

**Royal Tunbridge Wells (RTW)
Forum:
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Council (TWBC)**

- summary of Local Government services in RTW and what you pay
- introduction to TWBC, its people and its constitution
- useful references

Summary of Local Government services in RTW

Refer to handout

And the cost to residents?

Band D property in Royal Tunbridge Wells

	£	%
KCC	877.05	72.5%
Kent Police	110.88	9%
Kent Fire & Rescue	57.15	5%
TWBC	78.93	6.5%
Special expenses	84.15	7%
Total	1208.16	

Introduction to TWBC, its people and its constitution

- public body with statutory and discretionary powers
- political and officer structure
- 48 elected Councillors
- over 500 staff

Councillors

- not salaried – but certain allowances and expenses
- represent residents in a given geographical area or 'ward'
- a ward may have more than one Councillor
- may be allied to a political party or independent
- must adhere to code of conduct

Political Structure

Full Council

- all 48 Councillors

Cabinet

- Leader and eight Portfolio Holders from ruling party
- advisory panels

Overview & Scrutiny

- develop policy
- develop & monitor performance
- scrutinise decisions

Political Structure (cont)

Standards Board

- includes independent & Parish members
- concerned with standards of Councillors, complaints & adherence to constitution

Political Structure (cont)

Other Committees:

- Planning (Eastern, Western, Joint)
- Licensing
- General Purposes
- Local Development Members' Working Party
- Joint Transportation

Constitution

Sets out TWBC:

- operations and structures
- how decisions are made
- what procedures are followed
- standards of behaviour
- rights of citizens (see handout)
- citizen involvement

So who might the Forum approach for help and support?

Officer or Councillor?

Officers

The relevant officer will be able to:

- give the facts
- explain if changes are within their authority
- explain if rules are statutory or can be changed
- explain the process for change and advise on complexity / likelihood
- point you to the right people / organisations

Councillors

Councillors set policy and strategy

- Ward Councillor
- Committee chairperson, deputy, member
- Cabinet Member
- Leader
- Mayor ('conscience' of the Council)

With the exception of Cabinet Members,
Councillors can only act **COLLECTIVELY**

Useful references

- Council Tax and Performance leaflet – key facts and figures
- www.tunbridgewells.gov.uk - lots including contact details and constitution
- A-Z – new publication being distributed with free newspapers shortly

If you can't find what you need, ask and we'll try to help