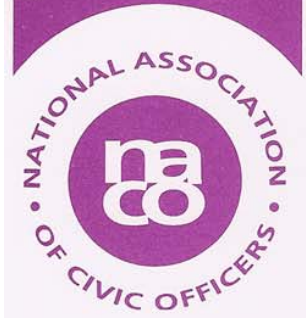


NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF CIVIC OFFICERS

# THE ADVENT OF THE ELECTRONIC CIVIC DIARY

## Going 21st Century



Civic Support Section  
Leicester City Council

Pamphlet number 3

[www.leicester.gov.uk/naco](http://www.leicester.gov.uk/naco)

## **THE ADVENT OF THE ELECTRONIC CIVIC DIARY - Going 21st Century**

The Civic Support Team at Leicester has designed an IT package to assist them in their day-to-day civic operation. The package took 6 months to create and was developed by the Council's IT Department and has had a significant effect on reducing the amount of staffing time taken to produce and prepare papers for the Lord Mayor's weekly engagements and associated office administration.

### **Why was it done?**

Due to significant budget cuts within the Section, it was necessary to look at different ways of ensuring that the service levels could be maintained in a more efficient and effective manner. It was also impossible with 4 admin staff in the office to have access to the diary at the same time, as it can take a few minutes to first locate the diary when making a call.

### **Undertook Review**

A review was undertaken and the results showed that it took one member of staff, two sometimes three days to produce the Lord Mayor's weekly engagement sheet, as it was typed up from the information in the diary and photocopied to 60 customers. Pro formas were always being chased and by the time it was produced it was often out of date

### **IT Package**

The Civic Support Team embarked on designing a package in association with the Council's IT section, which would reduce the amount of staffing time spent on producing the Lord Mayor's weekly engagement sheet and associated administration.

### **What should this super duper package do?**

All members of the Civic Support Team had an input into what they wanted the package to do in addition to it being an electronic diary. These were: -

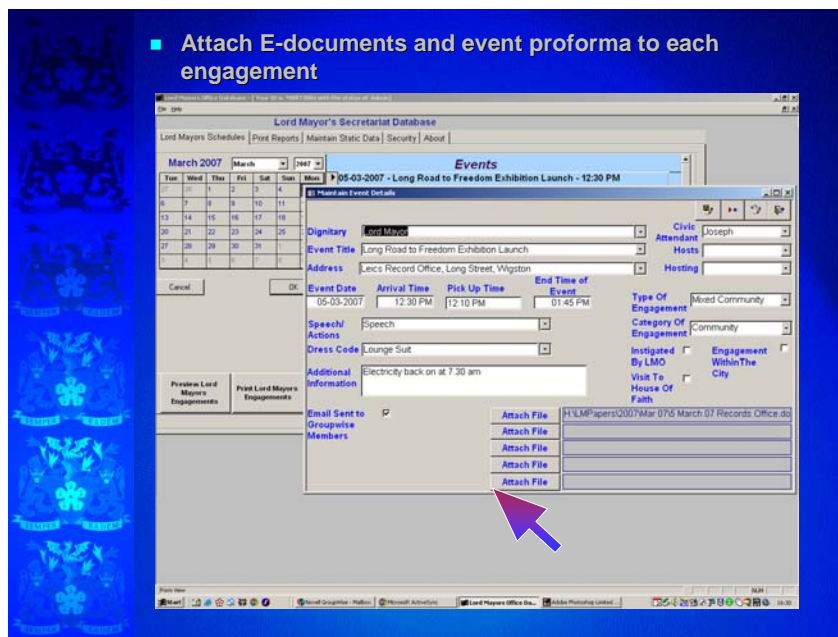
- Shift Patterns to be built in so that the Civic Attendant's Shifts were known well in advance;
- The collation of statistical information for the Section's performance indicators;
- The collation of statistical information for best value reporting;
- To be able to attach documents / background papers / speeches / pro formas to each engagement so as to avoid photocopying and to be more environmentally friendly;
- To be able to compile the Lord Mayor's weekly engagement sheet automatically with the various elements which are essential to the smooth operation, such as dress requirements, collection times;
- To be able to send information to individual Blackberry's;
- To have a mail merge facility;
- To compile a civic event check list which all the team can access;
- To create invitation lists;

This was achieved at a cost of £6000 and 6 months later The Lord Mayor's database was up and running.

Each member of the team can access the database from their own PC. To enter an engagement onto the Database, click on the relevant date and click ok. Most fields have a drop down menu, to avoid typing the most common entries each time but it also allows you to free type.

All the fields required to be able to brief a civic dignitary and compile a weekly engagement sheet, are displayed on the screen.

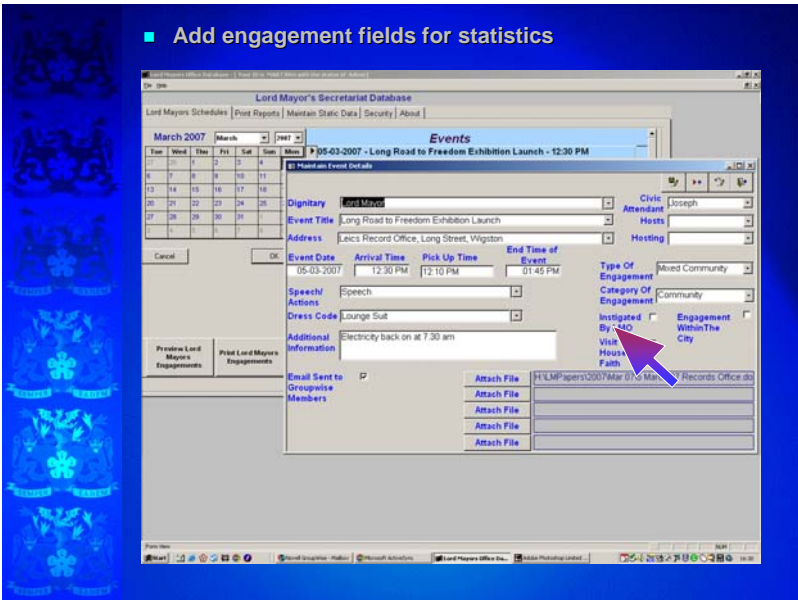
The Civic Support Team also have the ability to attach background information, pro formas and speeches to each engagement. This allows all the information to be on hand at a click of a button.



On the right hand side of the screen there is the facility to: -

- See at a glance which chauffeur is on duty (shift patterns have been programmed in years ahead but can be manually altered as necessary);
- Record who is hosting the event - Lord Mayor, Deputy Lord Mayor, High Bailiff;
- What the civics are hosting - afternoon tea, civic reception, civic dinner;
- Analyse the members of the community that the Lord Mayor and civics are reaching out to, such as women's groups, people with disabilities, elderly groups, ethnic minority groups, faiths;
- Analyse each event in terms of the best value point system;
- Record those events instigated by the Civic Support Team (one of the performance indicators is for 20% of engagements to be instigated, i.e. be proactive rather than reactive);
- Record the number of Houses of Faiths that have been visited each year

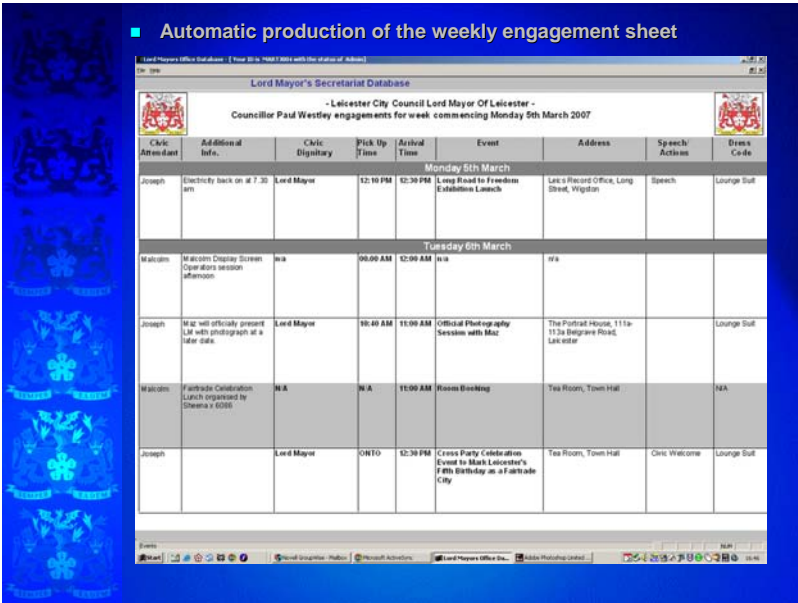
■ Add engagement fields for statistics



**What Can The Database Do?**

It automatically produces the weekly engagement sheet. The package takes all the information inputted into the database when an engagement is accepted and transfers it into a weekly engagement sheet.

■ Automatic production of the weekly engagement sheet



It can send engagements, once entered into the database to the team's PC's and Blackberry's. Any member of the team can send all the appointments entered over a particular time span.

The engagements appear in the individual team member's email Inbox as appointments and are automatically entered into their calendars both on the Blackberry's and PC's.

Any documents, which are attached, are also sent through this system. The Database allows easy synchronization of diary appointments both on PC and mobile devices.

To enable the Civic Support Team to have one central access point for organising events, a civic event checklist was electronically compiled. The civic event checklist is compiled automatically through the sending of emails by the lead organiser within the Team when requesting an individual / organisation to undertake a particular task in connection with the event.

The organiser can send an email to catering to book the catering for the event, order flowers, arrange special security, and arrange a civic gift. An email is sent to the organisation / member of staff requesting this information and when they have completed this task it is updated automatically on the civic event checklist. This means that it does not matter who is organising each event the whole team can see at a glance the status of the event, allowing greater flexibility within the team.

### Compilation of Statistical Information

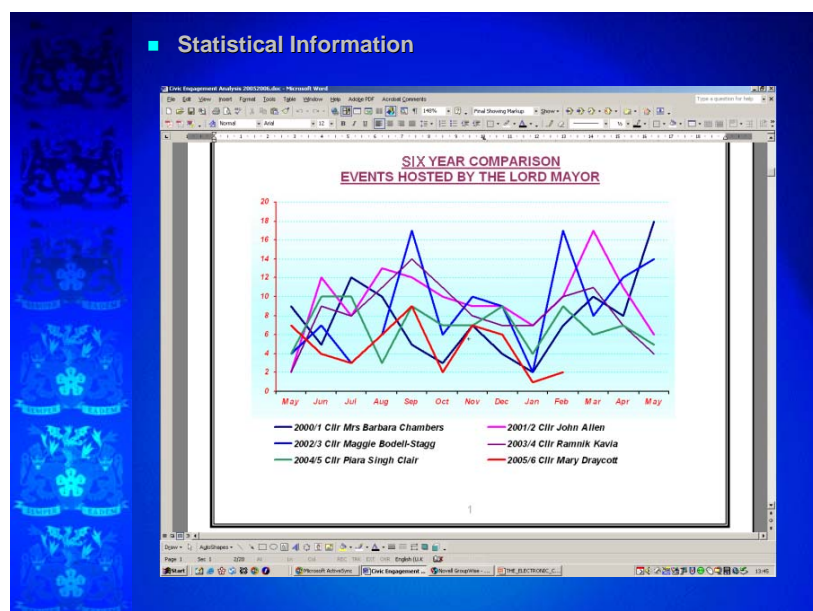
The Civic Office is responsible for producing the Civic Engagement & Performance Indicators Analysis on an annual basis. The Civic Administrators within the Civic Support Team are responsible for this element.

The database performs many of the calculations automatically and so has made the job a lot easier. By clicking on the print reports tab on the database, the operator is presented with a list of reports the database is capable of producing. The first report is Civic Engagement – Hosted Events.

A simple click on this reveals the number of receptions, dinners and afternoon teas hosted by the Lord Mayor on a monthly basis together with monthly totals.

Every year, the Civic Support Team receives a request from the Local Press, under the Freedom of Information Act to provide information on the number and types of events hosted by the Lord Mayor. The database produces this information at a click of a button and meets the deadlines under the Freedom of Information Act.

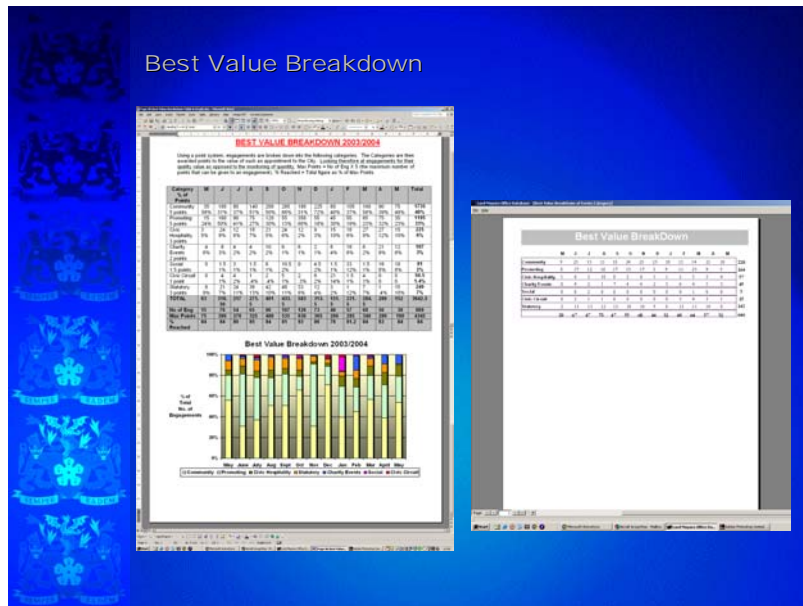
The Civic Office is also interested in tracking trends in hosted events. The figures produced allow the Civic Support Team to make comparisons year on year. Here we can see that September and March were the busiest months over a six-year period.



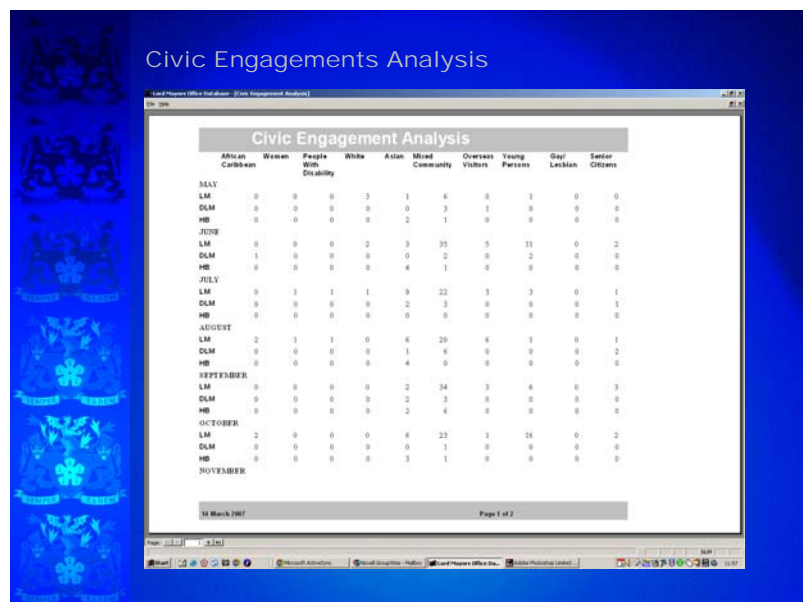
The database also produces a report naming the various dinners and receptions the Lord Mayor has hosted, which assists with requests for information under the Freedom of Information Act.

The database is very useful for calculating the Best Value Breakdown and measuring whether the City is receiving best value from its Lord Mayor.

By clicking on this link, the database automatically produces a report detailing the number of engagements per best value breakdown category. In the example below, we can see the number of engagements that fall under Community engagements, Promoting and so forth. This information is then used to create a bar graph that shows at a glance whether the best value objective has been met.



One of the Civic Support Teams responsibilities is to undertake the Equalities Impact Assessment on an annual basis. This is to ensure that every section of the community is receiving equal access to the Lord Mayor.



The Civic Engagement Analysis report calculates the number of engagements by Community category. These figures are then analysed against the most recent city demographics to ensure that each section of the community is having equal access to the Lord Mayor.

The database also holds labels of guests, this is an address list categorised by event. The database is capable of performing complex mail merges, such as invitations to contingents to participate in the Remembrance Day Service and Parade.

One of our performance indicators is to ensure that the Lord Mayor visits 48 Houses of Faith in a mayoral year, 4 every month. This report details the actual dates and places visited.

Visit to Houses of Faith

Date	Visit	Venue
Sunday 22nd May 2005	Trendy Hospital Service followed by Afternoon Tea	Trendy Hospital, Western Boulevard, Leicester
Sunday 22nd May 2005	Civic Service	Leicester Cathedral
Wednesday 26th May 2005	Leicester Early Music Association Concert and Reception	St Mary De Castro Church
Wednesday 26th May 2005	Thanksgiving Service for Charles White	Leicester Cathedral
Saturday 28th May 2005	Vasathi Celebrations Pujari St. Chelveste Society	Starkie 2001, Lee Circle
Friday 17th June 2005	Flower Festival	St Peter's Church, Woodhouse Rise, Braunstone
Saturday 18th June 2005	St Albans Centenary Celebrations - Rakidhe Choral Concert	St Albans Church, Weymouth Street
Sunday 26th June 2005	Royal Tigers Association Annual Parade Service	Leicester Cathedral, onto Devonshire Place
Saturday 9th July 2005	Opening of newly restored St Marks Church	The Engine, (former St Marks Church), Belgrave Gate
Sunday 10th July 2005	Service to Commemorate 80th Anniversary of the end of WW1	Leicester Cathedral
Saturday 23rd July 2005	Religious Function of Jai Waah	Chorwad Prasad Bama Hall, Bay Street
Sunday 24th July 2005	Inter-Faith Work Camp Lunch	St James The Greater, off Wapfield Road
Tuesday 26th July 2005	Visit to St Mary de Castro	The Vicarage, 15 Castle Street
Sunday 14th August 2005	Civic Service for 82th Commemoration of VJ	St Martins Cathedral, Leicester
Sunday 21st August 2005	St John Ambulance Church Service	St Mary's Parish Church, Church Walk, Hinxley
Saturday 27th August 2005	Guru Nanak Sikh Museum Open Day	1st Floor, 8 Holy Bones
Sunday 4th September 2005	Bang Eucharist & Re-dedication of North Cemetery	St Mary de Castro Church, Castle Street
Sunday 11th September 2005	St John's Ambulance Annual Cathedral Service	Leicester Cathedral

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Finally the database is capable of calculating the total number of Lord Mayor's Engagements in any given time span.

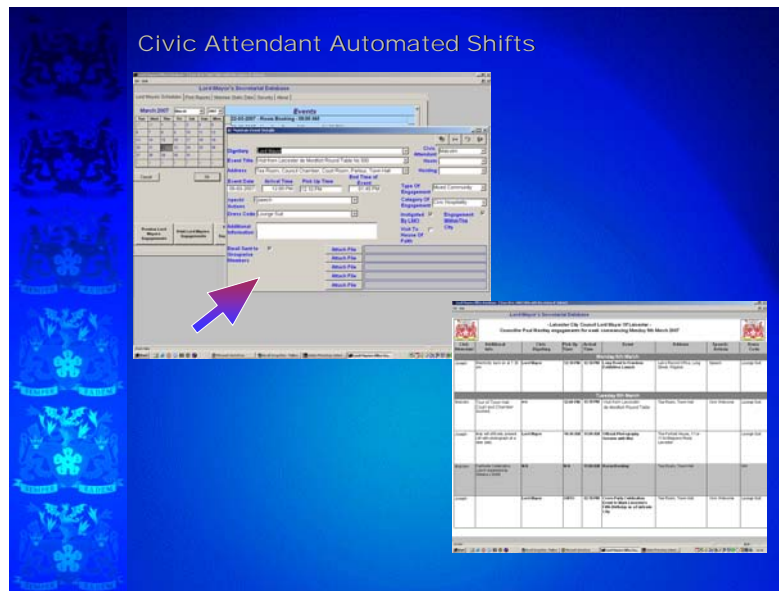
By clicking on this heading, the total number of engagements hosted by the Lord Mayor and instigated by the Lord Mayor can be seen. Again these form part of the Civic Support Team's performance indicators. The report also shows the total number of engagements undertaken inside and outside the City. The operator takes the figures calculated by the database and presents it in a visual format.

### Maintaining Statistical Data

The drop down Menus, contact details and statistical parameters mentioned earlier are created using the "maintain static data" function. The "maintain static data" tablatore stores repetitive information to enable the quick use of drop down menus. For instance:

- Eliminating the need to type Lord Mayor for every engagement that the Lord Mayor attends;
- Menus for regular events such as Mayor Making or Civic Service;
- E-mail addresses for the Civic Team;
- Contact details of Organisations and Groups;

- Standard tasks and duties, from ordering flowers to booking an additional chauffeur;
- Principal Civic Dignitaries List, which can be altered yearly or whenever required;
- Automation of the Civic Attendant shift pattern and transference to the Weekly Sheet (see below);
- Fields for event statistics such as who the Lord Mayor is meeting, perhaps senior citizens or young people



The system links into the Lord Mayor's home page on the Internet ([www.leicester.gov.uk/lordmayorcivic](http://www.leicester.gov.uk/lordmayorcivic)), from which the public can access the following information:

- How to invite the Lord Mayor;
- Biographies of the Civic Officers;
- Lord Mayor's Appeal;
- Civic History;
- Frequently Asked Questions;
- and NACO

### Diary

The Lord Mayor's Diary is also on the web, so that the Lord Mayor's engagements can be viewed each week.

The information is adapted for inclusion on the Web Site and the Database creates this template automatically.

### Further Information

A Civic Database DVD presentation is available from the Civic Support Section at Leicester City Council. For a free copy please email [Lord.Mayor@leicester.gov.uk](mailto:Lord.Mayor@leicester.gov.uk)