



## IVYBRIDGE TOWN COUNCIL

### PROTOCOL FOR MARKING THE DEATH OF A SENIOR NATIONAL FIGURE OR LOCAL HOLDER OF OFFICE



This protocol sets out the action to be taken in the event of the death of:

The Queen  
The Duke of Edinburgh  
The Prince of Wales  
The Duchess of Cornwall  
The Duke of Cambridge  
The Duchess of Cambridge  
Prince George  
Princess Charlotte  
Prince Henry (Harry) of Wales  
The Duke of York  
The Earl of Wessex  
The Princess Royal  
The Countess of Wessex  
The Duke of Gloucester  
The Duchess of Gloucester  
The Duke of Kent  
Prince Michael of Kent  
Princess Michael of Kent  
Princess Alexandra

- The Prime Minister
- Any Former Prime Minister
- The Constituency Member of Parliament
- A serving Mayor or Leader of the Council
- A serving member of the Council

#### **Preamble**

This policy is taken from that of the National Association of Civic Officers (NALCO) and, although the header page includes leading members of society who are outside the Royal Family, the policy does not contain guidance on the appropriate protocol following a death. Depending upon the status of the person, there may be national guidance at the time of the death or a decision will have to be made by the Town Council on how to mark the event. In the case of the death of a local person such as a serving member of the Town Council the Town Clerk in consultation with the Mayor will decide on the most appropriate action.

## **Part 1 Implementation of the protocol on hearing of the death**

Plans to mark a death will be implemented only when a formal announcement has been by Buckingham Palace/ Downing Street.

The Town Clerk in consultation with the Mayor is authorised to implement the protocol both for the Sovereign or another senior member of the Royal Family and for other figures whose death should be marked by the Town Council.

## **Part 2 Flag flying**

The Town Clerk will arrange for the Union Flag outside the Town Hall to be flown at half mast

On the formal announcement of Death, the flag will be lowered to half mast until 08.00hrs on the morning following the Funeral.

In the case of the death of the Sovereign, the day following the death will be the Proclamation Day (the day when the new Sovereign is proclaimed). On Proclamation Day the flag will, at the start of the day, be flying at half mast.

The flag will then be flown at the Mast-head from 11.00hrs. on D+1 (Proclamation Day) to coincide with the reading of the Principal Proclamation and until 13.00 hrs the following day, i.e. D+2 when it will be returned to half mast. .

## **Part 3 Books of Condolence**

Books of Condolence will be made available following the death of the Sovereign, the Duke of Edinburgh, the Prince of Wales and the Duchess of Cornwall. However, consideration will be given at the time by Council whether Books will be opened following the deaths of other members of the Royal Family.

A book of condolence will be opened on the first working day after the day of death at 09.00 through to 1800. The Town Council will consider, depending on anticipated demand, whether one or two books should be made available. The book(s) will be in an easily accessible place but quiet enough to enable those signing the books a moment of privacy and quiet reflection whilst doing so.

The Town Council will also have to consider whether books should be available in more than one location.

At any place a book is placed there will be a good sized table, covered with a suitable cloth, a chair, a clean blotter, a supply of pens and if necessary a desk lamp. A suitable framed photograph, if available, will also be on the table together with a small flower arrangement.

The book(s) of condolence will be in loose leaf ring binders, with paper with a black border and wide left hand margin, allowing the pages to be re-ordered so that the Mayor and other Town Councillors may have their signatures recorded first. A loose leaf binder will also have the advantage that any defaced pages or offensive comments may be removed. If more than one Book of Condolence is made available then it will be possible to combine them as one record.

The Town Mayor may wish to agree a form of words for a message expressing sorrow at the news of the death. This may be in the form of words for a press release, through electronic messaging, and on the Council's website. The message will also make reference to the book(s) of Condolence, and the arrangements for flying the flag at half mast.

Council will also have to consider whether to open its own on-line Book of Condolence or whether it is adequate to include on its website a link to the Buckingham Palace e-book of Condolence ([www.royal.gov.uk](http://www.royal.gov.uk)).

It is suggested that Books of Condolence should be closed at the end of the day following the day of the funeral but the Town Clerk in consultation with the Mayor may decide to hold the book(s) open longer if thought necessary.

The Council recognises that Books of Condolence are essentially a record of the sentiments expressed by local people on the death of a national figure. As such, they will form part of the Council's archive in order that future generations are able easily to access them and find out the way in which national events were marked in the area. They will not be submitted to the Royal Archives. However, any letter of condolence from the Mayor will make reference to the Book(s) of Condolence and their existence in the local archives which will ensure that when the letter goes to the Royal Archives it will act as an effective cross reference.

#### **Part 4 Events during the period of Mourning**

From the day of the death until the day after the funeral, the Town Clerk in consultation with the Mayor will give careful thought to the types of events and activities which the Mayor should host or attend. Lunches, Dinners, Receptions and so on are unlikely to fit in with the mood of the nation and as a mark of respect should be cancelled. The holding of any function within this period will be approached with a degree of sensitivity.

The Council appreciates the value of bringing people together at these times and the Town Clerk in consultation with the churches within Ivybridge may consider arranging a church service on the eve of the funeral when local people can join in an act of remembrance.

#### **Part 5 Proclamation Day**

As stated in Part 2 above, Proclamation day is set to be the day following the Death of the Sovereign (D+1). The proclamation will initially be made at St

James Palace and then be cascaded to other capital cities within the British Isles. Following the cascaded proclamations, if Council desires then the proclamation will be made on or after 4.00pm by the Mayor at the entrance to the Town Hall or other designated place on D+2.

Consideration will have to be given at the time to:

- The arrangement that will be made to tell the public in advance of the reading of the Proclamation
- Who will be invited to be present
- Who will be on the platform party

## **Part 6 Dress Code**

Whilst flags are at half mast, Councillors and Council Officers will be encouraged to wear black ties, small black rosettes or black armbands as appropriate. Consideration will also be given as to any adjustment to the Mayor's chain such as a black appendage or partial cover to signify mourning.

The Town Clerk will ensure that there is an adequate stock of black armbands.

## **Part 7 Marking a Silence**

The death of a Senior National Figure may be marked by a National Two Minute Silence. On the death of the Sovereign there will be a Two Minute Silence at 11.00 a.m. on the day of the funeral (D+10).

Council may decide that Silence will be kept for other members of the Royal Family on the day of the funeral as part of the funeral service but any such action should await an announcement from Buckingham Palace.

Any Silence will be led by the Mayor at the entrance to the Town Hall or other designated place.

## **Part 8 Letter of Condolence**

A single letter of condolence signed by the Mayor will be sent to the Private Secretary of the deceased asking that condolences are passed to the next of kin and other members of the family (except in the case of the Sovereign's death, in which case the letter will be sent to the new Sovereign's Private Secretary asking that condolences be passed to the new Sovereign).

Cllr P Dredge  
30.07.16