

**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
- HRH The Duke of York
- HRH The Earl of Essex
- HRH The Princess Royal
- HRH The Countess of Wessex
  
- The Prime Minister
- The serving Member of Parliament for South West Bedfordshire
- A serving Town Mayor
- A serving member of the Council
- A Former Town Mayor of the Council

This protocol was agreed by Council on XXXXXXXX

It is due for review not later than XXXXXXXX

Action Required	Authorised by
Leighton-Linslade Town Council's mourning protocol will be implemented on the formal announcement 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 his absence, the Head of Democratic & Central Services

**Flying the Flag**

Action Required	Implemented by	Other Notes
<b>Immediately</b> , at the request of the Town Clerk or his deputy, the flag at the White House will be lowered to half mast.	Head of Grounds	See Appendix A in this protocol setting out the correct procedure for flying a flag at half mast  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>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 with the Reading of the Principle Proclamation and until 1300 hrs the following day (D + 2). 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>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>At Leighton-Linslade Town Council, following the death of the Sovereign or other 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 of page 1, flags at Leighton-Linslade Town Council 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>	As above	<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 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>

## 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 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, a Book of Condolence will be opened at the Town Council offices.</p> <p>Book of Condolence will be open from 1000hrs – 1600 hrs 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.</p>	<p>Head of Democratic and Central Services.</p>	<p>The officer should ensure there is adequate paper available in the book. Pages that have been defaced or include offensive or other 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 <a href="http://www.royal.gov.uk">www.royal.gov.uk</a></p>
<p>The Mayor will issue a statement via the Town Clerk expressing the sadness of the Council and people of Leighton-Linslade at the news of the death of ..... 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>Senior Administration Officer 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>

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 bound version to be lodged in the Town Council/county archives.	Head of Democratic and Central Services	
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## 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 to 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. Any decisions/changes to be implemented by the Democratic Services team.	Consider working with local faith groups to arrange some sort of service on the eve of the funeral.

## 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.

Action Required	Implemented By	Other Notes
A stock of black ties and black armbands will be held in and available from the Mayor's Office for use by the Councillors and officers following the death of a senior figure.	The stock to be issued and maintained in good order by the Democratic Services team.	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.
On the death of the Sovereign, the Chains of office will not be worn by the Mayor or Deputy Mayor and instead badges of office will be worn on black neck ribbons.	Democratic Services team	The black ribbon for the chains of office to be held with black ties and arm bands in the Civic Office.

## Public Observance of Silence

Action Required	Implemented By	Other Notes
<p>When the death of a senior member of the Royal Family is to be marked by a Silence, an announcement will be made by Buckingham Palace.</p> <p>Consideration to be given to whether it would be appropriate for the Town Mayor to lead a Public Silence. If so, the location to be determined and all those listed in Appendix C to be invited to be present. Councillors to wear black ties/arm bands/rosettes.</p> <p>If not, the Silence will be observed at the White House by Town Council Members and staff.</p>	<p>The Town Mayor in conjunction with the Town Clerk.</p>	

## Letter of Condolence from Leighton-Linslade Town Council

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

## **Appendix A**

Full details for on the correct way to fly flags at half mast is given on the website of the Flag Institute ([www.flaginstitute.org](http://www.flaginstitute.org)).

It is important that the guidance given by the 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 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 with 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 and other senior officers

Past Mayors