



PROTOCOL TO MARK THE DEATH OF A SENIOR NATIONAL FIGURE OR LOCAL HOLDER OF HIGH OFFICE

1. Summary

- 1.1 It is recommended a formal procedure to mark the death of a senior national figure or local holder of high office is adopted.

2. Recommendation

- 2.1 It is recommended to Full Council that the attached protocol is agreed.
- 2.2 It is recommended that the following necessary items be purchased to allow the protocol to be enacted:
- a. Appropriate Flag(s)
 - b. Book of Condolence
 - c. Appropriate pen
 - d. Black armbands
 - e. Black tablecloth

3. Background

- 3.1 Guidance has been made available for a procedure to follow upon the death of the Sovereign, other senior members of the Royal Family, senior national figures or local holders of high office. It has been drawn up with reference to published guidance from the Royal Household and the Government.
- 3.2 This procedure should be implemented by the Town Clerk or in her/his absence, the Mayor or Mayor's Secretary.
- 3.3 Plans to mark the death of the Sovereign or senior member of the Royal Family must only be implemented after a formal announcement has been made by the Royal Household.
- 3.4 It might also be appropriate to use elements of the procedure when responding to an incident which has lead to a large number of deaths, for example, a train crash or terrorist attack. This would apply if a National Day of Mourning was announced by 10 Downing Street. This would be at the discretion of the Mayor and Town Clerk.
- 3.5 It is suggested that consideration be given to the offering of the Town Flag to drape over a coffin to the family of a previous Town Mayor.

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

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

- HM The Queen
- HRH The Duke of Edinburgh
- HRH The Prince of Wales
- HRH The Duchess of Cornwall
- HRH The Duke of Cambridge
- HRH The Duchess of Cambridge
- HRH Prince George of Cambridge
- HRH Prince Henry (Harry) of Wales

The protocol also provides guidance in recognising the deaths of the following individuals but should be read with reference to Appendix D.

- The Prime Minister
- A serving Town Mayor

This protocol was agreed by Policy, Resources and Finance Committee on 24 November 2020.

It is due for review no later than 31 January 2022.

PART 1 Implementation of the Protocol on hearing of the death

Action Required	Authorised by	Other Notes
Wareham Town Council's mourning protocol will be implemented on the formal announcement by Buckingham Palace / Downing Street of the death of any one of those persons name on page 1 of this protocol.	Implementation will be authorised by the Town Clerk or in her/his absence, the Mayor or Mayor's Secretary.	

PART 2

Flying the Flag

Action Required	Implemented by	Other Notes
<p>Immediately, at the request of the Town Clerk, the flag at the Town Council offices will be lowered to half mast.</p>	<p>Staff member</p>	<p>See Appendix A in this protocol setting out the correct procedure for flying a flag at half mast.</p> <p>If the death falls on St George’s Day or the period of mourning includes St George’s Day, the flag of the patron saint should be replaced by the Union Flag at half mast.</p>
<p>Following the death of the Sovereign, when the new Sovereign is proclaimed (flags will – at 11.00hrs – be raised to full mast and flown throughout the day at full mast, returning to half mast at 1800.)</p> <p>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 flags will, at the start of the day, be flying at half mast. All flags will be flown from the Mast Head from 1100 hours on Proclamation Day (D + 1) to coincide</p>	<p>Staff member</p>	<p>The funeral of the Sovereign will take place 10 days after the day of death. For other senior members of the Royal Family, the funeral will take place eight days after the day of death.</p>

<p>with the Reading of the Principle Proclamation and until 1300 hrs the following day (D + 2). This is because the Proclamation, having been read in London on Proclamation Day, will then be reading Belfast, Edinburgh and Cardiff on the following Proclamation Day.</p> <p>After the day of Proclamation, all flags are to be lowered to half mast until 0800 hours on the morning following the State Funeral (day of death plus 11 days).</p> <p>For any other prominent figures or local holder of high office, the flag should fly at half mast only on the day of death and the day of the funeral.</p>		<p>See Appendix D.</p>
<p>At the Town Council offices, following the death of the Sovereign or other</p>	<p>As above</p>	<p>The funeral of the Sovereign will take place 10 days after the day of</p>

<p>members of the Royal Family identified in the list on page 1, flags will continue to be flown at half mast until 0800hrs on the day following the funeral.</p> <p>For all others identified in the list on page 1 and Appendix D, flags at the Town Council offices will fly at half mast on the day of the announcement of the death. On subsequent days, the usual local arrangements will resume (see the note opposite) until the day of the funeral when they will again fly at half mast.</p>		<p>death. For other senior members of the Royal Family, the number of days will be fewer.</p> <p>The phrase 'Usual local arrangements' should be read as meaning that where a flag is usually flown it can, on the day following the funeral, again be flown at full mast. If no flag is usually flown, the flag can be taken down.</p>
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PART 3 Book of Condolence

A quiet location for the book should be considered so that those signing the books can have a moment of privacy and quiet reflection whilst doing so.

A loose leafed folder will ensure that pages can be re-ordered in case the Mayor and others cannot be the first to sign the book; their signatures can be on the first page of the bound book.

Action Required	Implemented By	Other Notes
<p>On the day following the announcement of the death of the Sovereign, The Duke of Edinburgh, The Prince of Wales or The Duchess of Cornwall,</p>	<p>Town Clerk</p>	<p>The officer should ensure there is adequate paper available in the book. Pages that have been defaced or include offensive or other</p>

<p>a Book of Condolence will be opened at the Town Council offices.</p> <p>Book of Condolence will be open from 1000hrs – 1300hrs Monday to Friday and will remain open until the day following the funeral.</p> <p>A table and chair should be made available for members to sign the Book of Condolence which should be loose leaf black folders and a supply of flag edged paper will be supplied as will table clothes and a framed photograph of the relevant person will be supplied from the stock held by the Town Clerk.</p>		<p>questionable comments should be quietly removed until such time as a decision can be taken at senior level (Town Clerk) on whether or not they should be permanently excluded.</p> <p>Books of Condolence should be opened on the first working day after death. Depending of anticipated demand, consider whether one or two books should be available. It should be an easily accessible place.</p> <p>Downloadable images of the Royal Family are available from www.royal.gov.uk</p>
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<p>The Mayor will issue a statement via the Town Clerk expressing the sadness of the Council and people of Wareham at the news of the death. The statement will also appear on the home page of the website.</p> <p>The statement will confirm that flags are to be flown at half mast and will give details of the Books of Condolence. In the case of the death of the Sovereign or a member of the Royal Family it will also mention any arrangements for an e-Book of Condolence on the Royal Website.</p> <p>On the death of any other significant person, the Town Clerk will discuss with the Town Mayor whether an e-book of Condolence should be opened on the Council's website.</p>	<p>Statement to be issued by the Town Clerk.</p> <p>Mayor's Secretary to ensure copy of the statement appears on the home page of the Council's website.</p>	<p>Guidance on the content of the statement is set out in Appendix B.</p>
<p>When the Book of Condolence has been closed, the Town Clerk will arrange for the pages to be bound and make arrangements for the final</p>	<p>Mayor's Secretary</p>	

bound version to be lodged.		
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PART 4 Focal point for grief

Upon the death of a member of the Royal Family or a senior national figure, members of the public may wish to visit a designated area as a focal point for grief. This may be to lay flowers and other tributes as well as to reflect and remember.

Action Required	Authorised by	Other Notes
There will be a designated area for members of the public to lay flowers etc. This will negotiated with the Rector of the parish.	Town Clerk	
This will be communicated to the public as part of the Statement issued by the Mayor via the Town Clerk.	Town Clerk	
This area will be monitored by the Town Clerk.	Town Clerk	
Tributes will be carefully removed the day following the state funeral.	Staff Member under the direction of the Town Clerk	

PART 5 Civic Engagements

From the day of death until the day after the funeral, careful thought should be given to the type of events and activities the Town Mayor should host or attend. Lunches,

dinners and receptions may not fit in with the mood of the nation and as a mark of respect may need to be cancelled or postponed.

Where school visits are scheduled it might be helpful for the Town Mayor to spend time with the children to talk about the events that are unfolding. This should not be pressed upon a Town Mayor who is not comfortable with taking on such a role.

Action Required	Authorised /Implemented By	Other Notes
To review the programme of engagements undertaken by the Town Mayor to ensure it is appropriate in a time of national mourning and that it sits comfortably with the national mood.	The Town Mayor in conjunction with the Town Clerk.	Consider working with local faith groups to arrange some sort of service on the eve of the funeral.

PART 6 Dress Code

If a full Council meeting falls during the period of mourning it might be felt appropriate for Councillors to wear a black tie or black arm band. Black arm bands will be provided by the Council. Council members will be required to supply their own black tie.

Action Required	Implemented By	Other Notes
A stock of black armbands will be held in and available from the Town Clerk's Office for use by the Councillors and Town Clerk following the death of a senior figure.	The stock to be issued and maintained in good order by the Mayor's Secretary.	At the time of the annual review of this protocol, consideration will be given to the number of items in stock, their condition and the need for cleaning, repair or replacement.

Action Required	Implemented By	Other Notes
As soon as practical, a letter of condolence will be drafted and circulated to the Town Mayor for approval before dispatch.	Town Clerk.	

PART 9 COVID Restrictions

If the death takes places during a period of 'lockdown' government restrictions will apply to all actions involving the public and guidance will be published at the time which should be followed.

In the event the death takes place during social distancing restrictions, those restrictions will need to be taken into account when inviting members of the public to sign the book of condolence and a risk assessment drawn up at the time, by the Town Clerk, taking into consideration the level of social distancing, restrictions on face coverings and hand sanitisation.

Action Required	Implemented By	Other Notes
Covid19 risk assessment to be produced in line with current restrictions.	Town Clerk.	Follow Government guidelines as published at the time: www.gov.uk/coronavirus

Appendix A

Authoritative information on flag flying can be found on the website of the Department for Culture, Media and Sport. Details can also be found on the website of the Flag Institute (www.flaginstitute.org).

It is important that the guidance given by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport and Flag Institute is adhered to strictly.

Half mast means the flag is flown two-thirds of the way up the flagpole with at least the height of the flag between the top of the flag and the top of the flagpole. Flags cannot be flown at half-mast on poles that are more than 45° from the vertical but a mourning cravat can be used instead.

When a flag is to be flown at half mast, it should first be raised all the way to the top of the mast, allowed to remain there for a second and then be lowered to the half mast position. When it is being lowered from the half mast, it should again be raised to the top of the mast for a second before being fully lowered.

Appendix B

The statement should begin with a suitable expression of sadness of the Town Council on hearing the announcement.

It might go on to state that flags will be flown at half mast.

If it is an occasion when Books of Condolence will be opened, then reference could be made to that.

When a decision has been taken on the Council's programme of events and engagements, it might be stated that events are being cancelled as a mark of respect or that they will begin with a period of silence.

If in doubt, do not rush out a statement which commits the Town Council to action before that action has been discussed and has the necessary agreement from the political leadership.

Appendix C

All members of the Council

Town Clerk

Past Mayors

Appendix D

Upon the death of those individuals listed below, the flag at the Town Council offices will be lowered to half-mast and be marked by a minute Silence.

- The Prime Minister (time and place of Silence to be directed by the Sovereign/Government).
- A serving Town Mayor (time and place of Silence to be directed by the Town Clerk).