

Is the final decision on the recommendations in this report to be made at this meeting?

No

Mayoralty and Civic Ceremony Review

Final Decision-Maker	DEMOCRACY COMMITTEE
Lead Head of Service	Paul Riley, Head of Finance and Resources
Lead Officer and Report Author	Paul Riley, Head of Finance and Resources Poppy Collier, Democratic Services Officer
Classification	Public
Wards affected	None

This report makes the following recommendations to this Committee:

1. That the findings of the Mayoralty and Civic Ceremony Working Group be noted.
2. That the Democracy Committee recommend to Council that the amendments to the Protocol to guide Councillors when electing the Mayor/appointing the Deputy Mayor and order of seniority of Councillors at Appendix I to this report (as tracked changes on document and summarised at paragraph 7 of this report), be agreed.
3. That the amendments to the protocol on Maidstone Mayoral Services at Appendix II (as tracked changes on document and summarised at paragraph 6 of this report) be agreed.
4. That the Democracy Committee support, produce a case for and recommend to Policy & Resources Committee that an additional £2000 be added to the current budget for the Mayor Making civic event, in order to develop the day into a larger event involving all communities in Maidstone.

This report relates to the following corporate priorities:

- Securing a successful economy for Maidstone Borough
- Keeping the Borough an attractive place for all

Through promoting Maidstone, the Mayor plays an important part in maintaining the successful economy of the Borough. The Mayor, through fundraising for his/her local charities, contributes to the good health and wellbeing of the Borough.

Timetable	
<i>Meeting</i>	<i>Date</i>
Democracy Committee	28 January 2016
Policy and Resources	17 February 2016
Council	2 March 2016

Mayoralty and Civic Ceremony Review

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report presents the findings and recommendations of the Mayoralty and Civic Ceremony Working Group, reflecting work undertaken during the period September 2015 – January 2016.
 - 1.2 There are no statutory requirements that govern the selection of Mayor or Deputy Mayor for nomination. As such this process varies between local authorities.
 - 1.3 The Group agreed its remit as the review of the following:
 - The Mayoral budget;
 - The selection process for the election and appointment of Mayor and Deputy Mayor;
 - Expectations of the Mayoralty and in-role support/development; and
 - The ceremonial requirements of the Mayor making event.
 - 1.4 Proposed amendments to protocols have been marked on the documents as tracked changes, and summarised within the report for clarity.
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2. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 2.1 On 13 August 2015 the Democracy Committee received a report outlining options for changes to the selection process for the election of Mayor and appointment of Deputy Mayor, at Members' request.
- 2.2 As the selection process for the Mayor or Deputy Mayor was not enshrined in statute, the report included a comparison between the selection processes at neighbouring and national local authorities (attached at **appendix VI**).
- 2.3 At that meeting Members were in agreement that a wider review should take place. This was due in part to dissatisfaction with the current system, and also the length of time that had elapsed since the last review. A Mayoralty working group had met between 2005 and 2007 to consider the role of the Mayor and the selection process, and the process was changed during the municipal year 2006/07. Members felt it would be appropriate to take a contemporary look at these issues, and a Mayoralty and Civic Ceremony Working Group was established.
- 2.4 Aside from examining relevant documentation and requesting further research, the Working Group gathered evidence by interviewing the following witnesses:

Political Party Group Leaders:

Councillor Annabelle Blackmore, Conservative Party Group Leader

Councillor Fay Gooch, Spokesperson for the Independent Group
Councillor Malcolm McKay, Labour Party Group Leader
Councillor Dave Sargeant, UKIP Party Group Leader

Former Mayors of Maidstone:

Mr Mike Fitzgerald, Mayor of Maidstone 2005 -2006
Councillor Joy, Mayor of Maidstone 2008 -2009
Councillor English, Mayor of Maidstone 2013 - 2014

Officers of Maidstone Borough Council:

Laura Dickson, Marketing and Sales Manager, Maidstone Culture and Leisure (MCL)
Paul Riley, Head of Finance and Resources
Dena Smart, Head of Human Resources (HR) Shared Service
Julie Webb, Personal Assistant to the Mayor

- 2.5 Special thanks are given by the Working Group to all the witnesses who took part in the review.

3. SELECTION PROCESS

- 3.1 The current process for the selection of Mayor and Deputy Mayor (**Appendix I**) came into effect during the municipal year 2006/07, which implemented selection by order of seniority. This system lists Councillors by the date at which they became Members of the Council, and prioritises those who have served for the longest time. The longest serving – or most senior - Councillor is asked whether they would like to become the Deputy Mayor. If they refuse, the next most senior Councillor is asked, and if he/she refuses this continues until a Councillor is found who is prepared to stand.
- 3.2 At Maidstone Borough a Councillor serves as the Deputy Mayor for a year, and then is nominated to be Mayor the following year. An additional criteria applied to selection is that a Member cannot have previously served as Mayor, and therefore Members can only serve as Mayor once.
- 3.3 Prior to 2006/07 each political Group took its turn in appointing its nomination for Mayor. This was based on a four yearly cycle between four political groups.
- 3.4 Larger political groups, such as the majority party or opposition party, would have more members than smaller political groups. However under this system they each had the same number of opportunities to nominate a Councillor. In practice this meant that Members of the larger party groups would have less opportunity to become Mayor than Members of the smaller groups. This also led to the possibility that newly elected or inexperienced Members of smaller groups could become Mayor, over longer serving or more experienced Members of larger groups.
- 3.5 Members have expressed concern regarding less experienced Members becoming Mayor. This is because one of the main duties of the Mayor is to

chair Council. Because of the procedural complexity of Council informal feedback from Members has indicated that it is considered beneficial for the Mayor to have had previous experience of chairing a committee.

3.6 The Working Group considered several alternatives to the current method of selection, including advertising and seeking applications in order to appoint according to a person description for the role. However it was felt that any form of selection could introduce political considerations into a role which should be apolitical.

3.7 Members discussed the need for the process to be clear and straightforward, so that it could be used at short notice in the instance in which a Deputy Mayor loses his/her seat at election. Under these circumstances a new appointment would have to be made in the short time between the election and the Annual Meeting.

3.8 Summary comparing current selection process and past process

Selection by seniority (post 2006)	Selection via yearly circulation between Groups (pre 2006)
<p>Pros:</p> <p>Prioritises experience</p> <p>Non-partisan selection process</p>	<p>Pros:</p> <p>Allows group to put forward most suitable nominee</p> <p>Non-partisan selection process</p>
<p>Cons:</p> <p>Due to bar on having previously held the office of Mayor, less experienced Members can become Mayor</p>	<p>Cons:</p> <p>Due to difference between party sizes and equal circulation between groups, less experienced Members can become Mayor</p>

3.9 Summary on conclusions regarding the selection process

The Working Group has recommended that the order of seniority method of selection be retained but with the following amendments:

- That a Member becomes eligible for nomination once they have served as a Councillor for at least six years.
- That a Member may serve as Mayor more than once in exceptional circumstances, these being that there are no other eligible Councillors, or that no other eligible Councillors are prepared to stand for nomination. Where there is more than one Member who meets this criteria, priority will be given to the Councillor who has served as Mayor the least number of times previously in the first instance. Should this not resolve the situation lots will be drawn.

- The time at which a newly elected Councillor signs their declaration of office be recorded for the purposes of deciding a tie break between Councillors of equal seniority; and
- The method of drawing lots be used to decide between two Councillors of equal seniority until such time as all Councillors have signed a declaration of office and have a time recorded for this.

3.10 The proposed amendments have been made to the protocol to guide Councillors when electing the Mayor/appointing the Deputy Mayor and order of seniority of Councillors at appendix I, marked with tracked changes and summarised at paragraph 6 of this report.

3.11 The Working Group recommend this course of action as it retains the positive qualities of the order of seniority process, but also ensures that the nominee for Mayor has a reasonable amount of experience as a Councillor. Allowing Councillors to serve as Mayor more than once in the exceptional circumstances builds resilience into the process.

4. EXPECTATIONS OF THE ROLE OF THE MAYORALTY

4.1 The protocol on Maidstone Mayoral Services (**Appendix II**) is provided to the Deputy Mayor on appointment, and provides a comprehensive guide to the history, role and responsibilities of the Mayor and Deputy Mayor. The Group therefore decided to update and make proposed amendments to this document. The full list of proposed amendments is listed at paragraph 7.

4.2 Members found the Local Government Association's publication 'Joining the chain gang: preparing for the role of civic Mayor' (**Appendix IV**) useful, as it features tools to help prepare for and shape a Councillor's Mayoral year. Considered particularly relevant was page 8, 'Role profile – the key skills of a Mayor', and page 17 'deciding on your personal mayoral theme'. The combination of both was felt to assist in maintaining a basic standard without restricting individuality.

4.3 In addition to these the Working Group formulated a list of qualities for a Mayor to be inserted into the protocol on Maidstone Mayoral Services:

- Etiquette – knowing what kind of behaviour is required in a given situation, including knowledge of protocols
- Deportment –conducting oneself with good manners
- Chairing – having knowledge of the rules of debate and the confidence to use them, and listening to and acting on Officer's advice
- Speaking – having the ability to address a group of people, and prepare a speech for an event
- Time Commitment – having the ability to grasp the opportunities available throughout the year in the role

4.4 Members explored the issue from a human resources perspective, and identified an issue wherein a person is appointed to a role for a temporary time. In these circumstances there is a loss of accrued knowledge and skills

each time the post holder vacates. A potential solution was to extend the duration of the Mayor's post from one year to two years. However the consensus of the Working Group was that the Mayoral year was an enjoyable but extraordinarily busy time, and a period of more than one year could become too overwhelming for one person.

4.5 During the course of the review it was agreed that all Councillors bring individual skills to the role. Likewise, Councillors may appreciate assistance to address areas for personal development relevant to the role, such as voice projection or speech writing. Members were in agreement that those who were willing to take on the role of Mayor should be prepared to commit to a package of self-development.

4.6 Summary of Conclusions regarding expectations of the Mayoralty

The Working Group has recommended the following:

- That the LGA publication 'Joining the chain gang: preparing for the role of civic Mayor' should be provided to the deputy Mayor Elect on Appointment, alongside the amended protocol on Maidstone Mayoral Services
- That individually tailored coaching, mentoring and training should be offered to the Deputy Mayor Elect by the Democratic Services Team.

The proposed amendments have been made to the protocol on Maidstone Mayoral Services at appendix II and listed at paragraph 7 of this report.

5. MAYORALTY BUDGET, CIVIC CEREMONIES AND MAYOR MAKING

5.1 The Working Group noted the current running cost of the Mayoralty and Civic events was £37,000 excluding staffing costs, or £117,000 including staffing. Additional funding would need to be found from current resources such as utilising an underspend, or taking a report to Policy and Resources Committee or Council which made a case for the additional funding.

5.2 As part of the review Members considered a survey undertaken in August 2011 which summarised information regarding the civic and Mayoral events held at other local authorities (**Appendix III**). Members heard that the Mayoralty itself was not a driver for tourism, although individual Mayors who were prominent figures in their own right could be. A survey conducted in 2011 asked members of the public which non-statutory services were considered desirable. Of these, the Town Hall and civic ceremonies received 1% of the vote (**Appendix V**).

5.3 Members were in consensus that the Mayor making civic ceremony should be made into a larger, more stage managed event, involving all sections of the community. It was therefore agreed that a recommendation would be made to request an additional £2000 be added to the budget for the Mayor making civic event.

- 5.4 The Working Group felt that customary practices such as the use of a carriage (held at the Maidstone Carriage Museum) on Mayor making day should be retained. These should be subject to practical considerations such as the ease with which the carriage could be removed from the Carriage Museum, the risk of damage to the carriage caused by poor weather, and the availability of suitably trained horses.

6. SUMMARY OF CHANGES TO THE PROTOCOL TO GUIDE COUNCILLORS WHEN ELECTING THE MAYOR/APPOINTING THE DEPUTY MAYOR AND ORDER OF SENIORITY OF COUNCILLORS

Paragraph	Proposed Amendment
3	A Councillor shall be considered eligible for nomination when he/she is the most Senior Councillor at the Council (as set out in the order of seniority by length of service of Councillors) who wishes to take up that office, has served for a minimum of six years and who has under normal circumstances not previously held that office. On becoming eligible he/she should be appointed to the position of Deputy Mayor (or Mayor and Deputy if there are exceptional circumstances).
4	A Councillor can serve as Mayor more than once in exceptional circumstances, these being that there are no other Councillors who meet the eligibility criteria, or no other eligible Councillors who are prepared to stand. Where there is more than one Councillor who is eligible under these exceptional circumstances, priority will be given to the Councillor who has held the post of Mayor the least number of times. Where there continues to be more than one eligible Councillor, lots will be drawn.

7. SUMMARY OF CHANGES TO THE PROTOCOL ON MAIDSTONE MAYORAL SERVICES

Paragraph	Proposed Amendment
1.3	The current process is that the longest serving Councillor who has served for at least 6 years can be nominated to be Mayor. A Councillor can become Mayor more than once in the exceptional circumstances that there are no other Councillors who meet the 6 year eligibility criteria, or there are no other eligible Councillors who are prepared to stand. The members of Council then vote for his/her election.
1.7	In addition to this protocol, the Deputy Mayor Elect will be issued with a copy of the Local Government

	Association's Councillor workbook entitled 'Joining the chain gang: preparing for the role of civic mayor'. In this workbook you will find helpful tools for preparing for the role, planning your time, and designing your year in office in order to make an individual contribution to the community alongside supporting the council's wider work.										
1.9	Each Mayor brings their own skills to the role. In addition, each Mayor will have areas in which they would like to broaden their knowledge, skills or experience. As the Deputy Mayor Elect, the Democratic Services team can put you in touch with a professional coach to provide you with individually tailored learning and development. Democratic Services can also help you to secure mentoring from a former Mayor, for specific guidance relating to your role as the civic head of a Council.										
2.1	<p>The Mayor is expected to demonstrate the following qualities:</p> <p>Etiquette – knowing what kind of behaviour is required in a given situation, including knowledge of protocols</p> <p>Department – conducting oneself with good manners</p> <p>Chairing – having knowledge of the rules of debate and the confidence to use them, and listening to and acting on Officer's advice</p> <p>Speaking – having the ability to address a group of people, and prepare a speech for an event</p> <p>Time Commitment – having the ability to grasp the opportunities available throughout the year in the role</p>										
2.4	The Mayor chairs the Council meetings and is able to vote, including where appropriate a casting vote. The Democratic Services team will provide you with training in the rules of debate and interpreting the constitution.										
3.1 (b)	delete: and the place at which Members who are of the Executive are able to hold the Executive to account.										
4.1	<p>The core civic events are:</p> <table style="margin-left: auto; margin-right: auto;"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th style="text-align: right;">Date</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Mayor Making and Civic Parade and Service</td> <td style="text-align: right;">21 May 2016</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Court of Survey Cruise</td> <td style="text-align: right;">2 July 2016</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Mayor's Garden Party</td> <td style="text-align: right;">27 July 2016</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Remembrance Sunday</td> <td style="text-align: right;">13 November 2016</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		Date	Mayor Making and Civic Parade and Service	21 May 2016	Court of Survey Cruise	2 July 2016	Mayor's Garden Party	27 July 2016	Remembrance Sunday	13 November 2016
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	The Mayor may only have capacity to undertake these events. In this instance, the Mayor could choose to delegate additional events to the Deputy Mayor.
11.2	During the Mayor Making civic event it is customary for the Mayor to make use of a carriage exhibited at Maidstone Carriage Museum. This however will be dependent upon the ease with which the carriage can be removed from the Museum, the availability of horses to draw the carriage, and the risk of damage being caused to the carriage by poor weather.
Appendix 2	-Added dates for 2016 -Removed Maidstone Scouts St Georges Day Parade -Added A Day Out in Staplehurst (Hush Heath winery and garden centre)
Appendix 3	-Inserted information regarding the Court of Survey Cruise

8. AVAILABLE OPTIONS

- 8.1 Members could consider the findings and recommendations of the Working Group.
- 8.2 Members could decide not to consider any of the recommendations of the working group. This is not recommended as the review of the Mayoralty has been requested by Members to address concerns and add value to the process and role.

9 PREFERRED OPTION AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

9.1 Democracy Committee are recommended to:

- Agree the changes to the Protocol on Maidstone Mayoral Services;
- Refer the amended Protocol to guide Councillors when electing the Mayor/appointing the Deputy Mayor and order of seniority to Council; and
- Refer the question for an additional £2000 to be added to the budget for the Mayor making civic event to Policy and Resources Committee.

9.2 This is the preferred option as the recommendations have been formulated using evidence gathered from a wide range of witnesses, including a number of former Mayors, and addresses concerns raised by current Councillors.

10 NEXT STEPS: COMMUNICATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECISION

- 10.1 If Democracy Committee agree the recommendations then a reference will be made to Council for consideration of the amended Protocol to guide Councillors when electing the Mayor/appointing the Deputy Mayor and order of seniority, and to request an additional £2000 be added to the current budget for the Mayor Making civic event.
- 10.2 The Protocol on Maidstone Mayoral Services will be updated to reflect the amendments and provided to the incoming Deputy Mayor Elect, alongside a copy of the Local Government Association handbook on the Mayoralty.
- 10.3 The Democratic Services Officer responsible for Member development has already researched and developed options for individually tailored coaching and mentoring, and these will be offered to the incoming Deputy Mayor Elect.

11 CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES AND IMPLICATIONS

Issue	Implications	Sign-off
Impact on Corporate Priorities	Through promoting Maidstone, the Mayor plays an important part in maintaining the successful economy of the Borough. The Mayor, through fundraising for his/her local charities, contributes to the good health and wellbeing of the Borough.	Head of Finance & Resources
Risk Management	NA	
Financial	None identified.	Suzan Jones, Finance
Staffing	NA	
Legal	None identified	Deputy Head of the Legal Partnership
Equality Impact Needs Assessment	None identified.	Clare Wood. Policy & Performance Officer
Environmental/Sustainable Development	NA	

Community Safety	NA	
Human Rights Act	NA	
Procurement	NA	
Asset Management	NA	

12 REPORT APPENDICES

The following documents are to be published with this report and form part of the report:

- Appendix I: Protocol to guide Councillors when electing the Mayor/appointing the Deputy Mayor and order of seniority of Councillors
- Appendix II: Protocol on Maidstone Mayoral Services
- Appendix III: Civic and Mayoral Events Survey, August 2011
- Appendix IV: Joining the Chain Gang, published by the Local Government Association March 2012
- Appendix V: Result of 12 week public consultation undertaken for the Budget Strategy 2011/12 onwards
- Appendix VI: Sample cross section of local authority protocols for the election of Mayor and appointment of Deputy Mayor

13 BACKGROUND PAPERS

None.