

Officebearers of the Council.

Originally these were the members of the Council delegated to carry out particular tasks on behalf of the community. Generally they had access to communal funds to carry out these tasks or were empowered to raise money for specific purposes; consequently part of their responsibility was to furnish an annual account of their expenditure. As the Council was then elected for one year, so too were the officebearers.

The Treasurer collected the income from burgh properties and paid the salaries of the burgh officials and servants. The early surviving records show that originally the Provost had undertaken this himself and the Treasurer's post probably dates from the early 16th century.

The Dean of Guild - who enforced burgh regulations on respect of trade and industry and since he collected substantial fines carrying out this role, was in general terms responsible for the upkeep of buildings belonging to the burgh. From c,1427 to 1833 he was an officebearer appointed by the councillors from among their number, but the Scottish Burghs Reform Act separated the Guildry from the Council and instituted the Dean of Guild as a representative of the former.

The Master of Kirk and Bridge Works - responsible for the upkeep of St Nicholas Kirk, for the Bridge of Don and from 1527 for the newly built Bridge of Dee.

The Master of Shoreworks - who upheld the harbour and its approaches and was empowered to levy a tax on cargo to pay for harbour works. His office was created in 1596 and his accounting responsibilities ceased in 1810, when the new body of Harbour Trustees took over the running of the Harbour. He remained, however, the Town's principal representative (after the Provost) on the Harbour Trustees and later the Harbour Commissioners.

The Master of the Guild Brethren's Hospital which was founded by the Town Council in 1607 using the property of the pre-Reformation Poores Hospital. He was responsible for administering its funds and the hospital (essentially an old people's home for impoverished members of the guildry with (at least to begin with) religious overtones). Increasingly the beneficiaries preferred to remain in more congenial surroundings outside the hospital, which was eventually sold in 1770. The Hospital property lay within the triangle bound by Correction Wynd, St Nicholas Lane and the west side of the St Nicholas Centre..

All the office bearers were responsible for keeping the accounts of their particular office until the mid 18th century, when in the interests of uniformity it became the responsibility of the Town Clerk Depute and after 1812 of the City Chamberlain (who was also the Town Clerk Depute for most of the 19th century). It has remained the custom to designate members of the Council as the five office bearers and in the 19th century these were the first steps in the *cursus honorum* which led through the rising posts of bailie to the provostship.