



Royston Town Council
Marking the Death of a Senior National Figure
Agreed by Full Council on 15th January 2024 – minute number 279/24

This procedure is for marking the death of the reigning monarch, their spouse/consort and the heir to the throne.

At the time of writing, this relates to the King, Queen Consort and the Prince of Wales. By agreement of the Full Council, it may also be used for other prominent people.

The King will be given a State Funeral. The Queen Consort and the Prince of Wales will be given a Ceremonial Royal Funeral.

High Sheriffs have responsibility for reading the Proclamation within their county and will work closely with the county Lord-Lieutenant.

Plans to mark a death should only be implemented when a formal announcement has been made.

Flags

The Town Council will lower the flag in Grossalmerode Gardens to half-mast from the time of the announcement until 8am on the day following the funeral.

Book of Condolence

A Book of Condolence will be opened on the first working day after the day of death. The Town Council will provide the Book of Condolence and it will be available in the reception area of the Council offices during opening hours. A good-size table covered with a suitable cloth, a chair and a supply of pens will be provided. If a suitable photograph is available, that may be in a frame on the table, adorned with black ribbon and a small flower arrangement will be provided.

The Book of Condolence should be closed at the end of day 11, the day following the funeral. The book is a historical record of the sentiments expressed by local people on the death of the national figure. The pages will be collated and bound with a letter being sent to the Private Secretary at Buckingham Palace advising that the Book of Condolence is held in the Council archives.

Website

The Council's website homepage will be overwritten with a black page carrying a portrait of the national figure who has died. There will be a tab to the Council's homepage during the period of mourning. The website will include details of the Council's arrangements agreed in this procedure. A statement from the Mayor will also be added to the Council's homepage.

Events and Activities

From the day of the death until the day after the funeral, careful thought should be given to the types of events and activities which should take place. The question 'why is it really necessary and appropriate for this event to go ahead' should be considered. For instance, if a celebratory event were to be due to take place during the time of mourning, it may not be appropriate, but it might be possible to hold Council meetings with an appropriate period of silence at the start.

Dress Code

Councillors will be encouraged to dress soberly on official business. The Councillors and the Clerk will be provided with black arm bands.

Public Holiday

The day of the state funeral will be a Public Holiday and the Council offices and all other Council sites will be closed on that day.

Area to Lay Flowers

The Town Council will inform local residents where the agreed area is to lay flowers in remembrance. This will be included in the information published on the website.

Review date - to be reviewed in March 2027 or when legislation dictates.