

# The Functions of the Mayor of Taunton

Throughout the year the Mayor is required to perform two basic functions:-

## **(1) Chair of Meetings of the Charter Trustees**

The Mayor is the Chair of meetings of the Charter Trustees which comprises all 16 Councillors who have been elected to represent Wards in the Unparished Area of Taunton. This is primarily a function of control and chairmanship at these meetings.

## **(2) Taunton Ambassador**

This is a non-political role. The various engagements and events range from civic receptions to carol services. The Mayor is likely to undertake between 200 - 300 engagements each year, including:-

- **Charity and Voluntary Events**

The Mayor supports local charitable and voluntary organisations within the Unparished Area and is frequently asked to open an event or attend an anniversary. As the President or Patron of a number of societies and other voluntary bodies, the Mayor is invited to attend several Annual General Meetings or the annual concert arranged by the Taunton Deane Male Voice Choir which is in aid of the Mayor's Charities.

- **Civic Receptions**

On occasion, hospitality is likely to be given by the Council and the Mayor hosts these events. The Mayor would normally make a speech of welcome on behalf of the Council and the Citizens of Taunton. This is followed by a response by the leading guest.

- **Flag Raising Ceremonies and Tributes**

The Mayor attends the various flag raising ceremonies throughout the year. These include Armed Forces Day, Emergency Services (999) Day, Merchant Navy Day and Commonwealth Day. Tributes in the form of two minute silences have been held in the past as a mark of respect for those who have lost their lives following an act of terrorism or a natural disaster.

- **Civic Visits to and from Taunton's Twin Towns**

All the arrangements are made by the Mayor's Officer. This involves a complete programme for the visitors which is compiled in conjunction with

the twinning associations and includes a welcoming reception and visits to centres of interest in the locality.

- **Church Services and Carols**

The Mayor invites the Members of the Council, Freeman, Past Mayors and Taunton's Member of Parliament, to join in religious services on different occasions throughout the year. The largest and most important of these are annual services held in St Mary Magdalene Church, namely the Civic Service and the Remembrance Service in November. Just before Christmas, the Mayor hosts a Carol Concert at the church and is usually asked to read one of the lessons. The Mayor also attends a large number of Carol Services held at various locations within the Unparished Area.

- **Festival Launches**

The Mayor is often invited to attend large events staged in Taunton such as 'Taunton Live' and 'EAT Taunton'.

- **Sporting Events**

The Mayor is invited annually to launch sporting events such as the Taunton Marathon, the Soroptimist's Swimathon and the Rotary Club's 50/50 Cycle Ride or to present the prizes. The Mayor is occasionally invited to attend matches in support of local Football, Rugby and Cricket Clubs.

- **Schools**

The Mayor is often invited to visit schools and sometimes wears the full Mayoral robes and Chain of Office, so that the children can learn something of Taunton's Mayoralty. The Mayor also formally welcomes exchange students from Taunton, Massachusetts and Kitwe, Zambia who have strong affiliations with local schools.

## **Important Notes**

- (i) Any Charter Trustee who wishes to be nominated as the Mayor must have served at least three years as a former Taunton Deane Borough Councillor or as a Somerset West and Taunton Councillor to be nominated as Mayor and two years as a former Taunton Deane Borough Councillor or as a Somerset West and Taunton Councillor to be nominated as Deputy Mayor.
- (ii) An allowance of £2,930 for the Mayor and £1,570 for the Deputy Mayor has been agreed for 2019/2020. The level of the allowances will be

subject to review by the Joint Independent Remuneration Panel following the first year of operating this new arrangement;

- (iii) The Mayor will be expected to drive himself/herself (or arrange alternative modes of transport) to engagements within the Taunton Unparished Area. A mileage allowance of 45p per mile (Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs non-taxable allowance) will be paid on submission by the Mayor of a monthly claim for re-imbusement.
- (iv) It is traditional for the Mayor to nominate at least one Charity for their one year Term of Office. Any donations or proceeds from events such as the Taunton Deane Male Voice Choir or the Civic Carol Concert will be held for distribution to the Charity or Charities nominated by the Mayor at the end of the Mayoral Year.
- (v) At the meeting of the Charter Trustees on 7<sup>th</sup> August 2019 a Civic Protocol was ratified, and Councillors also supported the presumption that the person taking up the Mayor of Taunton role was presumed to serve in the role for two consecutive years, if so wished by that person, though still being selected on an Annual basis. They also supported the tradition as undertaken under the former Taunton Deane Borough Council Mayoralty that there was an expectation of the Deputy Mayor taking on the role of Mayor of Taunton upon completion of their term of service as Deputy, if so wished by that person.