

Audit and Governance Committee



Date of meeting:	18 February 2025
Title of Report:	Revised Civic Handbook
Lead Member:	Councillor Sue Dann (Cabinet Member for Customer Services, Sport, Leisure and HR and OD)
Lead Strategic Director:	Tracey Lee (Chief Executive)
Author:	Glenda Favor-Ankersen
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Your Reference:	CHR 2024
Key Decision:	No
Confidentiality:	Part I - Official

Purpose of Report

This report provides the Audit and Governance Committee with the revised Plymouth City Council civic handbook.

Although the handbook had minor iterations since 2018, the last formal review was done in 2012.

The 2024 review considered the following:

- Protection of the Lord Mayor's civic function and events calendar
- Best practice from other civic offices
- Alignment of activities with current budgets
- Understanding of where the work of the civic office overlaps with other departments
- A clear escalation protocol
- Addressing of equality issues – removing gender specific terms
- Introducing more flexibility in protocol whilst ensuring Plymouth's specific requirements are met, acknowledging that some elements are fixed according to National Association of Civic Officers' (NACO) guidelines.
- Acknowledgement that all Lord Mayors will have their own idea of what they would like to achieve in their year and will want to add their own touches.

Recommendations and Reasons

1. To note the draft revised civic handbook which should be in place in time for the new Lord Mayor taking office in May 2025.

Alternative options considered and rejected

None, as working with an outdated civic handbook perpetuates poor practice, inefficiencies and failure to address modern challenges.

Relevance to the Corporate Plan and/or the Plymouth Plan

The Civic Handbook guides the Lord Mayor and Deputy Lord Mayor throughout their term. The Handbook also provides guidance for supporting officers and informs councillors, members of the public, voluntary groups, businesses and other organisations about the role of the Lord Mayor.

The Council's values include a commitment to Plymouth being a place where people can have their say about what is important to them, and where they are empowered to make change happen. The recommendations of this report seek to deliver these commitments in respect of a key element of the Council's constitutional arrangements

Implications for the Medium Term Financial Plan and Resource Implications:

The costs associated with the resulting operational changes in the civic protocol will be met from existing revenue resources.

Financial Risks

Developing and enforcing new components of the civic protocol may require initial financial investment, particularly in training current personnel. However, these costs will be offset in the long term through increased efficiency, reduced errors, and improved public service delivery.

Carbon Footprint (Environmental) Implications:

N/A

Other Implications: e.g. Health and Safety, Risk Management, Child Poverty:

** When considering these proposals members have a responsibility to ensure they give due regard to the Council's duty to promote equality of opportunity, eliminate unlawful discrimination and promote good relations between people who share protected characteristics under the Equalities Act and those who do not.*

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Appendices

**Add rows as required to box below*

Ref.	Title of Appendix	Exemption Paragraph Number (if applicable) <i>If some/all of the information is confidential, you must indicate why it is not for publication by virtue of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 by ticking the relevant box.</i>						
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
A	Civic Handbook							

Background papers:

**Add rows as required to box below*

Please list all unpublished, background papers relevant to the decision in the table below. Background papers are unpublished works, relied on to a material extent in preparing the report, which disclose facts or matters on which the report or an important part of the work is based.

Title of any background paper(s)	Exemption Paragraph Number (if applicable)
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	<i>If some/all of the information is confidential, you must indicate why it is not for publication by virtue of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 by ticking the relevant box.</i>						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Sign off:

Fin	OW. 24.2 5.02 1	Leg	LS/00 0036 09/25 /LB/1 0/02/ 2025	Mon Off	N/A	HR	N/A	Assets	N/ A	Strat Proc	N/A
Originating Senior Leadership Team member: Glenda Favor-Ankersen											
Please confirm the Strategic Director(s) has agreed the report? Date agreed: 11/02/2025											
Cabinet Member approval: Councillor Sue Dann approved by email Date approved: 11/02/2025											