

Guide to the work of Okehampton Town Council

Okehampton Town Council has 14 members who are normally elected for a four year term, with the current term ending in May 2015. Casual vacancies are filled either by means of a by-election or by cooption and those appointments will also run until May 2015. Councillors are volunteers and do not receive payment, although some travelling expenses may be reimbursed. Training for the role is available. The Town Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Committee Chairmen and Vice Chairmen are elected annually by Council Members.

The work and decision making of the Council is carried out through a Committee structure and in full Council Meetings. These meetings may be informed by reports from Working Parties. Councillors generally serve on two of the four Committees which are responsible for Parks, Planning, Policy and Resources and Property. They may also be appointed to serve as representatives on a number of outside bodies, which may be organisations such as OCRA or liaison groups such as the West Devon Borough Council/Okehampton Town Council group.

Committee meetings and Full Council meetings are usually held on Monday evenings, with meetings held on Tuesdays in weeks containing a Bank Holiday. All meetings are open to the public and press and minutes of meetings are open to public inspection and are published on the Town Council website.

Parks Committee

This Committee has responsibility for the maintenance of Simmons Park and other open spaces, the Town Council car parks, the skate park, the cemetery, some public rights of way, bus shelters, wayside seats and the War Memorial. It also has responsibility for reviewing and implementing the Development Plan in respect of parks and open spaces.

Planning Committee

This Committee is responsible for reviewing and commenting where appropriate on all matters relating to planning, including individual applications and wider strategic planning matters. It also ensures that the Council's Crime and Disorder Reduction Strategy is taken into account in comments in respect of planning applications.

Policy & Resources Committee

This Committee has responsibility for supervision and control of the Council's finances, including the allocation of occasional and regular grants to support organisations which benefit the residents of the town. It manages the personnel employed by the Council and oversees the use of IT.

Property Committee

This Committee has responsibility for the Civic buildings and property, including the Town Hall, Charter Hall and parts of the Market Hall as well as other smaller items of property owned by the Council.

This document is merely a guide to the way in which the Council carries out its function. More details can be found on the Town Council website www.okehampton.gov.uk