

Somerset Lieutenancy



*On behalf of
The Clerk to the Lieutenancy
County Hall
Taunton
Somerset TA1 4DY*

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PERSONAL AND CONFIDENTIAL

Mrs Jo Walker
Chief Executive
North Somerset Council
The Town Hall
Walliscote Grove Road
Weston-super-Mare
Somerset BS23 1UJ

16 December 2021

Dear Mrs Walker,

APPOINTMENT OF THE NEXT LORD-LIEUTENANT OF SOMERSET

As you may be aware the current Lord-Lieutenant for the County of Somerset, Mrs Annie Maw, is due to retire in October 2022, after long and distinguished service to the County. Her successor will be appointed by The Queen on the advice of the Prime Minister. In order to assist the Prime Minister in reaching a judgement, the Cabinet Office carries out a process of oral and written consultation. I have been asked by Mr Richard Tilbrook, the Prime Minister's Appointments Secretary, to facilitate the local arrangements.

Local consultation is critical to the process, and in February Mr Tilbrook will be visiting Somerset to undertake a series of confidential discussions with a cross-section of selected individuals to ascertain thoughts on the challenges facing the County, the sort of person who might be able to help meet those challenges as Lord-Lieutenant, and the names of suitable candidates.

Mr Tilbrook has indicated that he would welcome an opportunity to hear your views. A paper on the role of the Lord-Lieutenant is attached to help you in your deliberations. **He will be conducting interviews on 7-8 February.** At the moment, our hope is that these will be held in the Chapter Room of Wells Cathedral, but if government guidance remains that work should be done from home where possible, they will be held remotely via Zoom. Each interview will last up to half an hour for those who are being seen singly, and slightly longer for those who are being seen in groups. **I should be grateful if you could let me know at your earliest convenience whether you would be prepared to meet Mr Tilbrook, and when you would not be available over the two days listed.** A response to me by e-mail to jrfudge@somerset.gov.uk would be fine.

If it is not possible for you to meet Mr Tilbrook on either of the above dates, and you do wish to be involved, alternative arrangements can be made for you to speak to Mr Tilbrook on the telephone or to write to him.

Finally, can I thank you in anticipation of your involvement and ask that you treat this matter as personal and confidential.

Yours sincerely

Justin Fudge
Lieutenancy Officer

Enc

Association of Lord-Lieutenants

HOUSE OF LORDS,
LONDON,
SW1A 0PW.

County consultations for the appointment of a Lord-Lieutenant: the role of the Lord-Lieutenant

1. The Prime Minister has the duty of advising The Queen as to whom She should appoint as Lord-Lieutenant to represent Her Majesty in each county of the United Kingdom. The Prime Minister makes these recommendations apolitically and is himself advised by a senior civil servant, his Secretary for Appointments (supported by officers of the devolved administrations and Northern Ireland Office), following a broad consultation in the county to find out whom those in the county consider best for appointment.
2. This note, produced by serving Lord-Lieutenants, sets out the modern role of a Lord-Lieutenant, to help those consulted and those considering whether to accept appointment understand what the role involves. While this note tries to set out what is common to all Lieutenancies, in fact the role varies greatly from county to county. Further information is best sought from the current Lord-Lieutenant or the Lieutenancy office.
3. Appointment to the office of Lord-Lieutenant is a high honour and should be perceived as such. Those invited to be Lord-Lieutenant might consider the appointment as a duty of service to the monarch.

Duties

4. The Lord-Lieutenant's principal duty is to represent The Queen in the Lieutenancy and to uphold the dignity of the Crown. In this role, it is the Lord-Lieutenant's duty to:
 - i) arrange visits by members of the Royal family and to escort Royal visitors;
 - ii) represent The Queen, including presenting certain honours, medals and awards;
 - iii) encourage and assess nominations for honour, both personal (e.g. MBE) and for The Queen's Award for Voluntary Service;
 - iv) liaise with local units of the armed forces and their associated reserve and cadet forces; and
 - v) (in some counties in England and Wales) usually to lead the local magistracy as Chairman of the Lord Chancellor's Advisory Committee on Justices of the Peace.

Further role: encouraging communities

5. The Lord-Lieutenant is a leader in the county. It is their role to encourage, thank and congratulate; to act as a catalyst and bridge-builder and as a focus for key parts of the life of his county. They should engage in its civic, community, enterprise and social life and, especially, encourage a wide range of voluntary activity. They should spread their involvement over a variety of official and social activity, considering which will have significant and special impact. It is not their role to be a fundraiser but they are often asked to be patron of county appeals; and, while it is not their duty to entertain, entertainment by the Lord-Lieutenant can facilitate action and commitment by others. The Lord-Lieutenant has very broad discretion as to how to go about this community role, to suit their own style and county, but it is certainly the area where they have the opportunity to have the greatest impact.

Time commitment

6. The time required to carry out the office varies greatly from county to county: population density; geography and each Lord-Lieutenant's approach to their community role differ. The commitment can vary from a few days a month in a small, sparsely populated and inactive county to a virtually full-time role in an active metropolitan Lieutenancy. While there is usually no need to resign from professional activity on appointment, the demands of the office are generally incompatible with full-time employment and Lord-Lieutenants can often find themselves on duty in the evenings and at weekends. That said, several Lord-Lieutenants have part-time and non-executive appointments: the key is the ability to control one's own diary. The Lord-Lieutenant is supported by a Vice Lord-Lieutenant and Deputy Lieutenants of their own choosing (subject to Royal approval): effective delegation can relieve the weight of the office.

Office support and expense

7. The few metropolitan Lieutenancies have offices directly funded by central Government. The shire Lieutenancies are usually supported by a local authority, where the Chief Executive is nominally appointed Clerk to the Lieutenancy but provides from local authority resources a PA and office support for the Lord-Lieutenant. The Royal Household relies much on Lieutenancy offices and those offices (and indeed the Lord-Lieutenant) are expected to interact with the public with the same standards of courtesy and efficiency as does the Royal Household.

8. Lord-Lieutenants are not paid. The Lord-Lieutenant may however reclaim from central Government certain personal office expenses and, in particular, travel expenses. These expenses do not however cover the whole expense of being Lord-Lieutenant, for example the cost of a car, appropriate clothes and of entertaining (though the Lord-Lieutenant has no duty to entertain). In rare circumstances, the Lord-Lieutenant may have to find means to subsidise their office support if that provided by the local authority is inadequate.

Duration of office, age and character

9. Lord-Lieutenants (who may be male or female) are usually appointed with the expectation of at least 10 years' service: it is only by holding the office for some time that the Lord-Lieutenant can have a real impact on their county. All Lord-Lieutenants retire at 75. The Queen serves all of Her subjects and so with the Lord-Lieutenant: they must be able to relate to everyone in the county, whatever their background. While a career in politics, national or local, does not debar a Lord-Lieutenant from appointment, from appointment they must be strictly apolitical and distance themselves from matters of political controversy in their county. This is not limited to party politics: a Lord-Lieutenant would not, for example, easily be involved in a policy-making body on which elected politicians also sit. The Lord-Lieutenant must also be able to lead and to represent The Queen with dignity, for example when presenting honours.