

**Minutes of an Okehampton Town Council Parks Committee Meeting held on
Monday 18th November 2019 at 7pm in the Council Chamber,
Town Hall, Okehampton**

Committee Members Present: Councillor Mrs C Marsh (Chairman)
Councillor J Yelland (Mayor)
Councillor T Leech (Chairman, Planning)
Councillor P Vachon (Chairman, Property)
Councillor G Button
Councillor C Holt
Councillor M Ireland
Councillor P Jessop
Councillor D Penna

Other Members Present: Councillor J Goffey
Councillor D Sanger
Councillor D Travers
Councillor M Tucker

In Attendance: Mrs E James (Town Clerk)
Mr J McGahey (Park-Keeper)
Mr N Cleave (Groundsperson)

		Action
463	<u>Apologies for Absence</u> - On the proposition of Cllr Leech, seconded by Cllr Holt, apologies tendered by Cllr Tolley who was on holiday were approved.	
464	<u>Deferment of Business</u> – None	
465	<u>Mr McGahey, Park-Keeper</u> – Cllr Marsh welcomed Mr McGahey and Mr Cleave to the meeting. Mr McGahey reported on recent work that the team had undertaken in the rose garden and surrounding shrubs, the front entrance rockery which had been cleared and would be replanted in the spring and plans to create a sensory garden at Fairplace. Mr McGahey also updated the Committee regarding recent incidents of anti-social behaviour in Simmons Park, including that morning which had resulted in him being physically assaulted.	
466	<u>Members' Questions</u> – None	
467	<u>Minutes</u> - The minutes of the Parks Committee meeting held on 16 th September 2019 were APPROVED and signed by the Chairman on the proposition of Cllr Yelland, seconded Cllr Jessop.	
468	<u>Matters Arising</u> –	
468.1	<u>CCTV</u> – The Clerk reported that tender returns had been opened by Cllr Leech and herself at the end of last week and Cllr Leech had provided a breakdown of the costs. Consideration would be given to the tenders at full Council.	
468.2	<u>Clapps Wood Footpath Closure</u> – It was noted that the footpath through the wood had been closed for 24 hours from 8am on 22 nd October 2019.	
468.3	<u>Grass Verge Wildflower Initiative</u> – Noted that the Park-Keeper and Clerk were looking into options for the planting of additional areas.	Park-keeper/ Clerk
468.4	<u>Cemetery, All Saints Church</u> – Planting in the Cemetery to be addressed by	

	the Clerk in the new year.	Clerk
468.5	<p><u>Putting Club/Green</u> – Correspondence had been received from Parklands Leisure Centre detailing monies owed to the Council for putting in 2017/18, 2018/19 and 2019/20 to date. An invoice for 2017/18 and 2018/19 would be raised in the following days.</p> <p>The Clerk had met with Mr McGahey and OCRA the previous week to consider options for regenerating the putting green and would provide a report at a forthcoming meeting for consideration.</p>	Clerk
469	<p><u>Bookings</u> – The Committee noted the upcoming event in Simmons Park:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 15th December – OCRA Christmas run in the park 	
470	<p><u>Volunteers</u> – A request from a member of the public for volunteers to be able to undertake tasks in the park and other areas in the ownership of the Council was considered. Concern was raised regarding the additional time pressures that would be placed on the Park-keeper who was already mentoring/supervising an apprentice, and the limited work that could be undertaken by them.</p> <p>On the proposition of Cllr Yelland, seconded by Cllr Ireland (6 in favour, 3 against), it was RESOLVED that a meeting be arranged with the Chairman of the Parks Committee, the Park-Keeper, Clerk and member of the public who had instigated the enquiry.</p>	Clerk
471	<p><u>Park Row Bridge</u> – Cllr Marsh reported that the bridge was in need of repainting, it had been ascertained that the last time any maintenance had been undertaken on it by the Council was in 2011. The Clerk advised that she was attempting to clarify ownership of the bridge. It was noted that the Environment Agency would need to be notified of any proposed work and permits obtained.</p> <p>On the proposition of Cllr Marsh, seconded by Cllr Ireland, it was RESOLVED that the bridge be painted by Parks staff, subject to the issue of ownership being resolved.</p>	Park-keeper/Clerk
472	<p><u>Fields in Trust 'Have a Field Day' 2020</u> – Cllr Marsh advised that she had been in liaison with OCRA who had agreed to run this event in conjunction with their sports week at the beginning of July. On the proposition of Cllr Jessop, seconded by Cllr Ireland, it was RESOLVED that OCRA run the event.</p>	Cllr Marsh/ Clerk
473	<p><u>Skate Park</u> – Room 13 had produced a draft questionnaire in relation to the use of the facility. An additional question was suggested, and it was agreed that the Clerk would feedback comments made, including praise for the initiative being taken by the group.</p>	Clerk
474	<p><u>Football Club Training</u> – The committee considered use of the recreational area by the club for matches on Saturdays over the winter months, noting that several complaints had been received over the previous season regarding the muddy state of the area, and the cost to the Council for repairs and maintenance. Mr McGahey advised that he had been asked recently to cut the grass for them and mark out the pitches.</p> <p>On the proposition of Cllr Jessop, seconded by Cllr Marsh, it was RESOLVED that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • for the rest of this season the club be advised that they would be charged 	

	<p>for the parks staff time for any work requested and repairs/maintenance needed</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • they be informed of any bookings that have otherwise been officially made and that these would take precedence • that the Park-keeper would undertake an inspection of the area in the days leading up to matches to ascertain if the ground was playable and that his decision would be final 	Park-Keeper/Clerk
	<p>On the proposition of Cllr Leech, seconded by Cllr Ireland, it was RESOLVED that for future seasons, it be suggested to the club that a more sustainable programme and location be considered</p>	Clerk
475	<u>Okehampton Argyle</u> – Correspondence received from the club in relation to proposed sports facilities by others was noted.	
476	<u>Budget 2020/21</u> – The possibility of applying for a Pocket Park grant was raised. The Clerk advised that a short window for applications had just opened and as this appeared to be an annual possibility, suggested that the submission of a grant in the next round be prepared ahead of time.	Clerk
477	<u>Payment of Invoices</u> – On the proposition of Cllr Holt, seconded Cllr Ireland, the schedule of payments was APPROVED , noting that there were 2 errors on the schedule although the backup paperwork was accurate.	
478	<u>Reports of Council Working/Task & Finish Groups –</u>	
478.1	<u>Open Space, Sports & Recreation (OSSR)</u> – No further information to report upon	
479	<p><u>Urgent Items</u> – Cllr Marsh reported as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The WildTri event this year had been successful, and Hospicecare were rebooking to hold another event in 2020. The parks staff were thanked for their hard work and assistance in preparing for the event. • An area of bamboo behind Chalet Treloar was starting to cause problems and would be appropriately dealt with by the parks staff <p>Cllr Marsh thanked the Parks staff for their hard work.</p>	
480	<u>Members' Reports and Requests for Agenda Items -</u>	
480.1	<u>Dartmoor National Park Forum</u> – The meeting was being held in the next few days	
480.2	<u>Everything Okehampton</u> – Cllr Marsh reported that the dinner had been successful and had raised in excess of £3,000. The Christmas trees were being put up on 1 st December and would be taken down on 5 th January. Lights were in the process of being put up but would be limited in Red Lion Yard as replacements were required. For the first time the lights would be switched on at 6pm on Edwardian Evening by Radio Devon. It was noted that the timing coincided with a Council event in the Town Hall.	
480.3	<u>North Dartmoor Search & Rescue</u> – The group had assisted with the Carnival and would be helping on Edwardian Evening.	
480.4	<u>Okehampton Community Archive</u> – A coffee morning was being held in the next few weeks.	
480.5	<u>Okehampton Community Recreation Association (OCRA)</u> – A report	

provided by Cllr Tolley was read out; OUC had agreed to extend their funding for 18 months, the new manager and staff had been working hard to rationalise processes. The next meeting and AGM was on 15th January.

A motion to suspend Standing Order 3 (bb) to permit extension of the meeting was proposed by Cllr Yelland, seconded Cllr Leech, and agreed.

- 480.6** Parklands Leisure Centre Users Group – The new Manager reported as starting at the last Committee meeting had since left. Not all users, including Cllr Leech, had been informed of the date of the last meeting.

PART TWO ITEMS

It was **RESOLVED** that under section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 that the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the following item as it involves the likely disclosure of sensitive and confidential information. Proposed by Cllr March, seconded by Cllr Leech, along with the agreement that Mr McGahey and Mr Cleave remain for the following item of business only.

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| 481 <u>Alms House Resident</u> – Some action by one of the residents had been taken to resolve issues raised. On the proposition of Cllr Marsh, seconded by Cllr Jessop, it was RESOLVED that the Clerk write outlining further requests from the Committee. | Clerk |
| 482 <u>WDBC/Fusion Lease Agreement</u> – No update to report upon. | |
| 483 <u>Simmons Park Sports Facilities Proposal</u> – A response to correspondence sent was awaited | |
| 484 <u>License for Fair</u> – It was agreed that the Clerk prepare a 12-year license for consideration at the next meeting of the Committee, as previously resolved at a meeting held on 13 th April 2015. | Clerk |

On the proposition of Cllr Ireland, seconded Cllr Jessop, it was **RESOLVED** to exit Part Two and ratify decisions made in Part Two.

The meeting closed at 9pm.

Councillor Mrs C Marsh
Chairman