



NACO Newsletter 31 October 2022

Launch of Civic Office of the Year Award 2022

For two decades the **National Association of Civic Officers** has acknowledged, shared and rewarded innovation and best practice in civic office with an award, **Civic Office of the Year**.

The award is now biennial, so that the successful entrants may be properly acknowledged at the Awards Dinner, which is a key part of our two-day training event. That dinner will next take place on the evening of Wednesday 8 March 2023, in the wonderful setting of The Council House, Birmingham.

Now is the time to begin to put together your submission for consideration by our judging panel – you have around three months to refine it, but don't wait that long before you make a start.

In the past members may have thought (and some have said aloud) that they haven't done anything of note that would justify the time spent on a submission. That excuse this time around would be tantamount to a confession of irrelevance and redundancy, when one considers what has happened since the last award in made in March 2021.

We emerged (eventually) from Covid restrictions and the lifeblood of civic office – gatherings – resumed. We planned for and delivered Platinum Jubilee celebrations and most recently, and sadly, implemented Operation London Bridge on the passing of Her Majesty. If you haven't done something special and worth telling us about across that background, then please check your pulse for evidence of life!

The **first thing** you will want to know is the **criteria** on which entrants are judged, so you can target your submission. Here they are:

Quality and Innovation

- In the service you provide to your Mayor/Chair
- In the service provided to your Council
- In the service provided to your Community

Promotion of the Office of Mayor/Chair

- In your Council and/or Community

Value

- How you have used your resources to best effect.

Straightforward isn't it? **Second thing is how to enter.**

Unfortunately you can't rely on someone else doing the work – this is 'blow your own trumpet' time, so accept there is a little bit of work to do, but start now, create a folder, get some key achievements noted and expand it in the coming weeks.

The rules are straightforward - **no more than 10 pages of A4** (either electronic or hard copy) and please note that anything from page 11 onwards won't be judged! If pictures convey more than words, then include them in your 10 pages. If you want, you can include examples of your work by embedding links to videos, media clips, etc., into your submission. It would be terrible if huge embedded files blocked your submission from getting through our judges' servers, so if the file size is big, please send a single line e-mail just afterwards, to inform us that it should be there. If we don't receive it then we can get back to you.

Please note that we will be judging the **content** of each application and not the production quality.

We ask you to keep it brief so that authorities of all sizes have an equal chance of success – one of our early winners was a small town council with just 0.5fte in post. The closing date for submissions is 31 January 2023.

What's in it for you? - A fair question, with a twofold answer. First there will be a **cheque for £500**, made payable to your employing council, but with no conditions from NACO on how it is spent. In the past it has been used to fund a new robe and as a donation to charity – the choice is yours.

Perhaps of greater importance is the unanimous testimony of former winners about the **prestige of the award** and the boost to the credibility of civic office within their council – our bosses all love to celebrate success.

Where can I get a feel for what submissions look like? The good news is that there are around a dozen past winning submissions on the NACO website – just follow this link [past submissions](#)

So – are you going to spend time making excuses for not entering, or are you going to open a folder today and make diary entries to look at it and add content in the coming weeks?

Go for it and good luck.

Please send your submissions electronically to NACO Vice Chair and Civic Office of the Year Co-ordinator, Pat Seager at: pseager@eppingforestdc.gov.uk

by **Tuesday 31 January 2023**

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[Visit the NACO Website](#)