

Okehampton Town Youth Council

DRAFT Constitution

1. Introduction

Okehampton Town Youth Council (OTYC) has been set up to give our youths a voice, a connection to their town and to each other, with a view to creating their legacy within our community.

Youth Councillors will represent the views and opinions of their generation whilst influencing and inspiring change and introducing them to democracy.

OTYC will work alongside Okehampton Town Council (OTC).

2. Aims and Objectives

- a) To assist OTC by identifying issues affecting young people and providing recommendations for possible solutions or action that could be taken.
- b) To respond to enquiries from OTC on specific young people related issues.
- c) To encourage and engage the younger generation to get involved in projects and events in Okehampton.
- d) To work with other organisations in the town to help promote the views of young people and to make other services aware of young people's views and needs.
- e) To encourage a sense of community and pride amongst the younger generation in the facilities and services available within their community.
- f) To represent the views of younger residents.
- g) To work as a team in both decision making and actions arising.
- h) To create opportunities for learning.
- i) To promote the importance of a youth voice and the influence this can have on wider decision making.
- j) To make democracy and local government accessible to everyone.

3. Membership

The membership and structure of OTYC will, as far as possible, mirror that of Okehampton Town Council.

- a) There will be 14 Councillor seats on the Youth Council.
- b) Eligibility is open to all young people between the ages of 10 and 18 **and** who live, work or attend an educational facility within the Okehampton Town Boundary. The boundary includes the area to the east of Okehampton that will become part of the town boundary as approved by West Devon Borough Council following the Community Governance Boundary Review.

4. Structure

- a) The term of office for Youth Councillors will be one year with annual elections or selection following applications taking place May.
- b) The Council year will run from date of the first meeting following the elections or date of announcement of the Youth Councillors in May.
- c) Annually at the first meeting of the Youth Council in May the following will take place:
 - Election of a Chairman and Vice-Chairman
 - Election of a Clerk
 - Election of a Finance Officer
 - Setting of meeting dates for the Council Year.
- d) Any vacancies following an election/initial selection or due to resignation can be filled by co-option.

5. Meetings

- a) OTYC will meet at least 4 times per year in the Council Chamber or location as agreed.
- b) The Youth Council Clerk will prepare agendas for meetings in conjunction with the Youth Council Chairman and with support from a Town Council Officer.
- c) Agendas will be distributed at least 5 days before a meeting.
- d) Meetings will not be filmed or recorded and will not be open to members of the public with the exception of parents or carers of Youth Councillors.
- e) The quorum for a meeting will be five Youth Councillors.
- f) Resolutions must be proposed, seconded and vote on.
- g) Voting will be by a show of hands.
- h) The Youth Council Chairman will have the casting vote in the event of a tie.
- i) Only Youth Councillors will be eligible to vote.
- j) At least two adults representing OTC will be present at meetings or activities of OTYC, as observers/responsible adults and to advise and can participate if requested to do so by the OTYC Council. Other young adult members of the community linked to community groups such as Room 13 may also be present as agreed by OTYC.
- k) Minutes will be taken by the Youth Council Clerk and distributed before the next meeting for approval at that meeting. This can be with the support of OTC Officers.

6. Youth Councillor Duties

- a) Attend meetings and to send apologies if they are unable to attend.
- b) Work co-operatively with other members.

- c) Treat each other and all other people with civility and respect.
- d) Assist with the formation of groups if needed, support activities and events that may be arranged by OTYC.
- e) Raise awareness of issues affecting young people
- f) Assist with events, projects and issues affecting or arranged by OTC, including community engagement.
- g) OTYC will present its public image under the guidance of OTC.

7. Okehampton Town Council Support

- a) Provide meeting facilities and refreshments.
- b) Provide administrative support.
- c) May provide the OTYC with a budget to support activities.
- d) A nominated Town Councillor will regularly liaise with the OTYC and attend its meetings.
- e) Recommendations from the OTYC will be considered by the Full Council or the appropriate committee.