

Appendix 2 – review of Mayor Making Policy

Author: Louise Harrison, 24 March 2021

1. Current policy (last updated 3 February 2014)

1.1 The Mayor is the first citizen of the Town and speaks as such on behalf of the area and its community. The Mayor normally holds office for one year and is assisted by a deputy. The Mayor has many roles and duties based on custom and practice and local government law including

- Council – impartially chairing meetings of Full Council
- Civic – attendance at civic events as the Civic head and official welcome to visitors to the City. Also as first citizen, the Mayor visits twinned towns and receives official visitors from them
- Promotional/ambassadorial – maintaining strong links with the military services, local judiciary, business and commercial sectors. Also attending events organised by local and regional societies and local community groups
- Charitable - organisation of the Mayor's charitable appeal

1.2 Rules of Succession

A Deputy Mayor Designate shall be elected each year at the February meeting of Full Council.

The Deputy Mayor Designate will usually succeed to the office of Deputy Mayor when it becomes vacant.

The Deputy Mayor will usually succeed to the office of Mayor when it becomes vacant.

1.3 Procedure for elections and balloting

The Mayor and Deputy Mayor for the new municipal year shall be elected at the annual meeting of Full Council by formal resolution, usually in accordance with the rules of succession.

The procedure for election of Deputy Mayor Designate, and for election of Mayor and Deputy Mayor if it is not possible to fill these offices in accordance with the rules of succession, is set out below.

Nomination papers for the position shall be issued to Councillors two weeks prior to the Full Council meeting at which the election is to be held. For a nomination to be valid, the nomination paper must be completed in full and received at the Council Offices not less than one full working day before the meeting.

1.4 At the meeting of Full Council:

If only one valid nomination has been received, the Town Clerk shall declare the sole candidate duly elected.

If two valid nominations have been received, Councillors shall vote by secret ballot, and the Town Clerk shall declare the candidate receiving the most votes duly elected. In the event of a tie the chairman shall exercise a casting vote.

If there are more than two valid nominations, successive rounds of voting by secret ballot will be held. If a candidate receives more than half the votes in a given round, the Town Clerk shall declare the candidate duly elected; if this is not the case, the candidate with least votes shall be eliminated and a further round of voting held. In the event of a tie the chairman shall exercise a casting vote.

1.5 Vacancies arising during the Municipal Year

If the office of Mayor becomes vacant during the municipal year, an extraordinary meeting of the Town Council shall be called for the purpose of electing a new Mayor for the remainder of the municipal year.

If the office of Deputy Mayor becomes vacant during the municipal year an election to fill the position shall be held at the next ordinary meeting of the Town Council, or at an extraordinary meeting called for the purpose if there is no ordinary meeting scheduled before the annual meeting.

2. Proposed policy (if accepted to be formally adopted by means of a resolution at Full Council):

2.1 The Mayoral position ((see appendix 1) will commence at the Annual Meeting (held in May of each year) from the time of election to the position of Mayor.

2.2 Statutory procedures in accordance with the Local Government Act will prevail at all times and the position of Mayor is subject to the signing and delivering of the acceptance of office.

2.3 The Mayor will hold office until the next annual meeting of the Council when his/her successor is elected.

2.4 Any nominations to the position of Mayor must be submitted to the Town Clerk for consideration at the Full Council meeting in March of each year, in advance of the Annual Meeting in May.

2.5 Nominations must be made on a form to be supplied by the Town Clerk. This form must be submitted to the Town Clerk at least 1 week prior to the March Full Council meeting as referenced in (4) above. Late nominations will not be accepted and no nomination can be considered unless made in accordance with the requirements set above.

2.6 No person can be considered for the Office of Mayor unless properly nominated.

2.7 The qualifying period to hold the position of Mayor is 1 year, ie a Councillor must have been a Councillor for a minimum of 1 year before becoming Mayor.

2.8 All eligible nominations will be taken forward to the March Full Council meeting for review and information.

2.9 The Mayor will not be elected at the March Full Council meeting; it is a statutory requirement that the election of Mayor (Chair) is the first item of business at the Annual Meeting to be held in May (LGA 1972, s15(2)).

2.10 At the March Full Council meeting, Council may however choose a “preferred Mayor” but this cannot be binding on the Council; the Mayor must be elected at the Annual Meeting (as noted in 9 above).

2.11 Election of the Mayor at the Annual Meeting will be the first item of business.

2.12 Election of the Mayor will be by a show of hands and the successful candidate will be the properly nominated Member with the majority of votes.

2.13 In an election year and in the event of there being no qualifying Councillors (as defined in (7) above), the Council will nominate and elect any Councillor amongst their number at the Annual Meeting. The Mayor will be elected by a simple majority vote.

2.14 No Councillor can be nominated or elected to the position of Mayor if they have already served 2 terms as Mayor or are currently serving their second term.

2.15 In the event of the preferred nominated Mayor being unable to fulfil the role of Mayor at the Annual Meeting (perhaps due to illness or unforeseen circumstances), an Extraordinary Full Council will be held prior to the Annual Meeting to receive new nominations.

2.16 Nominations to and election of Deputy Mayor will follow the same procedure as above for the Mayor (but for the avoidance of doubt paragraph 14 does not apply to the office of Deputy Mayor).

2.17 The position of Deputy Mayor is to support the role of the Mayor, deputising for civic events and ceremonies in his/her absence.

2.18 The role of Deputy Mayor is not a “rising right of office” but it is recognised that there is significant benefit in the Deputy Mayor subsequently being elected to the position of Mayor.

2.19 A “Mayor Making” Ceremony will follow the Annual Meeting date and this will ordinarily be towards the end of May and within 2-3 weeks of the Annual Meeting. The “Mayor Making” Ceremony will be ceremonial only as the Mayor will already have been elected to and accepted the office of Mayor at the Annual Meeting. This will be a civic, ceremonial opportunity for the Mayor and Deputy Mayor to share with invited guests and the public. It will be a public, open ceremony and may be followed by a church (or similar) service; this will be at the discretion and request of the elected Mayor.

3. 2021- 2022 term of office

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the Town Clerk recommends both the current Mayor and Deputy Mayor continue and in effect serve two consecutive terms from May 2019 to May 2021.

Appendix 1 – The Town Mayor

The position of Town Mayor in Ferndown has existed since 1979 and is highly recognised and regarded both throughout Ferndown and within the wider district.

Its purpose has been primarily of a ceremonial role but it is equally a position regarded as being the most senior member of the Council; notwithstanding compliance with the LGA 1972.s101 noting that no powers may be delegated to a single individual Councillor.

Being the Mayor is different to being a Councillor. A Mayor, by virtue of the Office, can stimulate community pride, encourage business, promote the voluntary sector etc and represent the Council at civic events. The Mayor is the public face of the Council and with this in mind the Mayor needs to portray a genuine interest in those she or he meets, show enthusiasm and commitment to the role and always be mindful of the dignity of the office.

As the First Citizen, the Mayor acts as a focal point, particularly in times of crisis, celebration or tragedy. Only HM The Queen, members of the Royal Family and the Lord Lieutenant take precedence over the Mayor at events in the Town.

It is necessary for the Mayor and Deputy Mayor to adopt a non-political and impartial stance during their term of office and should seek to avoid taking a view in any local controversy if that would have the effect of impairing the ability to discharge the duties in an impartial and objective manner.