



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

28th March 2023

Dear Councillor

You are hereby summoned to attend the Extraordinary meeting of the **Civic Committee** to be held in the **Council Chamber, Town Hall, Wokingham** at **6.30pm** on **Tuesday 4th April 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 MAYOR'S CHAIN AND BADGE OF OFFICE

To receive, consider and resolve the Civic Officer's report 9/2022-23 dated 28th March 2023.

Civic Committee: Cllrs Jane Ainslie, Rachel Bishop-Firth (Vice-Chair), Mariangela Ferrai, Dianne King, Tony Lack, David Lee (Chair), Tim Lloyd, Keith Malvern and Peter 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 9/2022-23

To: Civic Committee
Date: 28 March 2023
Subject: Mayoral Chain and Badge of Office (continued)

1 REASON FOR REPORT

- 1.1 For a further discussion about the mayoral chain and badge of Office, following the most recent Civic Meeting.
- 1.2 For decisions to be made about its ongoing use and the best way for this distinctive and valuable piece in our collection to be preserved for our future generations.

2 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 See previous Civic Officer's report 08/2022-23 dated 14th March 2023 which was discussed at the civic meeting held on 20 March 2023 (copy attached).
- 2.2 The attached report notes historical details about the chain and badge, together with challenges WTC has with its age, its weight when worn and associated repairs (particularly with the badge) etc.
- 2.3 The mayoral chain and badge is a significant item in WTC's historical collection and is worn with pride by our Mayors.
- 2.4 It is fitting that this piece is visible to others where possible, and it is clearly of interest to our residents when the Mayor is out and about. It also attracts a lot of attention on occasions such as school visits when students admire it.
- 2.5 Given that parts of it are 131 years old, it feels prudent for WTC to ensure that it places enough importance on how it is worn and used in the future, to protect it. Options to consider in the attached report include the following:
 - 2.5.1 To consider adding a velvet backing to it for protection
 - 2.5.2 To consider if the production and addition of new shields is still required today
 - 2.5.3 To consider if the Mayor should wear the mayoral chain and badge of office on the robe only for special occasions. On Mayoral engagements in between, the Mayor could wear the chain and badge currently worn by the Mayoress/Mayor's Consort. This in fact 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.
 - 2.5.4 To consider the purchase of a new Mayoral chain and badge of office (members at the last civic meeting made it clear that in the current financial climate, a decision on such a purchase would need to be carefully considered as this would incur a significant cost).

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3 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 The Civic Committee should discuss and agree its preference for the ongoing approach WTC should take with its mayoral chain and badge of office and its use, to help preserve it in the best way for future generations, by considering and resolving recommendations 9.1 as noted in the attached report. To note that a combination of these options could be adopted.
- 3.2 Members to note, that whatever course of action is chosen, the outstanding repairs will be made to the current badge of office.

Nikki Payler
Civic Officer



Wokingham Town Council

Civic Officer's Report 6/2022-23

To: Civic Committee
Date: 14 March 2023
Subject: Mayoral Chain and Badge of Office

1 REASON FOR REPORT

- 1.1 To share with the Committee important information about the current condition of the mayoral chain and badge of office.

2 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 This important item in the Council's historic collection of items is a very distinctive and valuable piece.
- 2.2 WTC is the custodian of this item, and it is responsible for its preservation for our future generations.
- 2.3 The oldest elements, including the badge, are 131 years old.
- 2.4 It was last valued in August 2022 for a total of £57,000 which has significantly increased since the last valuation of £37,000 in 2011. The valuer brought to our attention the importance that WTC should place on its preservation.
- 2.5 Originally the chain was designed with a single row of twenty-eight links of the larger shields. The second row containing twenty-nine smaller shields were added in 1923 so that extra names and dates could be accommodated.
- 2.6 Each shield is engraved with a name and year(s) of the Mayor that has served. The chain currently has names of Mayors from 1947 to 2019.
 - 2.6.1 New shields are made and added for most recently served Mayors and the oldest links are then removed and placed in a display case in the Mayor's Parlour.
 - 2.6.2 The display cases contain shields from 1885 to 1946-7 and were last valued in August 2022 at £18,600

Agenda item 4

3 CHALLENGES

- 3.1 The mayoral chain and badge of office are regularly worn by each Mayor and are in constant use; they can be worn approximately 150 times in a year. Some Councils decide to retire their chain of office due to their value and age and keep it on display.
- 3.2 The chain and badge together weigh a total of 1206g (227g badge and 979g chain) which is extremely heavy for our Mayors to wear. Our female Mayors find this particularly heavy and quite a strain on their shoulders.
- 3.3 The badge often catches on Mayor's clothing. Despite this being rectified several times, it seems to be a reoccurring issue for our Mayors.
- 3.4 The chain and badge are showing more and more signs of wear and more frequent repairs are needing to be made which come at a cost (see section 8 for a record of expenditure over recent years).
- 3.5 Each time the chain is sent away, the process of taking off shields and adding new ones is likely to be weakening the chain.
- 3.6 The chain and badge are currently maintained by a regalia specialist in Birmingham. This also poses an associated risk, due to its value, with each time it is being couriered. Therefore, it would be beneficial for it to be sent away less frequently.
- 3.7 The mayoral chain and badge can often be with the regalia specialist for a number of weeks whilst it is being repaired, e.g. our Mayor was without this for 6 weeks in October/November 2022 whilst the last repair was being carried out.
- 3.8 Unfortunately, the mayoral badge of office is currently in need of more repairs. There is a piece which has broken off completely and one side of the leaf section at the top has become unattached and is loose. The chain has already been sent away for repair once in the current Mayor's term of office and where possible, the Civic Officer avoids doing this more than once so that a Mayor is not without the chain and badge for any longer than necessary. However, this does need to be repaired as soon as possible to prevent further or more extensive damage occurring.
 - 3.8.1 The bespoke box the chain is stored in, is also in need of repair.
- 3.9 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 could in the long term become irreparable. The Civic Officer is keen to bring these issues to the Committee to give members a full awareness and to discuss some possible options to be considered going forward These are outlined in section 4 to 8 below:

4 OPTION A – CONTINUE TO REGULARLY USE, BUT NO LONGER REMOVE AND ADD ANY NEW SHIELDS

- 4.1 WTC may decide to keep the mayoral chain and badge of office in regular use but decide not to continue to remove and add any further shields.
- 4.2 Not removing and adding new shields should reduce the weakening that this process brings. However, even regular constant use of the chain and badge may impact its strength and durability.
- 4.3 The outstanding repairs would also still need to be made to the badge.

5 OPTION B – TO ADD A VELVET BACKING TO THE CHAIN

- 5.1 A bespoke velvet backing could be fixed onto the chain and badge which would support it (see attached image of WBC Mayor) and also protect the Mayor's clothing. However, the chain and badge could still deteriorate if in constant use.
- 5.2 All backings have to be hand stitched in place.
- 5.3 A quote has been received (from the company who currently undertake work on the mayoral chain and badge of office) to add a backing to the chain for £376.22 which can be supplied in

black, navy or maroon as standard. Additional colours are available at an extra cost. There would be an extra cost for the badge to be backed.

- 5.4 If WTC continued to remove and add new shields to the chain, the chain will need to be removed from the velvet backing every time. This process is labour intensive and would incur additional costs and eventually effect the velvet, as the supplier would be unpicking it and re stitching it. This would not be advisable.
- 5.5 If the chain is fitted to a backing, it would also need the following:
 - 5.5.1 A retaining chain. These run across the back of the neck and hold the backing in place, in lieu of the redundant shoulder pins. This could be supplied for silver gilt retaining chains for £153.34.
 - 5.5.2 A new block fitted case. The current box would no longer be fit for purpose and a new block fitted case will be required at an approx. cost of £292.17. The supplier has advised that backings require careful storage, so a case is more important than ever.

6 OPTION C – TO PURCHASE A NEW MAYORAL CHAIN AND BADGE

- 6.1 WTC may wish to consider retiring the existing chain and badge of office and keep it safe and secure it as a display item only.
- 6.2 If retired, some research might be required in due course to identify suitable ways in which to display it, which may involve additional costs.
- 6.3 WTC could commission a new mayoral chain and badge of office to be made to replace its current one.
- 6.4 Production of a replica could be costly and it has been indicated that this could cost more than £20,000, but many other options are available including a chain with a badge of office to include WTC's Coat of Arms.
- 6.5 If this option is supported, it is suggested that WTC should not plan to have names of each Mayors engraved onto the chain to avoid similar issues in the future. This would also mean no ongoing cost for this and future maintenance should be minimal.

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7 OPTION D – RE- CONSIDER HOW WTC’S REGALIA IS USED

7.1 WTC currently has the following pieces of regalia in use (see attached for images and additional information about each piece):

	Item	Value		Notes
A	Mayor’s badge	£25,000	Silver Gilt	Worn by Mayor Total value when worn together is £57,000
	Mayor’s chain	£32,000	Silver Gilt	
B	Mayoress/Consort badge	£25,000	18ct yellow and rose gold badge	Worn by Mayor’s Partner Total value when worn together is £57,000
	Mayoress/Consort chain	£32,000	18ct yellow and rose gold chain	
C	Deputy Mayor’s Badge & chain	£4,000	Sterling Silver	Worn by Deputy Mayor
D	Deputy Mayoress/Consort Badge & chain	£2,000	Silver Gilt	Worn by Deputy Mayor’s Partner
E	Mayor’s Consort chain and badge	£2,150	Silver Gilt	Historically used to be offered to Mayor’s Partner if male but today chain B is always worn, This chain is now worn by Mini-Mayor
F	Alternative Mayor’s badge of chain	£250	Silver Gilt	Worn by Mayor on some occasions where large chain not practical/safe, e.g. Toy Run

7.2 If WTC wishes to continue to use the mayoral chain and badge of office, it could reduce the times it is used and only use it when the robe is worn on key civic occasions only, e.g,
 Mayor’s Sunday
 May Fayre
 Remembrance Sunday parade and service
 Winter Carnival
 Heritage Sunday
 Civic Funerals
 Any special function connected with council business at which royalty is present or other occasions as authorised by the Civic Officer

7.2.1 If the chain and badge also had a backing stitched on, this should preserve the chain and badge even longer.

7.3 For other engagements that the Mayor attends throughout the year, when the Mayor does not wear the robe, WTC could take the following alternative approach:

7.3.1 Mayor wears chain and badge B, the chain currently worn by the Mayor’s partner. This would effectively mean that the Mayor has two different chains to wear on different occasions which both have significant historical value and meaning to the Council. Chain and badge B are actually slightly older than the Mayoral chain and

badge and were originally worn by the first Mayor Cllr Thomas Wescott. However, whilst this is a beautiful chain, it is somewhat understated and our Mayors may not feel this is in keeping with a traditional mayoral chain and badge of office.

Residents frequently admire the current substantial chain and badge.

- 7.3.2 The Mayor's partner could wear chain and badge E as it used to be worn, and WTC could purchase an inexpensive chain for our Mini-Mayor's to wear.
- 7.3.3 If this approach is taken, it would mean that both chains A and B would not be worn at the same time, which would be a reduced risk as both of these chains have a total value of £114,000.

8 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS AND OTHER COSTS

- 8.1 In the last 10 years, £7,820.26 has been spent amending and repairing the mayoral chain and badge. These costs are broken down as follows:
 - 2013/2014 – 2 new shields added at £500
 - 2015 – a large refurbishment was undertaken to complete repairs, fixing any broken or worn connection points, and it was refinished in a polished hard gold plate. Significant work was also undertaken on the badge including the production of a replacement centre panel. The cost was £5357.32
 - 2017/2018 – 3 new shields added at £642.50
 - 2020 – 3 new shields were added and small repairs at £993.79
 - 2022 – repair of broken part on chain at £326.65
- 8.2 The cost of the current repair required to the mayoral badge of office is unknown until it is inspected but this should be undertaken as soon as possible.
- 8.3 The current box repair is estimated to cost approximately £300.
- 8.4 The cost of adding the two outstanding shields for years 2020-2023 has been quoted £451.28 (£225.64 each).
- 8.5 The costs associated to adding a velvet backing to the chain and badge are estimated at a minimum of £821.73 to include the following:
 - £376.22 to stitch onto chain (extra cost for backing to badge)
 - £153.34 for a retaining chain
 - £292.17 for a new case
- 8.6 The cost to commission a supplier to design and produce a new mayoral chain and badge of office is currently unknown as this could vary greatly due to requirements, if required.
 - 8.6.1 The Civic Officer has made some initial enquiries about this, and one supplier has quoted approximate costs as follows (which relates to the 2nd image sample attached):
 - £6,986.00 chain and badge
 - £551.25 box
 - £293.49 velvet backing
 - 8.6.2 This is a significant cost and in the current financial climate, any decisions on such purchases need to be carefully considered.
- 8.7 If this option is supported, the Civic Officer would be required to obtain specific quotations in preparation for budget requests later in the year so that funds were available to purchase for 2024-2025.
 - 8.7.1 Alternatively, members could consider recommending to F&P that it reassigns the expenditure allocated to add UV on the windows for this purpose and makes a request for the next financial year to do the work on the windows.
 - 8.7.2 Or, members could make an in-year formal request to F&P for an additional amount of money for this purchase.

9 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 9.1 The Civic Committee should discuss and agree its preference for the ongoing approach WTC should take with its mayoral chain and badge of office and its use, including all of the options above. To note that a combination of these options could be adopted.
- 9.1.1 To resolve if it should continue to be regularly used, or if it should be retired and kept as a historic piece of interest.
- 9.1.2 To resolve if a velvet backing should be added, if the chain and badge are kept in use.
- 9.1.3 To resolve if WTC should continue with the process of removing and adding new shields to the chain of office, if kept in use. If a decision is made not to remove or add any further shields, members may like to consider if all the shields relating to the Mayors who have served up to this current time should be added first, e.g. this would be mean adding just two further shields for 2020-2022 and 2022-2023.
- 9.1.4 To resolve if WTC would like to consider taking an alternative approach with the Mayor having the use of two chains and the Mayor's Partner to wear the Mayor's Consort badge and chain. If this is adopted, the Civic Officer will be required to purchase a new chain and badge for our Mini-Mayors.
- 9.1.5 To resolve if WTC would like to commission for a new mayoral chain and badge of office to be designed and produced. If required, members to agree on the funding approach (see 8.7)
- 9.2 Members to note that whatever course of action is chosen, the outstanding repairs should still be made to the current badge of office.

Nikki Payler
Civic Officer



Further information about WTC's regalia

A Mayoral Chain and Badge of Office

These were designed by a local dignitary, T W Heelas, and manufactured by the Crown Jewellers, Garrard of 112 Regent Street, London in 1892. Money for the purchase of the items was raised by subscriptions by various inhabitants of the Town of Wokingham. The monies raised were in excess of those required for the purchase of the Badge and Chain and it was decided by Council that the excess monies be used for the purchase of a Red Woolen and Fur trimmed Mayoral Robe.



The three items were presented to the Borough Council of Wokingham at a Public Dinner held in the Town Hall on 27th May 1893.

The Mayoral Badge is of gilded sterling silver of fancy openwork lozenge shaped form; bearing foliate scroll decoration surmounted by a Crown motif; the border comprising green oak leaves and gilded acorns and applied beaded embellishment surrounding a central multi-colour enameled shield depicting the Royal Standards with top banner strip proclaiming "Incorporated" and with three additional blue enameled fancy shields proclaiming "1583", "1613". "1885".

These dated refer to the following events:-

"1583" Granting of Royal Charter by Queen Elizabeth I allowing the Town to hold certain Fayres.

"1613" Granting of Royal Charter by King James I allowing Town to form a Council and erect a Guildhall.

"1885" Granting of 'Year of Incorporate' by Queen Victoria and Installation of First Mayor of Wokingham.

On rear of Badge is a sealed shield shaped box, reputed to have been a container for aromatic herbs or snuff in the first instance. The Badge is also fitted with a fine gold safety chain to prevent the Badge being damaged when worn whilst Mayor is seated at table.

The Chain is of Gilded Sterling Silver and was designed in 1892 as a single row containing twenty eight links of the larger Shields, the second inner row containing twenty-nine smaller shields were added in 1923 so that extra names and dates could be accommodated.

The Chain is therefore comprised of fifty-seven fancy openwork quatrefoil medallions each with applied central shield inscribed with Mayor's name and period of office: all interspaced with rose and reeded spacer links and incorporating a central larger fancy openwork quatrefoil medallion with applied circular disc proclaiming "Wokingham" in blue enamel above, an applied acorn and oak leaf motif, and with a gold-down clip device mounted on the reverse.

B Mayoress/Consort Chain and Badge of Office

The Badge

A Victorian two coloured, rose and yellow, gold ceremonial badge of fancy shield shaped form; the flanged border with applied acorn and oak leaf decoration surrounding a centrally mounted enamelled portrait miniature of Queen Victoria enclosed within a blue enamelled garter ribbon surround below an enamelled crown and mounted with enamelled crossed mace and axe decoration and all surmounted by a fancy turreted crown; the front is inscribed "Borough of Wokingham A.D.1887. Her Majesty Queen Victoria. Jubilee Year" and on the reverse "Alderman Thos. M Wescott. Mayor of Wokingham 1885-6. 1886-7"

Stamped - 18ct. Makers Mark 'T & J.B'

Weight: - 74.2 grams

It is reputed that the badge was purchased privately in honour of Queen Victoria's Golden Jubilee 1887 and worn during that year by the first Mayor of Wokingham, Alderman Thomas Manley Wescott. No official Mayoral Badge having been procured at that time.



The Chain

An 18 carat two coloured, rose and yellow, gold ceremonial chain comprising of nineteen shaped oblong textured panels arranged at equidistant intervals separated by two rows of double openwork spacer links each surmounted by a turreted crown and with applied blue enamelled shield depicting a monogram, with added modern safety chain.

Hallmark: - Birmingham 1936

Maker's Mark: - T & J.B

Weight: - 135 grams

It will be noted that the Hallmark dates of the Badge and Chain differ immensely 1886 and 1936. However, they were presented together to the Borough of Wokingham Council in 1937 by Councillor Miss Dorothy Westcott, daughter of the first Mayor of Wokingham.

The box reads "This Chain and Medallion was presented to the Borough of Wokingham by Councillor Miss D Wescott, March 4th 1937. The medallion was worn during the Jubilee year 1887 by her father who was first Mayor of this Borough."

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C Deputy Mayor's Badge & chain

This sterling silver badge, worn on a silver chain, has a pierced border with a design of a Tudor rose, thistle and clover and a crossed ceremonial mace and sword.

The centre is a red enamel boss with a gilt acorn and the title 'Deputy Mayor'. The badge was presented to the Council in 1950 by Alderman David Goddard, Mayor 1945-46.



D Deputy Mayoress/Consort Badge & chain



Made of quatrefoil gilt plate this badge is worn on a gilt chain. The Armorial Badge of Wokingham Town shows the red Tudor rose in a white chevron surrounded by acorns.

This Badge was purchased by Wokingham Town Council in 1989 as a badge of recognition.

E Mayor's Consort chain and badge

This is of highly polished white metal of circular form which surrounds a central circular disc with applied gilt acorn and oak leaf motif. The remote outer border proclaims "Wokingham Town Mayoral Centenary 1885-1985", whilst on the reverse face is inscribed "Presented by Councillors K & L P Cattran, Mayor and Mayoress 1985-1986"; Originally suspended via a white metal title bar, and a green neck ribbon the badge is now displayed on a white metal chain.

Diameter - 50mm

Weight Gross - 85 grams



The badge used to be worn when the Mayor's Consort was male, in preference to the Mayoress's Chain and Badge, if so wished. However, it is now offered to the Mini-Mayor to wear.

F Alternative Mayor's badge on green neck ribbon



This was purchased a number of years ago for the Mayor to wear on some occasions where it is not practical or safe for the large chain to be worn, e.g. the Toy Run.

WOKINGHAM TOWN COUNCIL



C77 Chain of Office
Link size - 36 x 31mm



90mm

Artwork Approval

Signed.....



QUOTE
T245

Design by : Dave Harper
Revised : 01.03.23

WOKINGHAM TOWN COUNCIL



C77 Chain of Office
Link size - 36 x 31mm

No.9 Backplate
77mm x 87mm
49mm Ø Centre

Artwork Approval

Signed.....

[Redacted signature area]

QUOTE

T245/B

Design by : Dave Harper
Revised : 08.03.23

QUOTE T245 B

WOKINGHAM TOWN COUNCIL MAYORS CHAIN OF OFFICE

DATE: 09th March 2023

Dear Nikki

As promised, I am pleased to attach the colour design suggestion which illustrates how the final appearance of your new Mayoral Chain of Office could look, and I can confirm the proposal for our craftsmen to hand-make this for you.

Mayors Chain of Office

As per the colour design attached, this would be hand-made by our craftsmen at our Birmingham Works in either Hallmarked solid Sterling Silver with a special polished hard Gold-plate or alternatively in non-precious base metal with a polished gilt finish, comprising of a hand-made pendant, stamped out to a special shape, size approximately 77x87mm, the highest quality hand-painted enamelled detailing to the pendant, attached to our C77 Chain links comprising of 25 hand-made chain links, size approximately 36x31mm.

	DESCRIPTION	QUANTITY	UNIT COST
Hand-made Mayors Chain of Office in Hallmarked solid sterling silver with a polished parcel gilt finish	As described above	1 off	£6,986.00 nett
Hand-made Mayors Chain of Office in non-precious base metal with a polished parcel gilt finish.	As described above	1 off	£5,247.00 nett
Hand-made block fitted wooden presentation case	To securely house the Chain of Office	1 off	£551.25 nett
Velvet collar backing to attach chain to should you wish	As described left	1 off	£293.49 nett

Postage packing and VAT would be additional, and production times would normally be about 10-12 weeks from receipt of your order confirmation and approval of artwork, suitable for production.

I trust this is helpful and look forward to hearing from you.

Best regards

