a-lone event but the ceremony and Church service were amalgamated into one event in 2017.

A robust discussion on the subject of the Church service took place across two meetings in 2022 which included the consideration of separating the two parts of the day again (ceremony and Church service). However, a resolution was made to retain the Church service in the Council Calendar, and for it to be held on the same day as the ceremony in May (a copy of these September and November 2022 minutes are attached as reference).

ARMED FORCES DAY

Wokingham Town Council, with the kind support of Saint Sebastian Wokingham Band, marks this date to help raise public awareness of the contribution made to our country by those who serve and have served in HM Armed Forces, and to provide an opportunity for the nation to show its appreciation for this.

It takes place on the last Saturday in June and an Armed Forces Day flag is raised.

Saint Sebastian Wokingham Band performs music in Peach Place usually between 11.00am and 12.00pm on the day.

Agenda item 4

HERITAGE OPEN DAY

Heritage Open Days celebrate England's architecture and culture by offering free access to properties that are usually closed to the public or normally charge for admission.

Every year in September, buildings of every age, style and function throw open their doors, ranging from castles to factories, town halls to tithe barns, parish churches to Buddhist temples. The WTC chooses one day to plan an Open day at Wokingham Town Hall which is usually held on a Saturday. See www.heritageopendays.org.uk for more information.

The Civic Officer plans this event together with the support from the A&C officer, to identify how to share our local history each year with residents and visitors, often with a theme. The theme for 2023 is 'Creativity Unwrapped' (set nationally) and ideas are currently being explored.

REMEMBRANCE

Wokingham commemorates Remembrance weekend annually.

The main event is the Remembrance Parade and Church Service (3pm) on Remembrance Sunday where dignitaries, councillors, guests and uniformed organisations attend.

The Mayor and Deputy Mayor lead a two minute silence at 11.00am in the Market Place for Armistice Day on 11 November each year and also at 11.00am in the Market Place on Remembrance Sunday.

CIVIC AWARDS

An annual Civic Award Ceremony has been held at the Town Hall since 1997 to recognise significant community voluntary work undertaken by residents within the town. Full criteria can be found on the WTC website.

The Civic Award selection committee consists of 3 members of the Civic Committee (Chair, Vice-Chair and one other) plus the Mayor and other key external members. At the meeting, the committee reviews all the nominations received, checks them against the criteria and determines which ones should be given a Civic Award. There is no set minimum or maximum.

Successful award winners are invited to attend a ceremony at the Town Hall at the end of January to receive their award from the Mayor. The Ceremony takes place at 7.30pm in the evening.

CHRISTMAS MUSIC

This is a free event for the community where WTC invites a musical group, to lead some carol singing for our residents to enjoy in the approach to Christmas.

We offer mince pies and mulled wine to our visitors.

An opportunity is taken to collect donations for the Mayor's Charity.

MINI-MAYOR

It is at the discretion of each Mayor to choose whether or not they wish for a Mini-Mayor to be appointed in their mayoral year.

If the Mayor is in support, all Junior Schools in Wokingham are invited to take part in a competition at year 5, to become Mini-Mayor at the start of their year 6 through to May the following year.

Pupils are asked to write to the Mayor to express why they would like to be Mini-Mayor and to share what they like about the town and any ideas for improvement

The winner is chosen by the Town Mayor, with the support of the Civic Officer, and they are invested with the mini robes and a chain of office to wear as required. They are invited to attend key events during the year, with the Mayor.

Although the role has no formal civic status, an annual 'Mini Mayor' competition has proved highly successful with the schools and some very positive feedback has been received.

TOWN HALL TALKS

Talks are given to local groups of schoolchildren, cubs and scouts, brownies and guides and some adult groups, on request.

The Town Clerk, with the support of the Civic Officer, the Macebearer and the Mayor (if available) offers a talk about its history and a little about what we do today. The groups are shown the various rooms and regalia, in addition to any other requests the visiting group may make.

Requests are managed and co-ordinated by the Civic Officer.

ANNUAL NEWSLETTER

WTC produces one printed publication each year. The Civic Officer co-ordinates its production, printing and distribution to all households in the town boundary, following the newly installed Mayor each year. This is supported by the Marketing Officer who works closely with the Civic Officer to edit and produce the content, and the A&C officer who builds and designs the newsletter.

FLAG FLYING

A flag flying policy was put in place by the Civic Committee, for WTC, to offer guidance and direction for the future with any new enquiries.

MUSEUM ACCREDITATION

It has been recognised for some time that WTC owns many historical items, but it lacks the processes it should have in place to record how these should be stored, cared for and preserved for future generations.

Work is now underway to take the initial steps to apply for museum accreditation and Open Days are now planned in the diary to support this.

The benefits of accreditation would mean that:

- WTC would be adopting industry recognised best practice
- WTC would have access to experts that can provide advice and guidance
- Opportunities would open up for WTC to apply for financial grants to help make improvements.

The Civic Officer works jointly with the Arts and Culture Officer on this activity. There is a mutual interest as the A&C Officer manages the Virtual Museum where much of our on-line collection is shared.

Updates will be brought to the Civic committee meetings as required.

Agenda item 4

CIVIC FUNERALS

If a Past Mayor, Councillor or a member of staff has died, they are entitled to have a Civic Funeral, if this is what the family wishes.

At a Civic Funeral, the Mayor attends (representing the Council) in their full regalia, along with available Councillors, the Town Clerk attends (representing the staff) and the Macebearer attends with the Mace. Black rosettes are worn on robes. The Mayoral Party will perform a guard of honour at the front of the Church or Crematorium.

ROYAL OCCASIONS

If WTC was notified of a Royal visit, the Civic Officer and the Town Clerk would work closely with the Lord Lieutenant's office to understand the requirements for such a visit.

The local Proclamation ceremony in 2022 was implemented following plans that had been put in place and built upon over the years by the Civic Officer, with the support of the Town Clerk, and jointly with the WBC Communications team.

TOWN TWINNING

Wokingham is twinned with Erfstadt in Germany (from 1977) and Viry-Chatillon in France (from 1988).

A Town Twinning Association (www.wokinghamtwinning.org.uk) was, in the past, instrumental in developing, promoting and continuing these links on behalf of the town. However, the association closed in 2022 due to the decline in popularity over recent years.

Wokingham remains 'twinned' with Erfstadt and Viry-Chatillon, and the charters remain in place, between the towns. Some local schools and organisations continue to make their own visits to our twinned towns.

26th September 2022

Minutes of the proceedings of the **CIVIC COMMITTEE** meeting held on this day in **the Main Hall, Town Hall, Wokingham** from 19:30 to 21:00pm.

PRESENT

Chair: Cllr David Lee
Councillors: J Ainslie, R Bishop-Firth (Vice-Chair), M Ferrai, D King, T Lloyd, K Malvern, P Lucey.

IN ATTENDANCE

Civic Officer
Mr Glen Kopanski (resident)
Mrs Kopanski (resident)

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (Agenda Item 1)

Apologies were received from Cllr T Lack.

MEMBERS' INTERESTS (Agenda Item 2)

Cllr Malvern asked for it to be noted that he is a member of the Wokingham Society.

QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL OR PUBLIC (Agenda Item 3)

The Chair invited Mr Kopanski and his Mother Mrs Kopanski to join the table as they indicated they wished to express their views on a couple of matters.

Screen for late Queen's funeral

Mr Kopanski expressed his dissatisfaction that Wokingham Town Council had not put in place a screen for residents to watch the late Queen's funeral. He believed it was unacceptable as people would have liked to have sat with other people to watch the funeral, rather than sit at home.

The Chair responded to Mr Kopanski and his Mother and explained that plans were in place behind the scenes that had been made ahead of the announcement and there were protocols that needed to be followed.

The Chair stated that he totally understood. He advised that a book of condolence was set up and an area was set up for flowers to be laid but, with hindsight WTC could have done a lot better and apologised that the Council didn't come up with something better than we did. The Chair advised that WTC would consider putting in place screens for future occasions.

Grass turf at Remembrance

Mr Kopanski advised that he is a member of the Royal British legion, and the piece of turf that is put out on the Market Place in the Remembrance period is not acceptable.

The Chair explained the following:

CHAIR'S INITIALS _____



- that this Committee has explored putting other things in place (consulting with the Wokingham Society and RBL) in order to take a different approach, e.g. commissioning for a plaque to be made and placed on the wall outside, but these concepts have been constrained by the Conservation Officer at Wokingham Borough Council who was not in support.
- in the past, residents have asked whether something more formal, e.g., a new memorial, could be placed in the town. However, a War memorial is already situated inside the Town Hall building which was paid for by the people of Wokingham who chose for it to be placed there. WTC are custodians of this for the town and do not think it is within its gift for a new memorial to be created and that we should respect their wishes.

The Civic Officer added that for the last two years, we have put out a different structure for residents to place their crosses into, following feedback from residents, and the turf is no longer used. WTC believes this is now more favourably accepted.

The Chair reiterated to the residents that WTC is very keen to uphold the traditions of the town and every Cllr who has joined the town understands that they are trustees of this, Remembrance certainly being one of the main ones.

Mr Kopanski and his Mother said they appreciated having the opportunity to talk to the committee about their issues and they acknowledged that they had been listened to, which was very important to them.

Awareness of meetings

As an aside, Mr Kopanski advised that he was not aware of the meetings that were held at the Town Hall until Cllr Gee had advised him, and he felt that these should be publicised in more places than WTC's website to allow residents who do not have access to learn about these.

The Chair acknowledged this, and suggestions were made for this to be looked into, including WTC's annual newsletter.

ACTION: Civic Officer

CIVIC COMMITTEE MINUTES (Agenda Item 4)

It was proposed by Cllr P Lucey and seconded by Cllr R Bishop-Firth and it was

**RESOLVED
30505**

that the Minutes of the Civic Committee meeting held on 21st March 2022 (pages 16503 to 16506), be received as a true and correct record and that they be confirmed and signed by the Chair.

MONITORING REPORT (Agenda Item 5)

The Monitoring Report dated 20th September 2022 was received and noted.

a) Museum Accreditation

See agenda item 8.

CHAIR'S INITIALS _____



b) Jubilee Plaque

The Civic Officer updated the committee to advise that since the last meeting, the plaque had been purchased and received, and is now waiting for it to be installed by Volker Highways.

c) Armed Forces Day

The Civic Officer updated the committee to advise that arrangements were made for Saint Sebastian Wokingham Band to play in Peach Place in June this year. The Deputy Mayor, Cllr S Gurney welcomed and thanked the band and also spoke to residents on the day. Cllr Gurney informed the Civic Officer that the band received a good response and was really welcomed by residents. It therefore seems appropriate for the band to continue to perform in Peach Place each year.

d) Bench dedication

The Civic Officer advised that an offer was made to the family of Chris Pape for a plaque to be engraved and placed on a bench in Elms Field in her memory.

The family were most appreciative of the offer and very gratefully accepted. The plaque is now in position.

COMMITTEE'S BUDGET (Agenda Item 6)

A report on the Committee's budget expenditure to 31 August 2022 was received and noted.

TOWN TWINNING (Agenda Item 7)

The committee received and accepted the Civic Officer's report which informed members that the Wokingham Town Twinning Association has closed.

The association had declined in popularity over recent years for several reasons; their membership has gradually declined, as they have not attracted new members. In addition, travel is now much easier and often cheaper than it has been in the past and, of course, the covid pandemic also did not help.

The report advised the following:

1. Wokingham remains 'twinned' with Ertstadt and Viry-Chatillon, but the Wokingham Town Twinning Organisation no longer exists, and they will no longer be organising social trips or social activities.
2. The charters remain in place, between the towns
3. WTTA have archived their minutes, newsletters and photographs with the Berkshire Records Office.
4. Ertstadt and Viry-Chatillon have been advised accordingly. Their 'twinning' organisations are also experiencing similar difficulties and it is questionable if they will also continue.
5. The WTTA website is now closed, but information about our twinned towns is present on WTC's website
6. Some local schools and organisations continue to make their own visits to our twinned towns.

CHAIR'S INITIALS _____



Cllr Lloyd added that the Arts and Culture committee have commissioned an artist to paint some pictures which will be printed on aluminum and installed in Erftstadt Court. One of these will be a scene of lakes in Erftstadt and will include the German word 'Heimat' meaning homeland.

MUSEUM ACCREDITATION (Agenda Item 8)

The committee members received the Civic Officer's report offering an update to the committee following an independent inspection of WTC's physical collection which in turn provided the Council with a Collection Care report for consideration.

The report noted key observations and highlighted that the main risk to its historical collection is from light, as it can cause permanent and irreversible damage to objects by fading etc.

Some initial work had begun to explore applying for museum accreditation in 2019 and the Civic Officer's report explained that covid lockdowns meant that this work was paused. However, the commissioning of this latest independent report and the receipt of its findings has now better informed WTC and has offered some helpful guidance.

The Civic Committee were all in agreement that work should be progressed, and members agreed with the following Civic Officer's recommendations:

- 1) For WTC to take the first step to apply for museum accreditation with a view to then becoming eligible to be 'working towards eligibility'. Once applied for and confirmed as an 'eligible' museum, WTC would have 3 years with 'Working towards Accreditation' status to submit a full application. Engagement would begin again with the museum volunteer.
- 2) It is hoped that officers can then begin to identify in more detail what is required to bridge the gap for WTC to be able to better store, care for and preserve our historic collection for future generations. It should be noted that the 3 areas of weaknesses currently are:
 - Care and conservation of its core historical collection
 - Improved user engagement
 - Insufficient resources
- 3) It seems sensible to request some initial funding to support the cost of addressing the UV light on WTC's windows. It is worth noting, that if WTC does apply for museum accreditation, it is likely that grant opportunities might be possible and such requests are often met more favourably if the organisation making the request is also taking steps to meet these costs. One initial quote received has indicated that it would cost £9,700 to apply UV protection to WTC's windows and possibly blinds to reduce light in the main hall. Members agreed £10,000 should be requested to F&P for this.

Cllr Lucey remarked that this was a good report and thanked the Civic Officer. He also recognised that it is important for WTC to take its time to prioritise what is most important and to even consider any student involvement if there is interest.

CHAIR'S INITIALS _____



The Chair also stated that it might be beneficial for Officers to have some support from Civic Committee members to help identify items that might be of most interest to the public and to help consider how best to exhibit these including thinking about some changing displays to display our history. Cllr Tim Lloyd advised the committee that he was happy to assist, along with Cllr Lee.

Mr Kopanski shared that he had a copy of a disc that had been recorded by Mr Ken Goatley talking about lots of Wokingham's history which may be of interest. He will deliver a copy of this to the Town Hall.

ACTION: Civic Officer

HERITAGE OPEN DAY (Agenda Item 9)

The Civic Officer informed the committee that as this event was unfortunately cancelled due to the passing of our late Queen, it would not be possible to reschedule this at another weekend.

The Civic Officer advised that Heritage Open Days are part of a trademarked festival throughout the country, and any events that run outside the festival dates cannot be considered part of Heritage Open Days.

So that WTC can utilise some of the items that were purchased for children's activities, the Civic Officer suggested that an Open Day could be planned for a day in October half term and be marketed to families to visit and enjoy. A proposed date was Tuesday 25 October.

The members were in support of this idea.

ACTION: Civic Officer

Mr Kopanski and his Mother Mrs Kopanski left the meeting.

MAYOR'S SUNDAY CIVIC SERVICE (Agenda Item 10)

The committee received the Civic Officer's report which asked members to discuss the church service element of the Mayor's Sunday event.

Through discussion with the Town Clerk and Civic Officer, the current Mayor in office requested not to include a church service as part of Mayor's Sunday in May 2022 due to personal preferences. The Town Clerk and Civic Officer took the decision to respect the Mayor's preferences, but the intention was for this not to be a permanent change. However, the Civic Chair has asked if this was the right response and has requested that this be brought to the Civic committee for discussion.

Members recognised that some of the sensitivity around this civic service is about the Mayor being expected to play a part in it and the reference that it is taking place in a church which is at the choice of the Mayor.

Members shared the view that perhaps WTC should change the focus of the service to be for the Council as a whole and for guidance to be offered for the forthcoming year for the Council and the community and town it supports, and not for the Mayor. It was felt that the Mayor should only take part, and be personally

CHAIR'S INITIALS _____



blessed and offer a reading, if they wish to. An alternative approach in how WTC shares details of this service might be to say that the Mayor is attending a civic service, rather than it being the 'Mayor's civic service'.

It was also recognised that having a chaplain may be difficult for some Mayors who are not religious and WTC could make this optional with the idea of a Mayor choosing to have a celebrant, if desired. It was noted that moments of reflection at the start of Council are welcomed by a number of our Councillors.

Members agreed that Council should not make any changes this year, but WTC should look at a consistent approach to retain the tradition of a civic service for 2023 and thereafter, to celebrate the coming council year and not the Mayor. The Civic Officer was asked to look at the following so that this may be discussed further at a future civic meeting:

- a) Share with the committee the previous report where a decision was made to combine the Mayor's Inauguration Ceremony with a Civic service, to re-consider if this should be split back into two separate events
- b) Consider making the civic service a more formal inclusive event for the community, in a similar way to how the church service was presented on the evening of the late Queen's funeral
- c) To explore bringing in representatives from different faiths to the service (up-to-date census data soon to be published may help to inform WTC with this) although it is recognised that Wokingham is not as diverse as other areas.
- d) Consider where WTC would hold services, as in the past it has tried to rotate and attend different Churches in Wokingham
- e) Speak to the Chair of Churches Together in Wokingham to gain his views and input

ACTION: Civic Officer

BUDGET REQUEST FOR 2023-2024 (Agenda Item 11)

The Committee considered if there is any expenditure that might be required over and above the normal annual budget settings for the next financial year.

The following items were discussed, and all members agreed that the following should be requested to F&P for 2023-2024:

- a) To increase the budget for the Christmas Music event from £150 to £1000 to allow the event to be expanded and to be able to pay the performers.
- b) £10,000 to support the cost of reducing UV and light from our windows to protect and preserve WTC's historical collection. See agenda item 8 for further detail.
- c) The Committee would also like to highlight to F&P that the Coronation of King Charles III is likely to fall in the next financial year which it may like to consider. However, details of any required costs for this are currently unknown, as no guidance has been received.

ACTION: Civic Officer

CHAIR'S INITIALS _____



WTC RESPONSE TO THE PASSING OF THE LATE QUEEN (Agenda Item 12)

The Civic Officer asked if there were any comments members wished to make about WTC's response to the passing of the late Queen in preparation of a debrief meeting later this week.

Cllr Bishop-Firth said that the proclamation went very well and recognised that this was a very big piece of work and WTC wouldn't have had much more resource to do anything else.

The comments expressed by Mr Kopanski and his Mother Mrs Kopanski, in agenda item 3, will be taken to the debrief meeting. However, it was recognised that as WTC is a Parish Council with limited resources, it would have been difficult to do this.

Committee members shared ideas about possible venues where screenings could be placed for future occasions for people to sit down and watch events, including the inside of the Town Hall, WADE and the new Carnival Hub.

ACTION: Civic Officer

INFORMATION ITEMS (Agenda Item 13)

There were no information items.

COMMITTEE INFORMATION (Agenda Item 11)

- a) The Chair asked for a member to join the Chair, Vice-Chair and the Mayor at the Civic Award Selection meeting taking place on Wednesday 7 December at 10am. Cllr D King volunteered to join this meeting provided that she is able to attend.
- b) Cllr Bishop-Firth shared that at the Woosehill Community Centre, there was a framed print with a note attached stating it was on loan. The Civic Officer was asked to look into this.
- c) No information was identified for marketing.

ACTION: Civic Officer

CHAIR'S SIGNATURE _____

CHAIR'S INITIALS _____



21st November 2022

Minutes of the proceedings of the **CIVIC COMMITTEE** meeting held on this day in the **Main Hall, Town Hall, Wokingham** from 19:30 to 21:22pm.

PRESENT

Chair: Cllr R Bishop-Firth (Vice-Chair)

Councillors: J Ainslie, M Ferrai, D King, T Lack, T Lloyd, K Malvern, P Lucey.

IN ATTENDANCE

Civic Officer

Katy Hughes (incoming Town Clerk)

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (Agenda Item 1)

Apologies were received from Cllr David Lee (Chair)

MEMBERS' INTERESTS (Agenda Item 2)

Cllr T Lack declared an interest regarding agenda item 9.

QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL OR PUBLIC (Agenda Item 3)

No questions were received.

CIVIC COMMITTEE MINUTES (Agenda Item 4)

It was proposed by Cllr P Lucey and seconded by Cllr J Ainslie and it was

**RESOLVED
30545**

that the Minutes of the Civic Committee meeting held on 26th September 2022 (pages 16597 to 16603), be received as a true and correct record and that they be confirmed and signed by the Vice-Chair.

MONITORING REPORT (Agenda Item 5)

The Monitoring Report dated 15th November 2022 was received and noted.

a) Museum Accreditation

As the committee were in agreement at the September civic meeting that work on this should now be progressed, this item will now be removed from the monitoring report, and updates brought to the committee, as required.

b) Jubilee Plaque

This was installed and now in place. This item will be removed from the monitoring report.

c) Church Civic Service

See agenda item 8.

COMMITTEE'S BUDGET (Agenda Item 6)

A report on the Committee's budget expenditure to 31 October 2022 was received and noted.

CHAIR'S INITIALS _____



REFLECTION ON REMEMBRANCE (Agenda Item 7)

The committee discussed the Remembrance events and agreed that it was well attended and a successful event. The addition of appointing contractors to stop the traffic for both two-minute silences was positively received, and it was agreed that it should be included in future plans.

Members thanked the Civic Officer for the organisation of the event.

MAYOR'S SUNDAY CIVIC CHURCH SERVICE (Agenda Item 8)

The committee received the Civic Officer's report offering a further update following a request at the last meeting. This also offered members the opportunity to review the itinerary for the whole of the day on Mayor's Sunday.

A couple of key points to note from the report are that:

- Officers met local Church ministers to seek their views. It was shared with the Ministers the suggestion that Cllrs made at the last civic meeting, to adjust the focus of the service each year to offer guidance for the forthcoming year to the Council as a whole. If a Mayor wished to be 'personally blessed' this could be included in the service as it has been done in the past, but this should not be assumed. The Ministers all agreed they would like to continue to support the Council with its annual service, but they also recognise they need for flexibility including making adjustments to the focus of the service, as required.
- In principle, the ministers all advised they would welcome other faiths taking part in their services, but we must be mindful that they are all constrained by their own rules and national guidance. If any such addition or change is made in the future, it is critical that close communication with all would be required and that ample time is allowed for such planning.

Members discussed the elements of the day at length and agreed that Council should continue to maintain its traditions and be inclusive whilst working with the incoming Mayor to balance the two.

Councillors shared mixed views about whether or not to keep the Church service on the same day as the ceremony, or to split the two parts again as it was held prior to 2017, as pros and cons were recognised for both formats. This was therefore put to a vote, but members were in full agreement about the other points below.

It was proposed by Cllr K Malvern and seconded by Cllr T Lack and it was

**RESOLVED
30546**

- a) To retain the Church service in the Council Calendar, and for it to be held on the same day as the Mayor Making ceremony. An allowance should be made to enable the Mayor the flexibility to respect their own personal views and beliefs, whilst still acting as First Citizen of the town and meeting the expectations of the broadest community they are representing.
- b) To cease organising a parade to Church on this occasion due to its low attendance which makes it very difficult for Council to justify the expenditure of over £2000 to close the roads to support this.

CHAIR'S INITIALS _____



- c) To continue to rotate Council's attendance for a Civic Church Service across Wokingham's churches. This would reflect the clear wish for Churches Together in Wokingham to remain involved and would demonstrate the value the Council places on the community support they offer.

Members were asked to note that in an election year, officers would need to plan in advance for a civic service. The Council will continue to book the use of one of the local Churches and once the incoming Mayor and their faith, if any, is known, discussions can be held about its focus, e.g. whether or not to include any personal blessing.

ACTION: Civic Officer

GIFTS FOR RETIRING COUNCILLORS (Agenda Item 9)

The committee received the Civic Officer's report requesting that they discuss and determine if they wish to take the same approach to giving gifts to retiring Councillors, as has been done in the past, as follows:

- a) Councillors who are retiring from being a Councillor should receive a retiring gift provided that they have served a minimum of eight years continuous service (two terms) at WTC. Gifts should be presented to these Councillors at the April Full Council meeting, prior to the election.
- b) Councillors who are choosing not to retire but do not get re-elected should also receive a retiring gift provided that they have served a minimum of eight years continuous service (two terms) at WTC. Gifts to these Councillors will not be formally presented at a Full Council meeting but will be presented to them privately.
- c) To present retiring Councillors who meet the criteria with a framed image of the Town Hall which has previously been commissioned by a local artist.

It was proposed by Cllr T Lloyd and seconded by Cllr J Ainslie and it was

**RESOLVED
30547**

To amend the above criteria to allow a Councillor who is retiring and has not served a minimum of eight years continuous service but has served as Mayor, to also be presented with a gift in recognition of their time they have given to the Council.

It was proposed by Cllr P Lucey and seconded by Cllr J Ainslie and it was

**RESOLVED
30548**

To accept the amended recommendation.

INFORMATION ITEMS (Agenda Item 10)

The following was noted:

- a) The Mayor's chain of office is currently with regalia specialists for a repair and further repairs are required to the badge in due course.
- b) The Open day in October's half term was very successful with good attendance. It was gratefully received by many families.
- c) Two new soldiers silhouettes were purchased for Remembrance and sponsored by the Wokingham Society. These were placed in Elms

CHAIR'S INITIALS _____



Field for the Remembrance period and will be repositioned annually, as the soldier is in the Market Place. The Civic Officer advised that one of the soldiers had unfortunately been vandalised and it will no longer be fit for purpose. If there is budget available at the end of the financial year, a replacement will be purchased.

- d) The King's Coronation has been announced as Saturday 6 May, which offers a number of challenges including its timing just after the election period. It is not currently known what the national or local expectations are. Officers will await guidance and keep the committee updated.

COMMITTEE INFORMATION (Agenda Item 11)

There were no information items.

- a) No information was raised by members.
- b) No specific information was identified for marketing. The Civic Officer asked members to keep sharing and commenting social media posts to help the Council spread awareness of its events.

CHAIR'S SIGNATURE _____

CHAIR'S INITIALS _____



20th March 2023 - draft

Minutes of the proceedings of the **CIVIC COMMITTEE** meeting held on this day in **the Council Chamber, Town Hall, Wokingham** from 19:30 to 20:45pm.

PRESENT

Chair: Cllr R Bishop-Firth (Vice-Chair)

Councillors: J Ainslie, M Ferrai, T Lloyd, K Malvern, P Lucey.

IN ATTENDANCE

Civic Officer

Mayor's Attendant

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (Agenda Item 1)

Apologies were received from Cllr David Lee (Chair), Cllr T Lack and D King

MEMBERS' INTERESTS (Agenda Item 2)

There were no declarations of interest.

QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL OR PUBLIC (Agenda Item 3)

No questions were received.

CIVIC COMMITTEE MINUTES (Agenda Item 4)

It was proposed by Cllr P Lucey and seconded by Cllr K Malvern and it was

**RESOLVED
30591**

that the Minutes of the Civic Committee meeting held on 21st November 2022 (pages 16653 to 16656), be received as a true and correct record and that they be confirmed and signed by the Chair.

COMMITTEE'S BUDGET (Agenda Item 5)

A report on the Committee's budget expenditure to 28th February 2023 was received and noted.

A request was made to change the wording of the 'Chairman's Allowance' to the 'Chair's Allowance', and members asked the Civic Officer to pass this request to the Finance Officer.

CIVIC AWARDS (Agenda Item 6)

The committee received the Civic Officer's report offering an update following the most recent process.

The report explained that the Civic Award Selection Committee has found it very difficult to support nominations for organisations as all charitable groups offer valuable support to our community in different ways and they have felt it has been far too difficult to recognise some and not others.

It was felt by the Selection Committee that a better approach may be to offer support to organisations on a more ongoing basis with visits from the Mayor, as it has often done in the past, and maintain the Civic Award process as recognising individuals only.

CHAIR'S INITIALS _____

Civic Committee 20/03/2023

16706



**RESOLVED
30592**

It was proposed by Cllr R Bishop-Firth and seconded by Cllr K Malvern and it was that WTC should revert back to the Civic Award Process allowing nominations to be made for individuals only, and not organisations. The process should continue to ask for two people to make a nomination.

The Mayor should continue to support and visit organisations on an ongoing basis to offer thanks as required.

Members also discussed that the number of nominations received in the most recent process was fewer than recent years, and it was suggested that ideas to help further promote this are discussed at a future Civic meeting.

ACTION: Civic Officer

ROAD NAME REQUEST (Agenda Item 7)

Following a request received, the Civic Committee considered adding the name 'Paul Gallagher' to the list of proposed names and requested that this is passed to the Planning and Transport Committee for referral to the Wokingham Borough Council. Members suggested that, if approved, it would be appropriate for his name to be used in any new roads in the Emmbrook area.

ACTION: Civic Officer

HERITAGE OPEN DAY (Agenda Item 8)

The committee received the Civic Officer's report offering an update about this year's theme.

The report explained that the Council's Open Day would be held on Saturday 9th September and the theme set by National Heritage Open Days this year is 'Creativity Unwrapped.'

Members offered some suggestions for the Civic Officer to consider and explore, whilst planning the event including the following:

- Sharing amongst the community to see who might be interested in working with us or taking part
- Discussing with local Arts groups

ACTION: Civic Officer

MAYOR'S CHAIN AND BADGE OF OFFICE (Agenda Item 9)

The committee received the Civic Officer's report offering an update about the Mayoral chain and badge of office.

The report explained how this is a very distinctive and valuable item in its historic collection, and WTC is its custodian and is responsible for its preservation for our future generations. It noted the following challenges:

- It is extremely heavy for our Mayors to wear, particularly our female Mayors

CHAIR'S INITIALS _____



- The badge often catches on Mayor's clothing
- It is showing more and more signs of wear and more frequent repairs are needing to be made
- Each time the chain is sent away, the process of taking shields and adding new ones is likely to be weakening the chain
- Keeping the chain and badge in regular use, without making any changes no longer feels like an option as its maintenance could become more and more expensive and it could in the long term become irreparable.

Members discussed the following options below which were presented in the report, along with other ideas such as getting in touch with BBC's The Repair Shop:

- adding a velvet collar to the chain and badge to add protection
- considering if the process of adding new shields for each Mayor should be continued
- reducing how often it is worn and for the Mayor to wear the Mayoress/Consort chain and badge when the robe is not worn
- purchasing a new chain and badge

It was proposed by Cllr R Bishop-Firth and seconded by Cllr J Ainslie and it was

**RESOLVED
30593**

that the Civic Officer should investigate the idea of getting in touch with The Repair Shop but in any case, the repairs to the badge of office and box should be made regardless.

The other decisions around the future of how WTC maintains and preserves the chain and badge should be deferred and brought to an Extraordinary Meeting before the end of the Council year to include as many Past Mayors as possible, the current Mayor if available, as well as any other interested Councillors.

The Civic Officer was asked to develop the ideas further and arrange an Extraordinary Meeting before the end of the municipal year.

ACTION: Civic Officer

INFORMATION ITEMS (Agenda Item 10)

It was noted that a replacement soldier silhouette has been purchased to replace the one that was vandalised and will be positioned in Elms Field for the Remembrance period again this year along with the other silhouette.

COMMITTEE INFORMATION (Agenda Item 11)

There were no information items.

- a) No information was raised by members.
- b) No specific information was identified for marketing.

CHAIR'S SIGNATURE _____

CHAIR'S INITIALS _____



CHAIR'S INITIALS _____

Civic Committee 20/03/2023

16709



4th April 2023 - draft

Minutes of the proceedings of the **EXTRAORDINARY CIVIC COMMITTEE** meeting held on this day in **the Council Chamber, Town Hall, Wokingham** from 18:30 to 19:20pm.

PRESENT

Chair: Cllr David Lee (Chair),
Councillors: J Ainslie, R Bishop-Firth (Vice-Chair), D King, Cllr T Lack, T Lloyd,
K Malvern, P Lucey.

IN ATTENDANCE

Civic Officer
Mayor's Attendant
Cllr Maria Gee (Mayor)
Cllr Lynn Forbes

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (Agenda Item 1)

Apologies were received from Cllr M Ferrai.

MEMBERS' INTERESTS (Agenda Item 2)

There were no declarations of interest.

QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL OR PUBLIC (Agenda Item 3)

No questions were received.

MAYOR'S CHAIN AND BADGE OF OFFICE (Agenda Item 4)

The committee received the Civic Officer's reports offering an update about the Mayoral chain and badge of office, and they continued a discussion on this topic from the previous civic meeting.

The Civic Officer gave a verbal summary of why the reports had been put together, for members, which included the following:

- WTC is the custodian of this item, and it is responsible for its preservation for our future generations.
- The oldest elements, including the badge, are 131 years old.
- It was last valued in August 2022 at a significantly higher amount from the last valuation in 2011. The valuer brought to WTC's attention the importance that it should place on its preservation.
- It feels prudent for WTC to ensure it considers how it is worn (if worn) and used in the future, so that it is conserved for historical purposes and for our future generations. This requires decisions to be made about its ongoing use and the best way forward so that the life of this distinctive and valuable piece in our collection is pro-longed.

CHAIR'S INITIALS _____

Civic Committee 05/04/2023

16718



The Civic Officer explained the following challenges:

- It is extremely heavy for our Mayors to wear, particularly our female Mayors
- The badge often catches on Mayor's clothing
- It is showing more and more signs of wear, and more frequent repairs are needing to be made, particularly to the badge
- Each time the chain is sent away, the process of taking shields and adding new ones may be weakening the chain. The fewer times it needs to be sent away would be preferable too, to reduce risk.
- Keeping the chain and badge in regular use, without making any changes no longer feels like an option as its maintenance could become more and more expensive and it could in the long term become irreparable.

Members discussed the following options again which were presented in the reports:

- adding a velvet collar to the chain and badge to add protection
- considering if the process of adding new shields for each Mayor should be continued
- reducing how often it is worn and for the Mayor to wear the Mayoress/Consort chain and badge when the robe is not worn
- purchasing a new chain and badge

It was proposed by Cllr D Lee and seconded by Cllr R Bishop-Firth and it was

**RESOLVED
30598**

that at some point in the near future, consideration should be given to purchasing a new Mayoral chain and Badge of Office and the existing one should be retired and suitably displayed so it is preserved for historical purposes and future generations. It was recognised that if it was continued to be used as regularly as it currently is, it could require more and more repairs and become more costly for the Council over time and the item may not last the same number of years.

Members agreed the following in the meantime:

- To retain the visibility of this piece but to reduce how much it is worn, the Mayor should wear it on special occasions only, mostly with the robe. On other occasions, the Mayor will wear the badge and chain traditionally worn by the Mayoress/Consort. This pre-dates the Mayor's chain and badge and was purchased privately in honour of Queen Victoria's Golden Jubilee in 1887 and worn during that year by the first Mayor of Wokingham, Alderman Thomas Manley Wescott. Despite this being older in age, and as valuable, it is lighter and easier to wear, and much less problematic to maintain.
- The Mayor's Partner should wear the silver chain originally purchased for a Mayor's Partner to wear if male.
- A new badge and ribbon should be purchased for our Mini-Mayors to wear.
- A velvet backing is not required for the Mayoral chain and badge of office.
- No further shields would be made and added to the existing chain except for the two remaining shields for Mayors who have served up until this time.

CHAIR'S INITIALS _____



- Going forward, new shields for the current chain could either be made and added to the display case in the parlour or, different shields added/engraved to a new chain if purchased.

ACTION: Civic Officer

CHAIR'S SIGNATURE _____

CHAIR'S INITIALS _____



WOKINGHAM TOWN COUNCIL

Monitoring Report: Civic

Date: 13 June 2023

Date Action Agreed	Item for Action (to include any resolution number)	Person Actioning	Proposed Completion Date	Progress
20.3.23	Purchase new badge and ribbon for Mini-Mayor	CO	Sept 2023	To purchase
20.3.23	Arrange for mayoral badge of office to be repaired and 2 new links to be added	CO	ASAP	To action
20.3.23	To consider the purchase of a new mayoral badge and chain of office at some point in the near future	CO	Not set	Committee to consider when felt appropriate

WOKINGHAM TOWN COUNCIL

Monitoring Report: Civic

Date: 13 June 2023

Wokingham Town Council Principles

Service

All residents of Wokingham Town deserve high quality services.

Distinctiveness

Wokingham Town is proud of its distinctive nature as a modern market town with an ancient heritage

Sustainability

Wokingham Town will aim to be a sustainable community.

Inclusivity

Wokingham Town will be welcoming to all

The Council's principles are noted here as a useful reference for members in discussions at Council meetings as they should always be considered.

The key principles for Civic will be distinctiveness and inclusivity but these will of course not be exclusive, and the committee will take all of these into consideration when making decisions.

06/06/2023

Wokingham Town Council

Page 1

15:02

Detailed Income & Expenditure by Budget Heading 31/05/2023

Month No: 2

Cost Centre Report

	Actual Last Year	Actual Year To Date	Current Annual Bud	Variance Annual Total	Committed Expenditure	Funds Available
<u>Civic</u>						
Newsletter	4,477	0	5,000	5,000	5,211	(211)
Operation Bridge Costs	3,565	0	0	0		0
Civic Receptions	824	706	2,800	2,094	384	1,710
Heritage Day	2,959	100	3,850	3,750	185	3,565
Remembrance Day	996	0	2,800	2,800		2,800
Christmas Music	115	0	1,000	1,000		1,000
Honoraria	1,400	0	1,400	1,400		1,400
Chair's Allowance	3,500	0	3,500	3,500		3,500
Civic Transport	0	0	100	100		100
Official Gifts	361	48	500	452	15	437
Christmas Cards	215	0	300	300		300
Insignia & Dress	2,944	1,022	3,000	1,978	23	1,955
Civic Awards	1,262	0	2,000	2,000		2,000
Silver Talks	71	0	50	50		50
Mayor's Sunday	2,587	2,116	5,000	2,884	684	2,200
Museum Accreditation	794	25	10,000	9,975	250	9,725
Civic :- Indirect Expenditure	26,071	4,018	41,300	37,283	6,751	30,531
Net Expenditure	(26,071)	(4,018)	(41,300)	(37,283)		
Grand Totals:- Income	0	0	0	0		
Expenditure	26,071	4,018	41,300	37,283	6,751	30,531
Net Income over Expenditure	(26,071)	(4,018)	(41,300)	(37,283)		
Movement to/(from) Gen Reserve	(26,071)	(4,018)				



22 May 2023

Dear Sally,

I am writing to express my sincere thanks for the warm hospitality extended to us both at your installation as Mayor of Wokingham Town Council yesterday. It was an absolute pleasure to attend such a well-organised and memorable occasion.

The Town Hall is beautiful, and I was slightly embarrassed to admit that it was my first time inside the building, despite living in Wokingham for the past 25 years. I promise I will try not to leave it so long next time!


Please convey our appreciation to your team who assisted in making the event such a resounding success, particularly to Nikki for keeping us safe on the pedestrian crossing, Cllr Tony Lack for making us feel instantly at home, the Redlands String Quartet for the entertainment during the various costume changes, the Rev Catherine Bowstead for a memorable service in the striking setting of Wokingham Methodist Church and 'The Great Food Company' for seemingly bottomless canapés and drinks!

Wishing you the very best for a successful, enjoyable and memorable term of office.

Yours sincerely,

Dr Stefan Fafinski JP DL FBCS FRSA
Deputy Lieutenant of the Royal County of Berkshire

Cllr Sally Gurney





Mr Simon Muir

The High Sheriff of the Royal County of Berkshire

3rd June 2023

npayler@wokingham-tc.gov.uk

By Email

Dear Nikki

Thank you so much for sending through the photograph of the Mayor making ceremony at Wokingham Town Hall, much appreciated and a memento of a thoroughly enjoyable event. Thank you so much for asking me to attend; it is wonderful to part of the tradition and history of Wokingham of which we can all be proud. Thank you to all of the team who went to so much trouble to organise the event.

Please don't hesitate to make contact if I can be of further help on my Shrieval Year.

Email: simonmuir@berkshirehighsheriff.com Tel: [REDACTED]

www.berkshirehighsheriff.com



Wokingham Town Council

Town Clerk Report 15/2023

To: Civic Committee
Date: 26 May 2023
Subject: Flag request for Wokingham In Bloom

1 REASON FOR REPORT

To ask the Civic Committee to consider a request from the Grounds and Bloom Officer to display the ceremonial flags around the town hall during July for the regional and national RHS Wokingham In Bloom (WIB) judging days.

2 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Following the success of the WIB campaign in 2022, and the previous nine years of development leading up to this, Wokingham was selected as the representative for the Thames Valley and Chiltern Area (Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire) in the national 'In Bloom' competition, for the first time.
- 2.2 Competing towns can only feature in a national competition once every three years, so Wokingham will not feature in 2024 or 2025
- 2.3 One of the aspects of the judging criteria for WIB is the visual impact, or the 'Wow factor' and the town hall will be the focal point in the judging route on both 11th and 25th July, where judges will meet with volunteers and receive a video presentation on activities following a three-hour tour of WIB locations.
- 2.4 At a recent meeting of the WBC Bloom Officer with representatives from the RHS, it was suggested that the ceremonial flags could be in place on the regional and national judging days, as they so well highlight the building and the town's pride in its Bloom volunteers.

3 FLAG POLICY

- 3.1 Wokingham Town Council has an adopted Flag Flying Policy which specifies which dates flags are displayed at the Town Hall.
- 3.2 In accordance with the policy, (see 'introduction' in the policy document)
Any new or individual requests for the flying of specific flags should be taken to the Civic Committee for discussion but they would only be approved in exceptional circumstances.

4 COSTS

- 4.1 The costs for the installation and removal of the ceremonial flags (approximately £350) would be covered by the Bloom budget.

5 CONSIDERATION

- 5.1 To consider whether participation in the regional and national Bloom competition is sufficiently exceptional to justify the use of the ceremonial flags for these events (note: these flags have not previously featured in regional judging, and it is not anticipated that this request would be made for regional events going forward)
- 5.2 In line with the Flag Flying policy, the town council limits the use of flags so as to increase their impact when they are used. The committee is asked to consider whether this circumstance is deemed sufficiently exceptional to justify the further use of the flags.

6 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 6.1 To consider whether or not to support the request of the WTC Bloom and Grounds Officer.

Wokingham Town Council
Policy Document



Flag Flying Policy

(V5 01/06/2023 12:51:00 by Nikki Payler)

Wokingham Town Council
Policy Document



Contents

Contents	2
Introduction.....	3
General Precedence for Flag Flying.....	3
House Flag	4
Flag Flying dates	4
Flag Flying at Half-Mast.....	5
Publicity	6
Reference	6

Wokingham Town Council Policy Document



Introduction

The national flag of the United Kingdom is the Union Flag.

Since 2008, Councils have had the discretion to fly the Union Flag at all times, if they wish. Whilst this has been the established policy at some Councils, Wokingham Town Council has chosen to fly the flag on notable occasions only so that people are more aware when it is present.

The Town Council raises the Union Flag at the Town Hall in accordance with published practice, as informed by the calendar on the Flag Institute www.flaginstitute.org for the United Kingdom and guidance from central government. Where there is no guidance available, or for local or regional events, the Town Clerk has the ultimate responsibility for the decisions around the flying of flags. This will be in accordance with local protocol, available best practice, and what the Town Clerk considers most appropriate. A consistent approach is taken with Wokingham Borough Council, where possible.

Any new or individual requests for the flying of specific flags should be taken to the Civic Committee for discussion but they would only be approved in exceptional circumstances.

Note: Wokingham Town Hall has two flag poles positioned on the roof of the building. The Union flag should always be flown on the lead pole (facing Peach Street) and takes precedence over other flags we fly, see below (except for the Royal Standards).

General Precedence for Flag Flying

The only flag that takes precedence over the Union Flag is the Royal Standard which is flown when a member of the Royal family is on the premises, being hoisted on their arrival and lowered following their departure. If the Royal person is to be present in a building, the Lord Chamberlain's Department or the Royal person's private secretary should be consulted. They will advise on the flag to be flown. The Royal Standard is never hoisted when the Royal person is passing in procession.

The order of precedence is as follows:

The Royal Standards

The Union Flag

The National Flag of the host Country (St. George's Flag)

The White Ensign of the Royal Navy

The Ensign of the Royal Air Force

The Blue and Red Ensigns

The Civil Air Ensign

Wokingham Town Council Policy Document



The national flags of Scotland, Wales, the Crown Dependencies and the British Overseas Territories

The national flags of other nations

The United Nations Flag

The Commonwealth Flag

The British Army Flag (Non-Ceremonial)

Flags of counties and metropolitan cities

Flags of other cities and towns

Banners of Arms (both personal and corporate)

House flags

Specific and additional flags to mark certain events, locations or occasions.

House Flag

WTC has its own house flag which is based on its Coat of Arms and includes the following features:

The acorns on a gold shield, represent Wokingham as the Forest Town. The ermine chevron indicates the Royal House, and the Tudor Rose is part of the badge of Elizabeth I and Elizabeth II, both allude to the fact that the arms were granted to the Borough in Coronation Year, 1953.

The WTC house flag is raised for significant Council dates as noted below. Please also see 'Flag Flying at Half-Mast' for details of when the House Flag is flown at half-mast.

Flag Flying dates

Below is the Council's annual schedule for the raising of Union Flags, amongst others in accordance with published practice. The Council chooses to fly certain other flags on significant dates in the Calendar which are noted in italics.

Date	Occasion	Flag
9 January	Birthday of the Princess of Wales	Union Flag
20 January	Birthday of the Duchess of Edinburgh	Union Flag
<i>March</i>	<i>Commonwealth Day (Second Monday in March)</i>	<i>Union Flag Commonwealth Flag</i>
10 March	Birthday of the Duke of Edinburgh	Union Flag
9 April	His Majesty's Wedding Day	

WTC Flag Flying Policy 2023 v5

Wokingham Town Council Policy Document



23 April	St George's Day	Union Flag St George's Cross
May	Annual Council Meeting/Mayor's Sunday	Union Flag House Flag Ceremonial flags
May	May Fayre (1 st bank holiday Monday)	Union Flag House flag
5 May	Council of Europe Day	Europe Flag
6 May	Coronation of HM The King	Union Flag
June	Armed Forces Day (last Saturday of month)	Armed Forces Day Flag
17 June	Official Birthday of HM The King	
21 June	Birthday of The Prince of Wales	Union Flag
July	Designated day for Wokingham Pride (2 nd weekend)	Pride Flag
5 July	NHS and Key Workers Day	NHS and Key Workers Flag
17 July	Birthday of HM The Queen	Union Flag
15 August	Birthday of The Princess Royal	Union Flag
September	Heritage Open Day (2 nd or 3 rd Saturday)	Union Flag House Flag Ceremonial flags
8 September	Accession of HM The King	Union Flag
24 October	United Nations Day	United Nations flag
November	Remembrance Sunday and Armistice Day (11 November and 2 nd Sunday)	Union Flag House Flag Ceremonial flags
November	Winter Carnival (last Sunday)	Union Flag House flag
14 November	Birthday of HM The King	Union Flag

Note: NHS and Key Workers Day was established for 5 July 2021. It is not yet clear if this will be an annual date to raise a flag.

Flag Flying at Half-Mast

On significant occasions, flags may be flown at Half-mast. This is a position two thirds of the way up the flagpole, and when hoisted, it is appropriate to raise the flag to the top, pausing for a moment, before lowering it to a suitable position. If the Union Flag is at Half-mast all other flags should be at the same position or should not be flown at all.

Flags of other countries should not be flown unless that country is also in a period of mourning. The exception to the above is the Royal Standard, which should never fly at Half-mast, representing the continuous nature of the Monarchy.

Union Flag

Wokingham Town Council Policy Document



For any unplanned events/occasions (in addition to what is noted in 'Flag Flying dates' above) that require the Union flag to fly at Half-mast WTC should be guided by directions from Central Government, via WBC.

House Flag

The Town Council's House flag will be flown at half-mast on the death of any serving member of the Council, Past Mayor, member of staff or significant member of the community as directed and agreed by the Town Clerk. It may also be flown for any Town council events at its own discretion.

Publicity

The flying of certain flags, or occasions where flags are flown at half-mast, will always be accompanied by an appropriate press release and/or statement on the Council's website and social media channels. The Public noticeboards will also be used to share why flags are being displayed.

Reference

The Flag Institute

www.flaginstitute.org

Government website (Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport)

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/designated-days-for-union-flag-flying#designated-days-for-flying-the-union-flag-on-uk-government-buildings-2021>

Wokingham Borough Council Flag Flying Policy & room naming protocol document 23/7/20