



**CITY OF LONDON CORPORATION**  
**THE CHIEF COMMONER'S HANDBOOK**

**EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION**

This Handbook is provided as a guide to the Chief Commoner of the day, the Chief Commoner Elect, and to those who might consider standing for the office of Chief Commoner, as an indication of the nature and responsibilities of the Chief and the support available to them. Whilst it is a comprehensive volume, it can only act as a supplement to official guidance offered by relevant Officers and there will inevitably be omissions and errors, which I will try and catch with updates from time to time.

DEPUTY EDWARD LORD, OBE JP

**A. JOB DESCRIPTION**

**1. Role and tenure**

The Chief Commoner is elected by the Court of Common Council in October each year, taking office for a period commencing and ending on the date of the first Court of Common Council after the wardmotes each year. As such, the title is unique amongst the Commoners in that it is bestowed by the Court and serves to recognise the distinguished contribution the office holder is likely to have made to the City Corporation over a period of years.

**2. Overall Responsibilities**

- a) The Chief is the foremost representative of the Commoners in the Court of Common Council with regards to their rights, requirements and privileges, responsible for championing the interests of Common Councilmen on such matters.
- b) The Chief chairs Sub-Committees and Working Parties responsible for the provision of City Corporation hospitality and consideration of the Commoners' privileges and related issues.

**3. Main Tasks and Responsibilities**

- a) To act as the foremost representative of Commoners in the Court of Common Council with regard to their rights, their requirements for the efficient conduct of the City Corporation business, and their privileges, and to be responsible for championing the interests of Common Councilmen on such matters.
- b) To counsel Common Councilmen, as required, with a view to resolving minor problems and in relation to their rights, requirements and privileges.
- c) To attend any City Corporation Committee meeting and have the ability to speak at such meetings.
- d) To participate, jointly with the Chairman of the Policy & Resources Committee, in agreeing arrangements for private Member meetings.
- e) To chair all Sub-Committees and Working Parties of the Policy & Resources Committee that are responsible for, the provision of City Corporation hospitality, consideration of Members' privileges, consideration of Members' facilities (excluding Guildhall Club where that is within the locus of the House Committee of Guildhall Club).
- f) To chair the Member Development Steering Group.
- g) To act as Deputy Chairman for all Reception Committees.
- h) To be an ex-officio Member of the Policy & Resources Committee.
- i) To support the Lord Mayor and the civic team on behalf of Common Councilmen.

#### **4. A note about status and involvement**

- a) The Chief Commoner is, in protocol terms, *primus inter pares* (first amongst equals) amongst the 100 Common Councilmen of the City of London. It must be stressed that the Chief Commoner and the Policy and Resources Committee Chairman have very different roles. Many people will confuse these two positions and it is possible that the Chief will have to explain them. The Chairman has responsibility for political leadership whereas the Chief holds a mainly ceremonial position, being a civic leader for the Commoners and indeed, as part of the Civic Team, the whole City.
- b) Although it is necessary for the Chief Commoner to adopt a non-political stance during their term of office, this should be balanced against their responsibility as a Councilman to promote the Corporation's corporate priorities. Where possible, the Chief Commoner will support engagements that are linked to promoting the objectives in the Corporation's Corporate Plan.
- c) There is an array of custom and practice that accompanies the role, particularly due to the City's heritage and connections. The Chief can use their position to stimulate community pride, encourage business or social investment, and promote the

voluntary sector. The Chief is also the symbol of an open society as historically such positions were once only open to the privileged few, but now often reflects the diversity of the more open and democratic society in that they can come from any class, race, gender, sexual orientation, or background.

- d) The Chief Commoner may on occasion be in the public spotlight more than many other Members. As the role is one of civic leadership, the Chief can often reach places and people that other politicians may not be able and therefore has an important role in representing the Corporation and the City's communities. As a result, the Chief's views may be widely heard and could be influential. It is therefore important that the Chief adopts an impartial role in discharging the duties 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 objective manner.
- e) Most Members will have been actively involved in the Corporation's internal political life before becoming Chief Commoner and stepping out of that role for their term of office can be difficult. However, it is important to avoid publicly promoting political views or canvassing support for a political point of view. Naturally, the Chief still has a responsibility to represent constituents in their Ward, and they may, whilst they hold office, be running for re-election. It is, of course, quite appropriate for the Chief, as a Councilman, to communicate with, and canvass support from, their electors, but they should not misuse their status as Chief Commoner in doing so.

## **B. ELECTION AND ADMISSION TO OFFICE**

- 1. The election to the office of Chief Commoner is regulated by Standing Order 18 and takes place at the October meeting of the Court of Common Council. All Members (Aldermen and Common Councilmen) are eligible to stand and vote in the election, although by convention Aldermen would not normally seek the office.
- 2. A past Chief Commoner is not eligible to serve for an additional term, although in the event of a casual vacancy between April and October, the Immediate Past Chief Commoner, if in Common Council, would step in to fill the role until the next regular election in October at which point the Chief Commoner Elect would take up office immediately, which would also occur were a casual vacancy to take place between October and April.
- 3. A Member who wishes to seek election as Chief Commoner must notify the Town Clerk of their intention to stand in writing by no later than **NINE** working days before the meeting of the Court at which the election is to take place. The notification of candidacy must be accompanied by nominations in writing signed by **ten** Members eligible to vote in the election. A Member may not nominate more than one candidate and, whilst a candidate may collect more than ten signatures, only the first ten will count.

4. A candidate for election who has been properly nominated may also submit a statement of up to 300 words setting out why they are seeking the office, which will be circulated to all Members with the agenda for the meeting.
5. There is no prohibition on candidates (or their representatives) canvassing other Members ahead of the election, or circulating additional information to Members, but they may wish to bear in mind the adverse impact that too much electioneering may have.
6. In the event of a contested election, there will be a ballot held at the meeting of the Court. In order to be elected, a candidate must secure at least half of the votes cast. The business of the meeting may be suspended whilst the count takes place, the scrutineers being the Chairmen of the Finance and Planning & Transportation Committees (or their representatives).
7. The Chief Commoner is admitted to office at the first meeting of the Court of Common Council in April each year, as the first item on the Court agenda (after the introduction of any new Members).
8. The format for the admission is as follows:
  - The outgoing Chief Commoner occupies the Chief's seat in Great Hall for the start of the meeting, with the incoming Chief sitting immediately behind.
  - Once the Lord Mayor has taken his place and the Court has been opened, and any new Members admitted, the Town Clerk invites the Chief Commoner Elect to take their seat.
  - The outgoing Chief Commoner and incoming Chief Commoner move into the gangway immediately at the foot of the steps leading to the dais. Both face the Lord Mayor and Court bow.
  - Turning to face each other, and bowing again, with the assistance of an Attendant, the outgoing Chief removes the Badge of Office and places the collarette around the neck of the incoming Chief.
  - Both turn again to face the Lord Mayor and offer a Court bow. The outgoing Chief moves to the seat vacated by the incoming Chief.
  - The incoming Chief takes their place, and then, on an invitation from the Town Clerk, addresses the Court, concluding with a proposal of a vote of thanks to the outgoing Chief.
  - The Chairman of the Finance Committee seconds the motion formally and it is put to a vote. The Lord Mayor having declared the motion to be carried, the immediate past Chief Commoner will respond.

## **C. INSIGNIA OF OFFICE**

### **1. Chief Commoner's Badge**

- a) The Chief Commoner's Badge of Office depicts the City's Coat of Arms in silver and enamel on a red enamel background, encapsulated in a gold wreath of flowers and leaves. The rear face of the badge depicts the Bridge Mark of the Bridge House Estates, making reference to when the Chief chaired the former City Lands and Bridge House Estates Committee. The badge is normally worn on a royal blue silk collarette, although an alternative collarette of scarlet with a white border may be worn instead.
- b) The Badge should be worn by the Chief Commoner whenever they are on an official duty either within or external to the City Corporation. It is not normally worn when attending a committee of which the Chief is an ordinary member. It is at the Chief's discretion whether they wear the Badge if 'visiting' a Committee of which they are not otherwise a member (see below)

### **2. Chief Commoner's Travelling Badge**

Due to the value of the principal Badge, there is also a travelling Badge which may be worn by the Chief when they are attending events outside London, particularly if they travel overseas. The travelling badge depicts a small version of the City's Coat of Arms on a red enamel background and is worn on a blue silk collarette. This badge might also be worn by the Immediate Past Chief Commoner, or the Chief Commoner Elect, when they are attending an event deputising for the Chief.

### **3. Chief Commoner's Consort's Brooch**

An official brooch is provided for the Chief Commoner's Consort/Escort, should they wish to wear it when accompanying the Chief on an official duty.

### **4. Gown and Hat**

- a) There is no special gown for the Chief Commoner and the Member holding the office would continue to wear their own Common Council mazarine gown, although the Attendants are able to have the gown cleaned and/or refurbished if required given sufficient notice before the Chief takes office.
- b) The Chief's gown is normally kept in a wardrobe in the Chief Commoner's Office rather than in the gown room. When it is required in a particular location (e.g. the Chamberlain's Court or for a Wardmote) this will be arranged by the Attendants. On occasions where it is necessary for the Chief to wear or carry an official bicorn hat (e.g. the Lord Mayor's Show), this is also kept in the Wardrobe in a hatbox.

### **5. Care and insurance**

The Chief Commoner's Badge and insignia are very valuable and great care should be taken of them. The Corporation provides insurance cover for all civic insignia and is responsible for the maintenance of the insignia, including any damage or wear and tear. The loss or damage of the Badge or any other part of the insignia should be reported to the Assistant Town Clerk and the Attendants as soon as possible.

## **D. FACILITIES**

### **1. Chief Commoner's Office**

- a) The Chief Commoner is provided with an office on the second floor of the Guildhall West Wing from which to undertake their official duties. The office has a leathertop desk with a computer and dedicated printer, and telephone (020 7332 1244). There is also a comfortable seating area with four tub chairs and a coffee table for informal meetings. The office also has a wardrobe and a combined book/display case and filing/drinks cabinet (including a miniature fridge).
- b) The bookcase has up to date editions of *Who's Who*, *Whittaker's Almanack*, *The City of London Directory* (the Blue Book), the *City of London White Book*, and bound copies of the Common Hall Register and the City Ward Lists. The Attendants will also arrange for the Chief Commoner to receive a daily newspaper of their choice, together with copies of the *Evening Standard*, *City AM*, and *City Matters*.
- c) The drinks cabinet can be stocked with alcoholic and soft drinks by the Guildhall Club catering contractor (The Cook & The Butler). The Chief should contact the Managing Director, Mark Grove, to discuss their personal requirements.
- d) Pictures from the Guildhall Art Gallery may be provided on loan for the Chief Commoner's Office, Parlour, and Flat. Between election in October and taking office in April, the Chief Commoner Elect may wish to contact the Curator of the Guildhall Art Gallery, to arrange a viewing should they wish to exchange any of the pictures currently hanging.

### **2. Chief Commoner's Parlour**

- a) The Chief Commoner's Parlour is situated off the Old Library and has a large leather topped meeting/dining table which seats up to twenty-four people. The room, which has an ornate barrel-vaulted ceiling, is lit by chandeliers, and has a working open fireplace and a large built-in display case.
- b) The Parlour has an ante room, which is approached by the staircase from the Basinghall Street entrance, and its own dedicated kitchen. Catering in the Parlour is undertaken by any of the companies on the approved Guildhall list. It is often financially beneficial to use a caterer already contracted to provide service elsewhere in the building that day.

- c) The Chief Commoner has first call on the use of the Parlour and it is used to host a series of Civic Dinners during the year as well as private lunches and dinners connected to City Freedom ceremonies, lectures, and other events. The Chief may also host a limited number of private events in the Parlour at no cost.

### **3. Chief Commoner's Flat**

- a) The Chief Commoner is provided with a one bedroom flat on the fourth floor of the Guildhall West Wing. The flat comprises a living room, bedroom, bathroom, shower room/guest toilet, and small kitchenette. The Chief may choose to reside in the flat during their year of office (for a few nights a week or more permanently) or simply use it as a place for relaxation, low level official or personal hospitality, or a space to change clothing as the pressures of the diary demand.
- b) The flat is serviced daily during the week by the Corporation's housekeeping staff who will change the bed linen as required and supply fresh towels. The Housekeeper can also supply basic toiletries although the Chief of the day may choose to bring in a supply of their own preferred brands of soap, shampoo, toothpaste etc. An incoming Chief will be asked prior to the start of the year whether they would prefer to have a double bed or two single beds in the bedroom. The living room has a double sofa bed in the event that a guest or guests need to stay the night.
- c) The kitchen and living room can be stocked with alcoholic and soft drinks, as well as tea, coffee etc by the Guildhall Club catering contractor (The Cook & The Butler). The Chief should contact the Managing Director, Mark Grove, to discuss their personal requirements.

### **4. Official Cars**

- a) The Corporation maintains two official black BMW five series cars, displaying the City shield in the front window, which are available to convey the Chief Commoner, Committee Chairmen, and senior officers to events in and outside the City. The cars can also convey the Chief Commoner to and from their home address if they are not resident in Guildhall.
- b) There is an order of precedence for use of the cars, which is headed jointly by the Chief Commoner and the Chairman of the Policy and Resources Committee. Cars should be booked, either directly with the drivers or via the Chief Commoner's Personal Assistant, as far in advance as possible.
- c) Where it is not possible to use a Corporation car for any particular journey, the drivers will book an executive saloon car on account with the Corporation's chosen contractor, currently Addison Lee.

- d) Details of all car bookings will appear in the Chief's electronic diary and on the day sheet. Addison Lee bookings will also be confirmed by text message sent to the Chief's mobile telephone.

## **E. ADVICE AND ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT**

A number of Corporation Officers are available to provide the Chief Commoner with advice and administrative support (contact details are appended to this Handbook):

1. **The Town Clerk & Chief Executive**, John Barradell OBE, is the Head of Paid Service of the City of London Corporation and line manager for all other Chief Officers. He chairs the Summit Group and the Chief Officers Group and is the Corporation's principal policy adviser.
2. **The Comptroller & City Solicitor**, Michael Cogher, is the Corporation's principal legal adviser and serves as the statutory Monitoring Officer. As such, it may be advisable for the Chief Commoner to consult the Comptroller on any disciplinary or pastoral matter concerning another Member, particularly one which may need to be referred on to the Standards Committee.
3. **The Remembrancer**, Paul Double LVO, is the City of London's parliamentary agent and chief of protocol and acts as the primary adviser to the Chief Commoner in their responsibility for overseeing Corporation hospitality and on other ceremonial and protocol matters.
4. The **Assistant Town Clerk** responsible for Members' and Democratic Services, Simon Murrells JP, acts as the Chief Commoner's primary adviser on a day to day basis, and also manages the support budget for the Chief Commoner.
5. The **Director of Communications**, Bob Roberts, and his team will provide advice on any media coverage for the Chief Commoner's activities, including use of social media.
6. The **Assistant Remembrancer (Ceremonial)**, Fiona Hoban, and her staff will frequently brief the Chief Commoner on proposals for Corporation hospitality and on arrangements for events in which the Chief will be playing a major part, as well as submitting for approval requests for private use of Guildhall.
7. The three **Principal Members' Services & Committee Managers**, Angela Roach, Lorraine Brook, and Gregory Moore, oversee the teams that support the Corporation's governing bodies and committees, and provide administrative assistance and policy advice to the Chief Commoner and committee Chairmen. In particular, Greg Moore has responsibility for meetings of the Court of Common Council and for advising the Chief Commoner on issues of Court procedure and protocol.



8. Emma Sawers, the **Executive and Members' Services Officer**, heads up the support team for the Policy & Resources Committee Chairman, Chief Commoner, and other Senior Chairmen and Deputy Chairmen.
9. The Chief Commoner's **Personal Assistant** manages the Chief's diary, correspondence, and filing.
10. The **Speechwriter**, Peter Cannon, prepares full speeches, speaking notes, and/or presentations for Senior Members, particularly the Policy & Resources Committee Chairman and Chief Commoner.
11. The **Attendants**, Mark Mojsak and Lee Austin, manage the Committee Rooms on the second floor of the Guildhall West Wing and are situated immediately adjacent to the Chief Commoner's Office. They also take bookings for fourth floor bedrooms and take care of gowns for Aldermen, Common Councilmen, and Ward Beadles, and service the Members' Rooms on the third floor – dealing with newspapers and periodicals, stationery, and post.
12. The **Drivers**, John Webb and Terry Rowhan, manage the booking system for the Corporation's own executive cars and for any private hire vehicles used from time to time.

## **F. CHIEF COMMONER'S DUTIES AND DIARY**

### **1. Planning the Diary**

- a) It is good practice to have diary planning meetings with the Assistant Town Clerk (or a Principal Members' Services and Committee Manager) and the Chief's Personal Assistant either weekly or fortnightly. These should review the diary for the immediate future and also attempt a forward look for the months ahead. It may be helpful for others to attend the meeting from time to time, especially the Consort, and the Chief Commoner Elect towards the end of the year in office.
- b) To assist in better diary planning it is essential that all invitations go through the Chief's Personal Assistant. It is the role of the Chief's Personal Assistant to co-ordinate the diary and, with the assistance of the Drivers, ensure that pick-up and travelling times are appropriate, that details are correct, and that all other arrangements are in place to ensure a successful engagement.
- c) If anyone approaches the Chief Commoner directly with an invitation to attend an event, the request should be referred to the Chief's Personal Assistant who will then advise the organiser of the Chief's availability and make the necessary arrangements.
- d) The Chief's Personal Assistant should be informed as soon as possible of any dates/times that the Chief Commoner will not be available, particularly any holidays, so that they can be noted in the diary.

- e) The Chief's Personal Assistant will maintain a comprehensive diary file which will contain invitations received as well as a full calendar of events to which the Chief Commoner is habitually invited. At the end of each week the Chief's Personal Assistant will supply the Chief Commoner (and their Consort) with a diary sheet for the following week, together with a file of invitations, committee papers, and any relevant briefing notes and draft speeches. They will also, each evening, provide a finalised day sheet for the following day, including confirmed transportation arrangements.

## **2. Annual City Ceremonial Occasions**

There are a number of firm fixtures in the Chief Commoner's diary, which should be regarded as a 'three-line whip':

- a) **Commonwealth Day Flag Raising** (March) – the Chief Commoner attends the flag raising in Guildhall Yard.
- b) **United Guilds Service** (March) – the Chief Commoner forms part of the Civic Procession at St Paul's Cathedral on the occasion of the United Guilds Service, with a reserved seat in the Quire.
- c) **Common Council Church Service** (April) – the Chief Commoner attends with the Lord Mayor, Sheriffs, Aldermen, and Common Councilmen, a service at St Lawrence Jewry before the first meeting of the Court of Common Council each civic year, preceded by a formal procession from the Glass Ambulatory.
- d) **Armed Forces Day Flag Raising** (June) – this event has now become a firm part of the annual calendar and involves a brief ceremony in Guildhall Yard, attended by the Lord Mayor and a high ranking military representative.
- e) **Common Hall: Election of the Sheriffs** (June) – the Chief Commoner attends the election of the Sheriffs and is included in the formal procession into Great Hall, with a reserved seat on the dais.
- f) **Admission of the Sheriffs** (September) – the Chief Commoner attends the admission of the Sheriffs and is included in the formal procession into Great Hall, with a reserved seat on the dais. The Chief is also a guest at the Sheriffs' Breakfast which follows the admission ceremony.
- g) **Common Hall: Election of the Lord Mayor** (September) – the Chief Commoner attends the election of the Lord Mayor and is included in the formal procession into Great Hall, with a reserved seat on the dais. The Chief will be called upon to second the vote of thanks to the Lord Mayor, which is proposed by the Master of the Lord Mayor's mother livery company. Common Hall is followed by Luncheon at Mansion House.

- h) **Presentation Dinner** (October) – whilst technically a private event hosted by the Lord Mayor Elect (or his Livery Company) it is usual for the Chief Commoner to be invited to attend. Please note that the Badge is not normally worn on this occasion.
- i) **Lighting Up Deputation and Dinner** (October) – The Lord Mayor and Sheriffs' Committee seek the permission of the Chief Commoner and the 'Lighting-Up Deputation' for permission to hold the Lord Mayor's Banquet, following which a Dinner is held in the Crypts.
- j) **Silent Ceremony** (November) – the Chief Commoner attends the admission of the Lord Mayor and is included in the formal procession into Great Hall, and congratulates the new Lord Mayor on behalf of all the Common Councilmen. The Chief also attends the Installation Luncheon at Mansion house held before the ceremony.
- k) **Lord Mayor's Show** (November) – the Chief Commoner participates in the Lord Mayor's Show formally in one of the City's horse drawn carriages, accompanied by some of the High Officers, having first viewed much of the outgoing procession from outside Guildhall. On arriving at Mansion House in the return procession, the Chief joins the Lord Mayor and other guests for luncheon.
- l) **Remembrance Sunday** (November) – the Chief Commoner forms part of the Civic Procession at St Paul's Cathedral on the occasion, with a reserved seat in the Quire. Thereafter, the Chief joins those Common Councilmen present on the steps of the Royal Exchange for wreath laying, and for the 'March Past' at Mansion House. The Chief can then choose to join the Lord Mayor's party, the Court of Aldermen and their partners, and the veterans for a buffet luncheon in Mansion House, or Common Councilmen and their guests for a seated luncheon in the Guildhall Club.
- m) **Lord Mayor's Banquet** (November) – The Chief Commoner, leading the Lighting Up deputation, forms part of the host element at the Lord Mayor's Banquet and will normally be stationed in the VIP Reception in the Art Gallery. The Chief Commoner has a designated seat on Table A (Right), just below the Chairman of the Lord Mayor and Sheriffs' Committee.
- n) **Staff Annual Lunches** (December) – The Chief Commoner is the principal guest at one of the three seasonal staff luncheons which take place in the Great Hall on consecutive days in December. The luncheons are hosted by the Chairman of the Establishment Committee and begin with a private drinks reception in the Print Room before processing formally into the Great Hall. The Chief sits to the Chairman's immediate right and responds to the Civic Toast. As the occasion can be quite boisterous, it has been agreed that speeches, which should be very brief, will now take place before the meal commences.

### **3. Guildhall Events**

- a) The Chief Commoner will often have a leading role in hosting Corporation events at Guildhall, from major set piece occasions such as State Banquets to small luncheons and dinners in the Parlour. In an average year, these might include, say:
- Two State Banquets
  - Six to ten Luncheons for distinguished individuals who have received the City Freedom
  - Two or three lectures marking particular anniversaries, followed by dinner in the Parlour for the lecturer
  - One or two armed forces related events, often a parade followed by a reception
  - Six to eight other receptions, perhaps marking a major sporting or cultural event
  - One or two dinners marking the visit of international delegations

From time to time, the Corporation may also host a function to mark a significant State or Royal occasion, or to mark the admission of a distinguished person to the Honorary Freedom of the City.

- b) As chairman of the Hospitality Working Party, the Chief helps set the strategic direction for Corporation hospitality and will discuss with the Remembrancer informally requests that are made by the Government and other organisations for the City to host an event, prior to it being put forward to HWP. In some cases, the Chief can exercise delegated authority to approve hospitality in between meetings.
- c) For **State Banquets**, and other occasions when a Reception Committee is appointed, the Chief is *ex-officio* Deputy Chairman of the Committee and a member of the Sub-Committee. The Chief will, with the Chairman, shortlist the caterers down to the final two to make a presentation to the Sub-Committee, and then be involved in the trial meal. On the evening of the Banquet, the Chief will form part of the deputation of the Committee to escort the visiting dignitary and otherwise be in the VIP reception in the Art Gallery, and be included in the formal photographs. The Chief Commoner has a designated seat on Table A (Right), just below the Chairman of the Reception Committee.
- d) For other events, especially those where arrangements are in the hands of the Hospitality Working Party, the Chief will, with advice from the Remembrancer's staff, select the caterers and the menu, as well as having final sign-off of the table plans, operational notes, and other logistics for the event.

#### **4. Supporting the Lord Mayor**

- a) The Chief Commoner would normally expect to be invited to all the set piece events hosted by the Lord Mayor at Mansion House during the year. At a few of these the Chief would have a major role, but regardless, the Chief will almost invariably sit at the top table or in a seat of prominence, usually on the centre sprig:
- **Lord Mayor's Children's Party** (January) – it is usual for the Chief Commoner to be invited to be the Chief Steward at the Children's Party, which is normally held on the first Saturday in January.
  - **London Government Dinner** (January) – the Chief Commoner will assist in the hosting of VIP guests in the Drawing Rooms and has a seat on the top table.
  - **'En Famille' Luncheons** (January and February) – the Chief Commoner will be the Lord Mayor's principal guest at one of the four *En Famille* luncheons held each year, and will have the privilege of escorting the Lord Mayor into lunch, and, after lunch, speaking and proposing a toast to the Lord Mayor and Lady Mayoress/Lord Mayor's Consort.
  - **Dinner to Archbishops and Bishops** (February - every two years)
  - **Business & Investment Dinner** (February or March)
  - **Dinner to the Masters, Prime Wardens & Upper Bailiff of the Livery Companies** (March)
  - **The Easter Banquet** (March or April)
  - **Dinner to the Bankers & Merchants of the City of London** (June)
  - **Dinner to HM Judges** (July)
  - **The Dragon Awards Dinner** (September)
  - **Election Luncheon** (September) – following Common Hall
  - **The City Banquet** (October)
  - **Lady Mayoress/Lord Mayor's Consort 'At Home'** (November) – the Chief Commoner makes a short speech and presents a gift to the Lady Mayoress/Consort on behalf of the Court of Common Council.
  - **The Installation Luncheon** (November) – the Chief Commoner will normally be invited to the luncheon hosted by the Lord Mayor and Lord Mayor Elect
- b) It is also possible that the Chief Commoner may be asked to accompany the Lord Mayor on an overseas or domestic official visit. This will usually depend upon any specific knowledge or experience the Chief Commoner of the day could offer on a particular visit, and would require the consent of the Chairmen of the Mayoral Visits Advisory Committee and of the Policy and Resources Committee.

- c) Similarly, as the Lord Mayor receives many more invitations than they, or a Lord Mayor Locum Tenens or Sheriff, could cover, it is possible that during the year, the Chief Commoner may be asked to represent the City of London Corporation at a variety of events. Where this is the case, the Chief will be asked as far ahead of time as diaries permit and will receive appropriate briefing from the Mansion House, but it is unlikely that they will be accompanied by a Duty Officer.

## **5. Chief Commoner's Events**

Each year, there are a number of events the Chief Commoner hosts in their own right:

- a) The **Chief Commoner's Dinner**, or more correctly the Hospitality Working Party Dinner in honour of the immediate past Chief Commoner, is usually held for 60-70 guests in May or June each year in the Livery Hall to thank the outgoing Chief for their service in the previous civic year.
- b) The **Chief Commoner's Reception** is held towards the end of the year of office, usually in March or April, and affords the Chief an opportunity to thank the many staff and others who have supported them during the past twelve months. It is usually held in the Crypts for up to 100, mostly internal, guests.
- c) **Civic Dinners** are hosted by the Chief Commoner and Remembrancer between six and eight times a year in the Chief Commoner's Parlour. The guest lists are agreed between the Chief and the Remembrancer and usually include leading representatives of some of the Corporation's key civic partners and stakeholders, perhaps on a particular theme agreed in advance.
- d) The Chief hosts a **Luncheon to Past Chief Commoners** in the Parlour each May or June in recognition of the contribution of the former holders of the office and as an opportunity for informal discussion.
- e) Each September, the Chief hosts a **Supper** for the Hospitality Working Party and other guests following the annual tasting of the Corporation's claret stock, led by the City's Wine Panel.
- f) The Chief may choose to host a small number of private functions in the Parlour or elsewhere in Guildhall such as a luncheon or dinner for their Ward colleagues, or their family, or a reception for a charity or organisation with whom they have a particularly close connection. The Chief will not normally be charged room hire for such events and generally advantageous rates can be negotiated with a caterer from the approved list, recognising that the Chief will be paying for the event personally. It is usually best for these occasions to be held when there are other events taking place elsewhere in the building in order to reduce the overhead costs to the Corporation.

## **6. Official Meetings**

In addition to their civic and ceremonial roles, the Chief Commoner plays an important function in the governance of the Corporation, in particular with regard to the following bodies:

*a) Court of Common Council*

The Chief Commoner in effect steers significant parts of the Court agenda, by proposing or seconding a variety of procedural or congratulatory motions, as well as ensuring the rights of Commoners, especially backbenchers, are preserved.

- The Chief Commoner, along with the Policy and Resources Committee Chairman, will be consulted by the Town Clerk's office prior to the final agenda for meetings of the Court being settled and published. The Town Clerk may wish to take a steer, as may Committee Chairmen in respect of their items, on how the Chief feels that a particular issue will be received by Members when it comes forward for debate.
- The Chief Commoner will be invited by the Lord Mayor to attend Breakfast at Mansion House on the morning of each meeting of the Court for what is, in effect, a call-over for that day's business. Also present are the Chairmen of the Policy and Resources, Finance, Planning and Transportation, and Establishment Committees (the 'Senior Chairmen'), as well as the Lady Mayoress/Lord Mayor's Consort, the Sheriffs, and the Town Clerk.
- It is advisable for the Chief Commoner to be present throughout the pre-Court Buffet Luncheon in the Members' Dining Room, in order to be available for consultation by Members and to 'take the temperature' on any particularly contentious issues. It would be helpful to feedback prior to the meeting if there is likely to be any substantial opposition to a measure before the Court to enable the relevant Chairman to consult with the Town Clerk and other Officers prior to the meeting commencing.
- At the meeting itself, the Chief Commoner sits in the senior position at a table on the gangway, just below the dais and to the Lord Mayor's right, opposite the Policy and Resources Committee Chairman, recognising the Chief's leadership role in the Court. The Chief will be provided with a detailed script for the meeting, highlighting items where they have a speaking part, particularly proposing or seconding motions. When required to speak, the Town Clerk will announce 'The Chief Commoner' at which point the Chief rises in their place and makes whatever remarks or proposal is appropriate.
- At the conclusion of the meetings prior to the Christmas and Summer recesses, it is usual for the Lord Mayor to wish Members a good break, to which the Chief Commoner will normally respond with the good wishes of the Court to the Lord Mayor and their family.

- Where there has been a ballot taken at the Court, the Chief Commoner is usually one of the scrutineers to oversee the count. Where the Chief cannot remain to undertake this responsibility, or where they are conflicted due to being a candidate in a ballot, the Chief should nominate another, unconflicted, Member to act as scrutineer in their stead.
- In between meetings of the Court, it is sometimes necessary to exercise the provisions of Standing Order 19 to enable decisions to be taken by the Town Clerk, in consultation with the Lord Mayor, Chief Commoner, Chairman of the Policy and Resources Committee, and Chairman of the Finance Committee. The Chief may therefore be required to consider significant matters speedily.

*b) Informal meetings of the Court*

Informal meetings of Members take place at least twice a year – in February and November – in place of the scheduled formal Court meetings, but with the same timings: buffet lunch in the Members' Dining Room at 12:00 noon and the meeting, usually in the Livery Hall, at 1:00 pm. The Chief Commoner, with the Policy and Resources Committee Chairman, sets the agenda for these meetings, usually having invited Members to submit items for discussion ahead of the event. The Chief Commoner will usually chair the meetings, and should be aware that they might occasionally become quite heated depending on the issues to be discussed.

*c) Policy and Resources Committee*

The Chief Commoner is *ex-officio* a member of the Policy and Resources Committee which meets monthly on a Thursday afternoon. As this Committee leads the Corporation's policy agenda and the resource allocation process, it is important that the Chief attends as often as possible, not least in order to represent views of backbench Members on major issues.

*d) Freedom Applications Committee*

Again, the Chief Commoner is an *ex-officio* member of this Committee which has recently had a renaissance in order to oversee the procedure for the City Freedom. It has produced guidance for those who have it in mind to propose a candidate for the freedom and has also instituted a pre-approval vetting system to avoid embarrassment to the City or to a proposer should a candidate prove to be controversial. The Committee also considers high profile candidates for proposal by Special Nomination, which may include politicians, diplomats, journalists, or other celebrities with a London connection.

*e) Standards Committee*



Whilst not a Member of the Standards Committee, the Chief Commoner may choose to attend meetings of the Committee, given the Chief's pastoral and disciplinary responsibilities.

*f) Hospitality Working Party*

The Chief Commoner chairs the Hospitality Working Party which meets eight times a year to oversee all Corporation hospitality, other than the Lord Mayor's regular annual programme, and receive reports on the Remembrancer's business plan and budgets, including the accounts for events that have taken place. The Working Party also has responsibility for approving use of the Great Hall by external clients and setting hire charges and the list of approved caterers.

In between meeting of the Hospitality Working Party, the Chief Commoner has wide ranging delegated authority to approve hospitality and the use of Guildhall, on the recommendation of the Remembrancer. In some cases, the Chief Commoner may wish to seek the views of the other members of the Working Party prior to exercising the delegated authority.

*g) Members' Privileges Sub-Committee*

The Chief Commoner chairs the Sub-Committee which has responsibility for Members' facilities, including the Members' Reading Rooms, Bedrooms, and locker/changing rooms, but not for the Guildhall Club. It also discusses wider issues concerning the privileges of Members, including matters concerning seniority. The Sub-Committee meets as and when required.

*h) Mayoral and Shrieval Appraisal Panel*

The Chief Commoner is a member of the Appraisal Panel which assesses Aldermen in respect of their progression towards the offices of Lord Mayor and Sheriff. The meetings usually take place in April or May each year and may often be amongst the first duties undertaken by a newly installed Chief Commoner. Given the sensitivity of the discussions and the material which is made available to members of the Panel, absolute discretion is required.

*i) Mayoral Visits Advisory Committee*

The Chief Commoner is a member of MVAC, which determines the Lord Mayor's visit programme for the ensuing year.

*j) Deputation on Mayoral and Shrieval Allowances*

The Chief Commoner is a member of the Common Council side of the deputation which meets with representatives of the Court of Aldermen each year to determine the level of Mayoral and Shrieval Allowances.

*k) Member Development Steering Group*

The Chief Commoner chairs this informal steering group which has oversight of the Member training and development programme.

*l) House Committee of the Guildhall Club*

The Chief Commoner is an *ex-officio* member of the Guildhall Club Committee, which oversees the Members' Bar, Members' Dining Room, Members' Private Dining Room, and catering facilities in the Members' Room.

*m) Meetings of other Committees*

The Chief Commoner is entitled to attend all meetings of all other Committees of the Corporation with full speaking rights, but without the power to vote. When attending these meetings, it is usual for the Chief to sit to the right of the Deputy Chairman.

## **7. Informal Meetings**

- a) The Chief Commoner will normally meet the Lord Mayor once a month and have scheduled fortnightly update meetings with the Chairman of the Policy and Resources Committee, Town Clerk & Chief Executive, and the Remembrancer, although impromptu meetings with those and other senior Members and Officers are likely to occur more frequently.
- b) The Chief Commoner is usually a member of the Policy and Resources Committee Chairman's Sounding Board which meets monthly over breakfast to discuss current and forthcoming issues affecting the City and the Corporation.

## **8. Other Corporation events**

- a) The Chief Commoner is invited to all **Committee Dinners** and should, where possible, attend. It would be normal for the Chief Commoner to be seated on the top table.
- b) The Chief Commoner is normally invited to the **Port Health & Environmental Services Committee's River Inspection**, held in June or July. The inspection begins with a trip on the River Thames either up or downstream, followed by a visit to a relevant site connected to the Port Health Authority function, and then a luncheon, prior to returning to the City by coach.
- c) The Chief Commoner may, in consultation with the relevant Chairman, attend formal visits by a Committee to the City's **Open Spaces**.
- d) It is normal for the Chief Commoner to be invited to attend the **Prizegivings** for the City's independent schools, and possibly also its academies, as well as the **Graduation Ceremonies** of the Guildhall School of Music and Drama. Where the

Chief accepts such an invitation, they should usually be asked to process to a reserved seat on the dais, and to attend luncheon.

- e) Depending upon local custom and practice, the Chief Commoner may be invited to join the Lord Mayor and Lady Mayoress/Consort at the switching-on of the **Christmas Lights** around the City, such as Leadenhall Market, Bow Lane, One New Change, and St Paul's Cathedral.

## **9. External engagements**

- a) The Chief Commoner will normally be invited to attend one of the **Royal Garden Parties** at Buckingham Palace, which usually take place in late spring or early summer.
- b) The Chief Commoner is often invited by **Livery Companies** to attend luncheons and dinners as well as events like the annual Cart Marking ceremony in Guildhall Yard, and may be asked to speak.
- c) Similarly, the Chief Commoner may be invited by **Ward Clubs** to attend their Civic Luncheon or other events, and may be asked to speak.
- d) The **Livery Committee** may ask the Chief Commoner to speak at one or more of the briefings they hold for new liverymen and, in particular, for wardens who are expected to succeed to the Mastership of their Company in the near future.
- e) The Chief Commoner is expected to attend the annual luncheon of the **Past Chief Commoners' Society** which is usually held each September in the Members' Private Dining Room.
- f) The Chief Commoner may be invited to represent the City at **Remembrance Services** at the various war memorials spread throughout the Square Mile, such as the National Submariners' War Memorial on Victoria Embankment.
- g) In odd numbered years, the **British Red Cross** holds its **Christmas Market** at Guildhall, usually organised by an Alderman and their partner. It is usual for the Chief Commoner to be invited to the opening gala, normally held in the presence of a member of the Royal Family, to whom the Chief should be presented.
- h) The Chief Commoner is likely to be invited to be a VIP guest at **Sir John Cass's Foundation Founder's Day** at the Church of St Botolph Aldgate.
- i) The Chief Commoner may find themselves invited by members of the **Diplomatic Corps** to attend National Day celebrations and similar events. The Chief should take appropriate advice from the Remembrancer, Director of Economic Development, or Executive Director, Mansion House & Central Criminal Court, before accepting some

invitations, especially from countries that may be regarded as particularly controversial.

- j) The Chief Commoner may be invited to become a member of the **London Mayors' Association**, which includes the civic heads of the thirty-two London Boroughs as well as the City's Lord Mayor. The LMA runs an events programme during the year, including an annual dinner, reception, civic service at Westminster Abbey, and the Whittington Walk from Highgate Hill to Mansion House. Where possible, the Chief may wish to attend these events which provide a helpful opportunity to meet colleagues from across London. The Chief is particularly encouraged to attend the civic service at Westminster Abbey in October.
- k) The Chief Commoner will usually act as host to the **Pearly Kings and Queens Harvest Festival** celebrations, held in Guildhall Yard each September. They celebrate the bounty of the autumn harvest with traditional entertainment in front of Guildhall from 1.30pm, before parading through the streets to Church of St Mary Le Bow for a service of thanksgiving. Expect Morris dancing, maypole dancing, marching bands and lots of colourful characters at this traditional event.
- l) The role of the Chief Commoner is primarily internal to the City of London and the Corporation, and it is not anticipated that the Chief will engage in any extensive domestic or international travel, other than that envisaged in paragraph F 4 (b) above.

It is recognised that a Chief Commoner may, from time to time, be invited to participate in events such as the Livery Masters' weekend visit to Ironbridge, or civic visits to the Company of Cutlers in Hallamshire or other companies/guilds in Bristol, Edinburgh, Glasgow, or York. Similarly, the Chief might be invited by Zurich's trade guilds to the annual Sechseläuten festival. The costs of such trips can be accommodated without additional approval in accordance with the Corporation's Business Travel Scheme.

Should the Chief Commoner be invited in an official capacity to take part in any other international event, or should they be invited in a personal capacity but where their civic role is likely to be engaged during a visit, then approval should be sought in advance. Where such approval is required, this will be determined by the Policy and Resources Committee taking into account the views of senior Members including the Chairmen of the Policy and Resources Committee and the Mayoral Visits Advisory Committee and the Immediate Past Chief Commoner. Where approval is given, the relevant costs of the trip will be met by the Corporation in accordance with the Business Travel Scheme.

## **G. PROTOCOL**

1. The office of Chief Commoner is the highest civic position to which a Common Councilman, as such, can hope to be elected. Whilst the Chief is not the City's 'first citizen', the role is nonetheless akin to being the Civic Mayor of a Borough Council or Chairman of a District or County Council, i.e. it is not a role of 'political' leadership, but rather the ceremonial head of the Commoners, their conscience and counsellor, their spokesperson, and the defender of their rights and privileges.
2. In Civic Precedence, the Chief Commoner formally follows behind the Lord Mayor, Aldermen, Sheriffs, and High Officers, and ahead of all other Councilmen. In practice, in recent years, the Chief is generally accorded precedence over Aldermen below the Chair and the High Officers, certainly in terms of seating, recognising the seniority of the role and the importance for the Corporation to work more collegially. For reference, the normal order of precedence amongst Common Councilmen is:

- The Chief Commoner
  - Chairman of the Policy and Resources Committee \*
    - Chairman of the Finance Committee
  - Chairman of the Planning and Transportation Committee
    - Chairman of the Establishment Committee
    - Chairman of the Police Committee
- Other Commoners in order of length of service, as set out in the Pocket Book

\* the Chief Commoner leads at civic events, and the Policy Chairman leads at political or business events.

3. The Chief forms part of the 'Civic Team' and should be acknowledged as such when on duty at Guildhall, Mansion House, or elsewhere in the City, for example at a Livery Company event. Recognition of the Chief Commoner's status should be made by appropriate placement on the seating plan, in processions, as well as in the allocution. For example, at a particularly sparkling Livery dinner, the Master should use (as appropriate):

*"My Lord Mayor, Your Excellency, My Lords, Aldermen, Mr Recorder, Sheriffs, Chief Commoner, Fellow Masters, Ladies and Gentlemen."*

4. The formal mode of address of the Chief Commoner is:

**The Chief Commoner of the City of London,**

**Mrs Wendy Mead OBE CC / Deputy Billy Dove OBE JP**

In speech, they are referred to as "Chief Commoner" or, more informally "Chief".

In writing officially, they should be addressed as "Dear Chief Commoner" or "Dear Chief".

## **H. PASTORAL CARE & DISCIPLINARY MATTERS**

Within the Court of Common Council, the Chief Commoner has a pastoral responsibility for the Councilmen and will provide advice and guidance to Members where necessary. The Chief also has an informal disciplinary and dispute resolution function, including the authority to withdraw Corporation hospitality or access to facilities where they deem it appropriate.

Where the Chief Commoner has cause to intervene on a disciplinary or dispute resolution matter, it is **strongly advised** that the Chief consults one or both of the Comptroller and/or the Assistant Town Clerk. Indeed, it may be appropriate for one of them to accompany the Chief at any relevant meeting with a complainant or a respondent Member.

## **I. PRACTICALITIES**

1. **Dress** – for male Chief Commoner's the dress code for most daytime events is lounge suit, and for the majority of evening dinners it is dinner jacket/black tie. For more formal occasions evening dress/white tie will be required, or morning coat if during the daytime, with or without decorations as indicated by the organiser. On each occasion, the relevant dress will be marked on the day sheet and, if a Corporation event, included in the Remembrancer's operational notes. When the Chief Commoner is female, she will wish to wear the appropriate equivalent dress, advice on which can be obtained from women colleagues who have recently held the office.
2. **Lunch** – when the Chief Commoner is working at Guildhall but does not otherwise have a lunch engagement, they are entitled to take lunch free of charge in the Guildhall Club, and a table is permanently reserved for that purpose.
3. **Stationery** – the Chief Commoner's office is supplied with a stock of A4 and  $\frac{2}{3}$  A4 Conquerer letterhead, die stamped with the Corporation logo and the title 'THE CHIEF COMMONER', with matching envelopes. When corresponding on private business or on Corporation business in their capacity as a Ward Councilman, the Chief's headed paper should not be used, nor should the title of Chief Commoner be used.
4. **'Thank You' letters** – it is still regarded as best practice in the City to send handwritten 'thank you' letters to hosts who have provided substantial hospitality (usually a sit down meal), although these can be typed and the Chief's Personal Assistant will be happy to provide suitable drafts.
5. **Biography** – an official biography for the Chief Commoner will be produced by the Communications Office which will be available on the Corporation website and sent as a pdf to organisations where the Chief Commoner has accepted an invitation to attend a function, especially if they are going to speak. The Chief Commoner Elect is

asked to provide some text (no more than 500 words) to the Director of Communications, preferably prior to 1 March each year.

6. **Official Portrait** – the Communications Office will arrange with the Chief Commoner Elect an appropriate time to take an official portrait photograph wearing the Badge, which will then be installed in the Members' Corridor on the third floor of the Guildhall West Wing as soon as possible after their admission to office. The same portrait will also appear on the Corporation website, in official publications, and for posterity in the gallery of former Chief Commoners. It is therefore important that the Chief is fully content with the portrait as it will have a very long lifespan.
7. **Christmas Cards** – the Chief Commoner will normally send around 700 official Christmas Cards each year to:
  - Lord Mayor, Sheriffs, Aldermen and Common Councilmen
  - Chief Officers and Officers at Grades J and I, as well as all staff in the Town Clerk's Members' and Democratic Services team, the IT Division's VIP Support team, and the Remembrancer's Department, as well as some staff at Mansion House & Central Criminal Court, and in the Guildhall Facilities Management team (Security, Housekeeping, Reception and the Post Room).
  - Masters and Clerks of Livery Companies
  - Judges at the Central Criminal Court and Mayor's & City of London Court
  - Lord Mayor of Westminster, Mayors of the London Boroughs, and Chairman and Secretary of the London Mayors' Association
  - Diplomatic Heads of Mission accredited to the Court of St James
  - The Bishop of London, The Archdeacon, The Dean & Chapter of St Paul's Cathedral, and City Clergy
  - Other key stakeholders (Military, Pageantmaster etc.)

The Chief's Personal Assistant will order the cards, having agreed a design with the Chief, usually before the summer recess. The Chief may wish to use the recess to get ahead with signing the cards, rather than waiting until the autumn.

8. **Official gifts** – a small stock of official gifts is maintained to offer, usually on a reciprocal basis, to visiting VIPs or when the Chief is attending an external event where there is to be an exchange of gifts (which will normally be established in advance). The Chief Commoner may retain any gifts received, or may choose to deposit them with the London Metropolitan Archive, providing on either basis that they are properly accounted for.

9. **Media** – the Director of Communications will advise the Chief Commoner on all matters concerning media engagement, which must at all times reflect the civic and a political nature of the role. There is an @chiefcommoner Twitter account, which the Chief may wish to use to post official and uncontroversial ‘tweets’ about their work and that of the Corporation. A Chief who is used to social media might like to do this themselves, but others may prefer to let the staff of the Communications Office handle tweets on their behalf.
10. **Dietary requirements** – it is helpful for the Chief’s Personal Assistant, the Remembrancer’s Department and the Guildhall Club to be aware of anything the Chief Commoner (or their Consort) does not eat either on religious grounds, due to allergies, or just because they do not like it. For the Chief’s own events, they will usually choose a menu of their liking. At other venues and events, this can prove a little more difficult. The Chief’s Personal Assistant will inform organisers of the Chief Commoner’s dietary requirements and attempt to arrange an alternative dish if there is something on a menu that the Chief cannot eat.
11. **Health issues** – if the Chief Commoner or their Consort has a medical issue that may affect their duties, it is important that relevant staff, usually the Assistant Town Clerk and the Chief’s Personal Assistant are made aware of it to help plan engagements to avoid any difficulties.
12. **Costs and expenses** – the majority of the costs of the office of Chief Commoner, such as travel expenses, stationery, Christmas Cards, postage etc. are met by City’s Cash from within the Town Clerk’s local risk budget. Similarly, lunches taken in the Guildhall Club or any drinks and snacks provided by the Club to enable the Chief to provide official hospitality in their office or flat will be charged by the contractor to City’s Cash. In addition, the Remembrancer’s Department provides a small budgetary allowance for the Chief Commoner, which might be used to cover the cost of minor hospitality events hosted by the Chief during their year.

## **J. LEGALITIES**

1. The Chief Commoner is reminded that they remain bound by the Members’ Code of Conduct and in particular the requirement to register any gifts and/or hospitality received in the course of their official duties. The responsibility to register remains on the Member individually, but in practice this role may best be performed by the Chief’s Personal Assistant.
2. The Chief Commoner is automatically covered under the Corporation’s personal accident and travel insurance policies. The personal accident policy is on a 24-hour basis and provides capital benefits for death and serious injury, and weekly benefits in the event of temporary disablement. Travel insurance operates whilst the Chief Commoner is away from home on behalf of the Corporation and includes cover for



medical expenses, personal property, money, cancellation, personal liability, and legal expenses.

**K. CHIEF COMMONER ELECT/IMMEDIATE PAST CHIEF COMMONER**

1. There is no formal Deputy Chief Commoner. However, the Immediate Past Chief Commoner, from the day they leave office until the day the next following Chief is elected, and, from then on, the Chief Commoner Elect, are members, and de facto the Deputy Chairmen, of the Hospitality Working Party and the Members' Privileges Sub-Committee.
2. They may also be asked by the Chief to act as their representative or substitute. For example, on Remembrance Sunday, the Chief Commoner Elect attends the **Service at the Tower Hill Memorial** to those who gave their lives in the Merchant Navy and Fishing Fleets during the World Wars. After that service, the Chief Elect should return to Guildhall for lunch in the Members' Dining Room. When representing the Chief Commoner, it may be appropriate for them to wear the Chief's Travelling Badge as a sign of their official status.

**L. CHIEF COMMONER'S CONSORT**

The Chief Commoner may ask their spouse or partner, or a child, or close personal friend, to act as their Consort during the course of their year in office. Alternatively, they may ask a number of people to accompany them on official duties as their Escort(s). Either way, it is hoped that the Chief's Consort or Escort will be included in invitations where possible, particularly in cases where the Lord Mayor and the Sheriffs have their own consorts with them.

The role of Consort or Escort is an entirely informal one and bestows no official status on the individual. They will however be granted suitable facilities to help them support the Chief Commoner, which may include (at the request of the Chief) a pass to give them access to Guildhall, use of the Members' Bar and Dining Room, a key to the Chief Commoner's Flat, and a parking space in the Members' Car Park. The Chief's Consort/Escort is not entitled to personal use of the official car except when accompanying the Chief.

Consorts/Escorts are expected to conform to the same high standards of general behaviour as those imposed on elected Members by the Code of Conduct.

January 2018

## KEY PERSONNEL CONTACT DETAILS

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