

## Warwick Town Council: Functions of a Town Council

1. The principal function of a Town Council is to act as an instrument of community at grass roots level and to promote and watch over the particular interests of Warwick.

It should act as a sounding board for community opinion, and in doing so focus the sense of the local community, whether in protest against, to agitation for, or act in consultation on any aspect that affects the social or environmental well-being of the Town and in doing so bring that consensus to bear on the responsible decision makers, whether they be members of a local authority or of any other agency, public or private.

2. The other functions of a Town Council may be classified into:

### a) Maintenance

In Warwick, the Town Council have accepted responsibility for the maintenance and upkeep of the Court House, (Grade I - Listed Building of Special Interest) which is used as for events and functions as well as a Tourist Information Office. It is available for use by all local organisations for meetings, functions, etc. The Council also maintains the War Memorial in Church Street, cuts the grass and looks after weeding and trees in the closed churchyards.

### b) The Provision of Services

It provides allotment sites at four locations administered by the Council providing facilities for 198 gardeners. Two events a month are held at the Court House, Tea Dance and In the ballroom a social event for local residents.

### c) The Encouragement of Voluntary Initiative

This includes the management or oversight of charities, grant-aid to voluntary effort, the giving or sponsoring of entertainments, arts and crafts and tourism and expenditure on many different things considered to benefit the Town. This section also includes subscriptions to organisations and bodies and provision to make and receive courtesy visits at home and abroad.

Since Warwick is an ancient town it has a great number of Charities some of which have combined to ensure greater financial ability to help deserving causes.

The Town Council also makes small grants to various voluntary organisations, provides Band Concerts and organises annual displays, Summer Bunting, Warwick in Bloom and Christmas Lights.

### d) The Defence of Local Interests

Defence includes the statutory right to see all planning applications and make recommendations on them to the District Planning Authority. Consultation prior to the making of bye-laws and the rights to represent the views of the townspeople at public inquiries and to oppose private bills in parliament.

The influence of the Council is also exerted through its District and County Councillors and through membership of National Associations.

Every three weeks the Town Council Plans Committee meets to examine all planning applications for Warwick and considers any objections from local residents before making its recommendations to the District Planning Authority. The Town Council is also consulted by the County and District Councils on structure plans for development, transportation and future strategic planning.

The Town Council appoints representative Governors at Warwick School and Kings High School. It appoints representative Trustees to all Charities in the Town.

e) Guardianship of Local Traditions and Rights

Guardianship of local traditions and rights is, of course, impossible if there is no truly local council to carry it out.

It is under this heading that the Town Council retains the Annual Mayor Making traditions and the celebration of Mayor's Sunday at a Church in the Town. The traditional opening of the Warwick Mop remains with the Mayor.

Similarly, under this heading the Town Council retains, maintains and secures the regalia (including the Charters and Black Book), two maces, silver plate and the Mayoral Chain. Rating and Finance

The rating authority is Warwick District Council who collects rates on behalf of the County Council and Town Councils.

The Town Council rate is charged to the residents of the Town only and is usually a very small percentage of the total

August 2017

Jayne Topham

Town Clerk