

**Minutes of an Okehampton Town Council Parks Committee Meeting held on
Monday 16th September 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 G Button
Councillor C Holt
Councillor M Ireland

Other Members Present: Councillor J Goffey
Councillor P Jessop
Councillor D Sanger

In Attendance: Mrs E James (Town Clerk)

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| | | Action |
| 303 | <u>Apologies for Absence</u> - Apologies were presented and approved on behalf of Cllrs Penna, Tolley and Vachon. | |
| 304 | <u>Deferment of Business</u> – None | |
| 305 | <u>Mr McGahey, Park-Keeper</u> – Cllr Marsh requested that the Groundsperson, Mr Cleave, also be asked to attend a meeting so that other Councillors could meet him. | Clerk |
| | The Clerk read a report from Mr McGahey in which he advised that instances of dog fouling were decreasing now that the summer holidays were ending and advised that he was putting plans into place for winter planting and other projects. | |
| 306 | <u>Members' Questions</u> – None | |
| 307 | <u>Minutes</u> - The minutes of the Parks Committee meeting held on 22 nd July 2019 were APPROVED and signed by the Chairman on the proposition of Cllr Leech, seconded Cllr Holt. | |
| 308 | <u>Matters Arising</u> – | |
| 308.1 | <u>CCTV</u> – It was noted that CCTV was being progressed in conjunction with a system for the town. | |
| 308.2 | <u>Dog Waste Publicity Campaign and Signage</u> – Noted that both items would be progressed by the Clerk in time | |
| 308.3 | <u>Skate Park</u> – Noted that the parks staff had repaired the area of broken concrete. | |
| 309 | <u>Bookings</u> – | |
| 309.1 | The Committee noted the recent and upcoming event in Simmons Park: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anderton and Rowland Fair - 13th to 20th October 2019 inclusive and the licence was approved and signed. | |
| 310 | <u>Fields in Trust Best Park Award 2019</u> – Simmons Park had been nominated by the Park-Keeper, Mr McGahey, and had been placed in the top 20% of parks nominated UK-Wide. The Park was 1 of 4 parks in the South West to achieve the 'Much Loved' status from the 28 that were nominated. | |

	The Parks staff were congratulated and thanked for their hard work.	
311	<u>Salmon Bench</u> – The Committee noted that the carved back of the bench had been stolen, following theft of the seat a few weeks prior, both of which had been reported to the Police. It was further noted that it would be replaced with a simple wooden seat in due course.	Park-keeper
312	<u>Chainsaw Sculpture</u> – A member of the public was investigating the feasibility of creating a chainsaw sculpture from the dead tree in Red Lion Yard and are liaising with the owner.	
313	<u>Putting Club/Green</u> – A response regarding the putting green fees had been received and would be followed up. An amount to be requested was discussed and agreed.	Clerk
314	<u>Simmons Park Car Park Management Agreement</u> – The Clerk reported that following investigation, the current contract for management was the most suitable. The possibility of activating cashless payment for car parking had been investigated and there would be a charge of 8.8% of fees taken. On the proposition of Cllr Leech, seconded by Cllr Holt, it was RESOLVED not to activate cashless payments and to delay further review of the agreement until the ongoing Charity work had been resolved.	Clerk
315	<u>Simmons Park Car Parking ‘Free after 3’</u> – On the proposition of Cllr Yelland, seconded by Cllr Leech, it was RESOLVE to permit fee car parking after 3pm and on Saturdays through December.	Clerk
316	<u>Clapps Wood Footpath Closure</u> – The Committee noted that the footpath through Clapps Wood would be closed for 3 hours from 0800hrs on 22 nd October 2019.	Park keeper
317	<u>Town Hall Hanging Baskets</u> – On the proposition of Cllr Ireland, seconded by Cllr Leech, it was RESOLVED that hanging baskets for the front elevation of the Town Hall be created by the parks staff for Summer 2020.	Park keeper
318	<u>Water Monitoring</u> – Advice received from the Council’s insurance risk assessor that no action was necessary, was noted.	
319	<u>War Memorial</u> – A request to add a name to the Memorial in All Saints Church had been received and would be forwarded to the Church for action as appropriate. A Cllr advised that when maintenance of the closed churchyard, not the area owned/maintained by the Town Council, was undertaken often the arisings were piled over graves of still born children. Cllr Leech to liaise with WDBC	Clerk
320	<u>Land Behind Lidl</u> – Condition to be assessed and reported back	Clerk
321	<u>Grass Verge Wildflower Initiative</u> – Cllr Goffey reported regarding a decision by the Rotary Group not to adopt verges. Clerk to liaise with Park-keeper staff regarding the feasibility of the Council taking on some verges for this purpose.	Clerk/Park keeper
322	<u>Ash Tree Dieback</u> – Approximate numbers of Ash trees on Town Council land were noted. It was commented that it was understood some Ash trees	

appeared to be immune to the disease.

- 323** **Community Tree Planting Initiative and Tree Charter** – Cllr Goffey was asked to establish if there were already any areas in this region which were being planted. It was generally agreed that the Charter was a good thing although responsible planting needed to be undertaken. To be reviewed by the Climate Group.

Clerk

It was noted that the Council had no available land on which more trees could be planted, or a budget to do so.

- 324** **Cemetery, All Saints Church** – The Committee viewed photos of the cemetery provided by the Clerk and considered a report regarding planting and pest control. On the proposition of Cllr Marsh, seconded by Cllr Ireland, it was **RESOLVED** that the Council would work with the Rev and families regarding planting and pest control. A policy would be drawn up in due course.

Clerk

- 325** **Purchase of Equipment** – On the proposition of Cllr Yelland, seconded by Cllr Ireland, it was **RESOLVED** to approve a list of equipment requested by the park-keeper.

Clerk

- 326** **Payment of Invoices** – On the proposition of Cllr Holt, seconded Cllr Leech, the schedule of payments was **APPROVED**.

- 327** **Reports of Council Working/Task & Finish Groups** –

- 327.1** **Open Space, Sports & Recreation (OSSR)** – A further meeting requested by Okehampton Hamlets Parish Council had been held. Information previously provided was reiterated and it was suggested that a working group consist of members of Okehampton Town Council, Okehampton Hamlets Parish Council and OCRA be set up to further discussions. WDBC to provide more information which would be reviewed initially

- 328** **Urgent Items**

Cllr Marsh reported that it had been brought to her attention by the Clerk that the Football Club had been holding matches on the recreation part of Simmons Park, one of which had recently clashed with an official booking for an event. A copy of the club's insurance and fixtures list for this season had been requested. It was agreed the football club use of this area would be reviewed for the next football season and annually going forward. The Clerk advised that a review of the booking forms and policy had commenced and would be brought to the Committee when complete.

It was noted that the garden at Fairplace had been severely cut back by WDBC. The Clerk reported that WDBC had apologised and had now removed this area from their maintenance schedule.

- 329** **Members' Reports and Requests for Agenda Items** -

- 329.1** **Dartmoor National Park Forum** – No meeting to report upon

- 329.2** **Everything Okehampton** – A dinner was being held on 11th October to fundraise for the Carnival and Christmas lights

- 329.3** **North Dartmoor Search & Rescue** – The annual dinner celebrating the group's 50th Anniversary had been held on 14th September.

- 329.4** **Okehampton Community Archive** – Cllr Holt reported a meeting was due to be held on 18th September, the coffee morning had been cancelled.

329.5 Okehampton Community Recreation Association (OCRA) – The next meeting was coming up on 23rd September.

329.6 Parklands Leisure Centre Users Group – A new manager had been appointed; he was due to start the following week.

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 Leech, seconded by Cllr Yelland.

330 **WDBC/Fusion Lease Agreement** – No update to report upon.

331 **Simmons Park Sports Facilities Proposal** – Cllr Marsh and the Clerk reported upon actions being undertaken.

Action

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

332 **Alms House Resident** – The Clerk read out a letter which had been sent to a resident from the landlord and further reported upon the condition of the land surrounding the property, which belonged to the Council. On the proposition of Cllr Yelland, seconded by Cllr Ireland, it was **RESOLVED** that the Clerk write to this person setting out terms as agreed by the Committee.

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

The meeting closed at 8.40pm.

Councillor Mrs C Marsh
Chairman