

Guidance for Host Organisations

Receiving His Majesty's Vice Lord-Lieutenant of Bedfordshire, Chris Sharwood – Smith MBE



The following guidance is provided for the assistance of host organisations on matters of protocol, precedence, and ceremonial issues where a member of The Royal Family or the Lord-Lieutenant herself will NOT be in attendance.

The purpose of protocol is not to add unnecessary formality but to reduce confusion and ensure that people feel comfortable.

The Office of the Lord-Lieutenant

The ancient office of the Lord-Lieutenant dates back to 1547 when the military functions of the Sheriff were transferred to the Lieutenancy. To this day the Lord-Lieutenant retains the link with the armed services. The Lord-Lieutenant's official duties are mostly, but not entirely, of a ceremonial nature. However, the Lord-Lieutenant attends many social occasions in support of the local community, civic, business, and cultural life of the county.

In each County the Lord-Lieutenant appoints a Vice Lord-Lieutenant, who is their immediate Deputy and will take over their responsibilities if they are unable to perform their duties. If attending in this capacity Mr Chris Sharwood-Smith is the official representative of His Majesty The King for the county of Bedfordshire. When the Vice Lord-Lieutenant is attending an event in his official capacity in Bedfordshire, **he should be received with the same degree of etiquette and protocol afforded to the Lord-Lieutenant.**

Addressing the Vice Lord- Lieutenant

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| Lord-Lieutenant | (this title has a hyphen) |
| Vice Lord-Lieutenant | (this title also has a hyphen) |
| Deputy Lieutenant | (no 'Lord' included in this title and no hyphen) |

The correct form of address for the Vice Lord-Lieutenant is as follows:

Written: Mr Chris Sharwood-Smith MBE, His Majesty's Vice Lord-Lieutenant of Bedfordshire.

Salutation: Dear Vice Lord-Lieutenant.

In a speech preamble: My Vice Lord-Lieutenant, Ladies and Gentlemen....

And within the body of a speech, simply "Vice Lord-Lieutenant".

Arrival Arrangements

Generally, the Vice Lord-Lieutenant drives himself; his car needs to be parked as near as possible to the point where he will be received. Providing a reserved parking space ensures that the Vice Lord-Lieutenant can arrive on time and without worry. Parking instructions as well as clear entrance indication should be sent to the Lieutenancy Office beforehand (see 'Engagement form').

It is usual for him to be received at the entrance of the venue by the host and/or the senior person present.

During and at the End of a Visit

Often the host will accompany the Vice Lord-Lieutenant throughout a visit or event, perhaps handing over at various stages to individuals with a special role. The Vice Lord-Lieutenant should never be left unattended, not least because he cannot be expected to know the planned route or sequence of events. At the end of the visit or event as a matter of courtesy the host should escort the Vice Lord-Lieutenant to the departure point before final farewells. Guests should be invited to rise to acknowledge the Vice Lord-Lieutenant's status.

Seating Arrangements

The Vice Lord-Lieutenant should be seated as the principal guest on the host's right. The Vice Lord-Lieutenant's spouse is usually placed on the host's left, the host's spouse being placed on the right of the Vice Lord-Lieutenant. If spouses are not present the second most important guest is placed on the host's left.

Processions

If there is to be a procession involving other civic dignitaries, the Vice Lord-Lieutenant takes precedence (as a direct representative of the Sovereign) and so would be the last to enter. If people are seated, it is usual for the host to arrange for the Vice Lord-Lieutenant to be announced upon entering the venue, so that those present may stand to acknowledge his status. The person making the announcement should do so by saying: 'Ladies and gentlemen, please stand to receive the Vice Lord-Lieutenant of Bedfordshire'.

Toasts and Speeches

If you wish the Vice Lord-Lieutenant to propose or respond to a toast, or make a speech, prior notice should be given. Please provide, in writing, relevant details of any points you would wish him to make (see 'Engagement form').

If speeches of welcome are being given by the host please ensure they welcome 'the Vice Lord-Lieutenant as representing His Majesty The King in the county of Bedfordshire'.

Church Services

The Vice Lord-Lieutenant should normally be met at the entrance to the Church and escorted to the front pew on the North side of the Church. Provision should also be made for the Vice Lord-Lieutenant's spouse if they are attending.

The congregation should be invited to rise at the Vice Lord-Lieutenant's entry and upon their departure. The Vice Lord-Lieutenant should enter the church immediately before the clergy and withdraw immediately after, with arrangements being made for the Vice Lord-Lieutenant to be escorted to and from their seat.

At funeral services the Vice Lord-Lieutenant will be received and seated according to the wishes of the next of kin.

Civic Services

Where the Vice Lord-Lieutenant attends a Civic Service then consideration should be given to including their presence in the Order of Service. This will assist the congregation in identifying them, as well as ensuring that they are permitted to leave before the other dignitaries. Please inform the Vice Lord-Lieutenant in advance should you wish him to say prayers or a reading (see 'Engagement form').

Visits to Schools

Where appropriate, the pupils should rise upon the Vice Lord-Lieutenant's arrival and again on their departure.

Taking the Salute

When the Vice Lord-Lieutenant is invited to take the salute at a march past, either following a Service or at another formal event, it is customary for the host to join the Vice Lord-Lieutenant on the dais, although normally one pace behind them. The host should also salute or remove the headdress as appropriate.

Media and Press Coverage of the Event

Should you wish, you are very welcome to notify the local press that the Vice Lord-Lieutenant will be attending your function. Please, note that you may wish to consult the Lieutenancy Office before any media posting (including social media), printing or engraving is ordered. We kindly ask you to inform the Lieutenancy Office about any media companies supposed to attend the Event as well as share post event materials, photo, publications, etc (see 'Engagement form').

Mode of Dress

The Vice Lord-Lieutenant normally attends events in ceremonial uniform please liaise with the Lieutenancy Office if this is not appropriate.

Other information

The Vice Lord-Lieutenant would most likely want to meet as many people taking part in the event as possible. It would be lovely if this was facilitated by the host.

Engagement form

The Lieutenancy engagement form for a visit from the Vice Lord-Lieutenant can be found here

[Vice Lord-Lieutenant Engagement Form](#)

and must be completed by your organisation at least two weeks before an event to ensure that all parties are fully briefed. If arrangements change, please contact the Lieutenancy office, we understand that this happens.

If you have any questions at all please, get in touch.

Lieutenancy Office: **Central Bedfordshire Council**, Priory House, Monks Walk, Chicksands, Shefford, Bedfordshire, SG17 5TQ

Direct Dial: 0300 300 5128 | Internal: 75128 | Mobile: 07356 138329

Email: lord.lieutenant@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk