

# Death of a Senior Figure Policy

## 1.0 Introduction

This protocol sets out the action to be taken in the event of the death of a member of the Royal family, the Prime Minister, MP for Northamptonshire or a serving employee or Parish Councillor of Naseby Parish Council. Those senior figures currently identified are as follows: -

- H.M. The Queen
- HRH The Prince of Wales (Charles)
- HRH The Duchess of Cornwall (Camilla)
- HRH The Duke of Cambridge (William)
- HRH The Duchess of Cambridge (Kate)
- HRH Prince George of Cambridge
- HRH Princess Charlotte of Cambridge
- HRH Prince Louie of Cambridge
- HRH Prince Henry (Harry) of Wales
- HRH The Princess Royal (Anne)
- HRH The Duke of York (Andrew)
- HRH The Earl of Wessex (Edward)
- HRH The Countess of Wessex (Sophie)

## 2.0 Scope of the Policy

This policy allows the Parish Council to announce the death of any of the aforementioned, and to ensure that protocol be implemented upon receiving official notification.

## 3.0 Objective

The objective of this policy is to:

- To ensure that the passing of any of these individuals is marked appropriately and within the current guidelines.
- To ensure that members of the public are notified and also made aware of the protocol in place.

## 4.0 Protocol to be Observed

### Union Jack & Flags

Upon receiving notification of the death of a senior figure (as listed above), the Parish Clerk will instruct a member of the Naseby Battlefield Trust lower the Union Jack to half-mast, situated at the Obelisk on Clipston Road.

For any other prominent figures or local holders of office, the Union Jack should be flown at half-mast, only on the day of the death and the day of the funeral.

In the event of a local or national disaster, the Parish Clerk, in conjunction with the Chairman of the Council, will instruct the Naseby Battlefield Trust to lower the Union Jack to half-mast on Clipston Road, if deemed appropriate.

Flags/Union Jack must flown at half-mast on the following occasions:

- The Sovereign - from the announcement of the death until the funeral of the Sovereign, except on Proclamation Day when flags are flown at full mast following the proclamation.
- Member of the Royal Family - from the announcement of the death until the funeral of the member of the Royal Family, subject to special commands from the Sovereign in each case.
- The funerals of foreign rulers, subject to special commands from the Sovereign in each case.
- The funerals of Prime Ministers (past and present) of the United Kingdom, subject to special commands from the Sovereign in each case.
- The funerals of First Ministers and ex-First Ministers of Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, subject to special commands from the Sovereign in each case. Unless otherwise commanded by the Sovereign, this only applies to flags in their respective countries.

## **5.0 The Death of the Sovereign and Members of The Royal Family**

### Book of Condolence

On the day following the announcement of the death of the Sovereign or other senior members of the Royal Family, a book of condolence will be opened at the Parish Office and a national book made available by Buckingham Palace at [www.royal.gov.uk](http://www.royal.gov.uk)

In the event of another member of the Royal Family or notable person, the Parish Clerk in discussion with the Chairman, will judge the public feeling as to whether or not a book of condolence should be opened locally.

Dates and times for when the Book of Condolence will be made available, will be decided and confirmed at the time of the announcement, but will only remain open for comment until the day after the funeral. It will then be closed, bound, and filed within the Council's official archive with the Palace informed of its existence.

### Marking a Silence

Where 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 and the Chairman of the Council will lead a public silence outside of All Saints Church with Parish Councillors present. The Parish Clerk will be responsible for arrangements for any media coverage and access.

A minute's silence will also be held at the beginning of the council meeting should it take place near to the period of national mourning.

A statement expressing the Council's and community's sadness and condolences will be posted on the Council's social media sites and website, along with an image/portrait of the Royal Family member or notable figure, posted alongside it.

This statement will confirm that the Union Jack will be lowered to half-mast, with details of how to access the book of condolence, including any that the Palace are making available online.

### Dress Code

During the official mourning period, Councillors and the Clerk will be encouraged to dress soberly whilst conducting official business.

### Events, Activities and Meetings

From the day of the death until the day after the funeral i.e., the period of national mourning (Day of Death +10 days), Council should think carefully about what activities and events it holds and should cancel any ordinary or extra ordinary meetings it has planned, unless the summons for an official council meeting - three clear days - have been observed prior to the announcement being made.

The Clerk, along with the Chairman, will review any events booked during this period to decide whether it would be appropriate to continue to hold such an event.

### Website

For the death of the Sovereign or any other senior member of the Royal Family, the Parish Council website homepage should be overwritten in black with a portrait posted of the individual, including the Council's statement of condolence. This page can only be removed once the period of national mourning has concluded.

## **6.0 The Death of a Prime Minister (Past and Present) or Notable Figure**

The Union Jack will be lowered to half-mast at the Obelisk on Clipston Road, until 8:00am on the day after the funeral.

A minute's silence will also be held at the beginning of the subsequent monthly council meeting.

A statement expressing the Council's and community's sadness and condolences will be posted on the Council's social media sites and website, along with an image/portrait of the individual, posted alongside it.

This statement will confirm that the Union Jack will be lowered to half-mast also.

All protocol concerning dress code and events and activities, will mirror that of section 5.0.

## **7.0 The Death of a Naseby Council Member or Employee**

The Clerk will inform all other council members when the announcement has been received and will post a statement on social media and also the Council website.

The Union Jack will be lowered to half-mast at the Obelisk on Clipston Road until the day after the funeral.

A minute's silence will also be held at the beginning of the subsequent monthly council meeting.

The Casual Vacancy for a council member will be created and advertised within the usual timescales as set by West Northants Council, and not before the funeral has taken place, as a mark of respect.

**Adopted:** 02 December 2021

**Reviewed:** May 2022