



Bedford Borough Council

The first known reference to a Mayor of Bedford in England was in 1264.

Prior to the Municipal Corporations Act, 1835, the Mayor of Bedford came into office on 29 September. The first Mayor of the reformed Corporation came into office on 1 January 1836, and subsequent Mayors on 9 November. After the Local Government Act, 1948, and the Local Government Act, 1972, the Mayors from 1949 onwards came into office in May.

The Civic Mayor was replaced by a directly elected Mayor following a referendum held in Bedford on 21st February 2002 following a petition signed by at least 5% of the electorate. The move was approved with 11,316 voting in favour and 5,357 against on a turnout of 15.5%.

Thus, the Mayor of Bedford is currently a directly elected mayor responsible for the executive function, and ceremonial duty of Bedford Borough Council in Bedfordshire.

The first mayoral election on 17 October 2002 saw independent Frank Branston elected as mayor, he was re-elected in 2007, but following a by election after his death in office in August 2009, the post was taken by Liberal Democrat Dave Hodgson, who was re-elected in 2011, 2015 and 2019.

Since 1st April 2009 the Borough of Bedford is a unitary authority, with the executive having the powers and functions of both a non-metropolitan district and a non-metropolitan county. On this date Bedfordshire County Council ceased to exist, and unitary authorities for Bedford Borough Council and Central Bedfordshire Council were formed.