

**Minutes of an Okehampton Town Council Parks Committee Meeting held on
Monday 20th January 2020 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 B Tolley (Chairman, Policy & Resources)
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

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

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| 598 <u>Apologies for Absence</u> – Apologies tendered by Cllrs Travers and Tucker due to work commitments, who were not members of the Committee, were noted. | |
| 599 <u>Deferment of Business</u> – None | |
| 600 <u>Mr McGahey, Park-Keeper</u> – Mr McGahey reported that the ground had been very wet, they were nearing the end of composting and had installed a bench to replace the Salmon bench that had been stolen in 2019. Anti-social behaviour had quietened down recently. | |
| 601 <u>Members' Questions</u> – None | |
| 602 <u>Minutes</u> - The minutes of the Parks Committee meetings held on 18 th November and 2 nd December 2019 were APPROVED and signed by the Chairman on the proposition of Cllr Yelland, seconded Cllr Jessop. | |
| 603 <u>Matters Arising</u> – | |
| 603.1 <u>CCTV</u> – Cllr Leech and the Clerk had met with the preferred contractor on 17 th January and a report would be presented to the next meeting of full Council | |
| 603.2 <u>Cemetery, All Saints Church</u> – Planting in the Cemetery to be addressed by the Clerk in the new year following attendance on a Cemetery Management training session in February. | Clerk |
| 603.3 <u>Volunteers</u> – Cllr Marsh and Mr McGahey reported that a meeting had been held with a member of the public, and StOC who would be undertaking some voluntary work in the meadow in March. Part of the area would be cut by the parks staff and any resulting grass raked up by StOC, some low-lying tree branches would also be trimmed back to let the light in. | |
| 603.4 <u>Park Row Bridge</u> – The Clerk advised that DCC assumed ownership of the bridge and were looking to establish if/when decoration work could be planned into their schedule. | |

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| 603.5 | <p>Football – Correspondence received from the football club was read out and the committee was updated on use of the area by the Rugby Club on Sundays which the council was not aware of.</p> <p>On the proposition of Cllr Marsh, seconded by Cllr Ireland, it was RESOLVED that both clubs should advise the Clerk/Park-keeper of their intentions which would be managed by them to ensure there were no clashes of booked events and the ground was kept in a reasonable condition.</p> | Clerk |
| 604 | <p>Meeting Dates – An additional Parks Committee meeting date was noted for 9th March 2020.</p> | |
| 605 | <p>Bookings – The Committee considered the following request for an event in Simmons Park:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bounce Around South West request to hold a children’s inflatable theme park in Simmons Park on 16th and 17th April 2020. On the proposition of Cllr Jessop, seconded by Cllr Tolley, it was RESOLVED to approve the event as in 2017 subject to approval of all required paperwork by the Clerk. • The Committee noted that plans for a weekly Park Run were progressing and would likely commence in the spring | Clerk |
| 606 | <p>Fields in Trust ‘Have a Field Day’ 2020 – Cllr Marsh advised that she had further liaised with OCRA would be arranging the event in conjunction with some other activities. On the proposition of Cllr Jessop, seconded Cllr Ireland, it was RESOLVED that OCRA run the event and that a free pack be obtained.</p> | Clerk |
| 607 | <p>Skate Park –</p> | |
| 607.1 | <p>A suggestion by Room 13 that a graffiti artist be sought to work with young people to undertake some artwork on the structures was considered. It was noted that Okehampton Hamlets Parish Council had done something similar recently and that it was very expensive, fundraising would need to be undertaken by Room 13.</p> | |
| 607.2 | <p>On the proposition of Cllr Leech, seconded Cllr Jessop, it was RESOLVED to grant permission to leaders of Room 13 to use gas hobs at the skate park only for specific events as approved by the committee.</p> | |
| 607.3 | <p>Correspondence received from Mel Stride, MP, regarding issues raised by a constituent was considered. The committee commented that the area was inspected annually by RoSPA, more regularly by the park-keeper and any defects were promptly resolved. Anti-social behaviour in the area was an issue at times and the possibility of CCTV in the area, and behind Lidl, would be considered in conjunction with a scheme for the town and Simmons Park. Issues would be raised by Members attending the next Okehampton Matters meeting.</p> <p>Clerk to keep Mel Stride, MP, updated with any progress.</p> | Cllrs Vachon & Tolley |
| 608 | <p>Landmark Tree – Noted that the Clerk had registered interest for a free Landmark from DCC recognising the loss of ash trees through ash dieback. Tree to be provided had yet to be decided but would likely be an Oak, small-leaved Lime or Rowan.</p> | |
| 609 | <p>Putting Green – Plans for enhancement to the putting green were provided by Mr McGahey, the cost for which would be approximately £200. It was hoped the work could be complete by the end of April.</p> | Clerk |

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| | On the proposition of Cllr Marsh, seconded by Cllr Ireland, it was RESOLVED to agree the plans and for work to commence. | Park-keeper |
| 610 | <p><u>Fairplace</u> – Plans for the creation of a sensory/bee friendly garden were provided by Mr McGahey, who planned to commence work at the end of March. The proposed plants would link to the 4 main senses; sight, smell, touch and sound, and where possible would also be bee and butterfly friendly. Suggestions for a longer flowering tree than a Flowering Cherry for the centre of the area were requested.</p> <p>On the proposition of Cllr Ireland, seconded Cllr Marsh, the plans were approved, subject to the central tree.</p> | Park-keeper |
| 611 | <u>Security Alarm Systems</u> – Alteration work to the system approved by Cllr Marsh which would result in an annual saving of around £600 was noted. | |
| 612 | <u>Health, Safety and Wellbeing</u> | |
| 612.1 | The committee noted that walkie talkies had been purchased for the parks employees enabling easy and prompt contact between them, and also the office in the Town Hall when necessary. | |
| 612.2 | <p><i>(Cllr Holt left the meeting)</i></p> <p>Consideration was given to the Clerk's proposal that bodycams be purchased for the 3 parks employees to help ensure their wellbeing and safety following recent incidents of anti-social behaviour and assault on a member of staff.</p> <p><i>(Cllr Holt returned to the meeting)</i></p> <p>On the proposition of Cllr Marsh, seconded Cllr Ireland, it was RESOLVED that bodycam be purchased as proposed, but that they would be not be able to be used until the relevant policy and guidelines had been approved.</p> | Clerk |
| 613 | <u>Policies and Documents</u> – On the proposition of Cllr Jessop, seconded by Cllr Ireland, it was RESOLVED to recommend the Exclusive Right of Burial in Okehampton Cemetery Policy to Policy and Resource Committee. | Clerk |
| 614 | <u>Solicitors Expenses</u> – Additional costs for work to prepare the Charity transfer and associated documentation as approved by Cllr Marsh was noted. | |
| 615 | <u>Payment of Invoices</u> – On the proposition of Cllr Holt, seconded by Cllr Jessop, it was RESOLVED to approve the schedule of payments. | |
| 616 | <u>Reports of Council Working/Task and Finish Groups -</u> | |
| 616.1 | <u>Open Space, Sports & Recreation (OSSR)</u> – No meeting or progress to report upon | |
| 617 | <u>Members' Reports and Requests for Agenda Items -</u> | |
| 617.1 | <u>Dartmoor National Park Forum</u> – No meeting to report upon. | |
| 617.2 | <u>Everything Okehampton</u> – Cllr Marsh thanked the Council for the grant cheque which had been received that day towards the Christmas lights. The Food and Music Festival was being held on 27 th June. | |
| 617.3 | <u>North Dartmoor Search & Rescue</u> – Cllr Ireland advised that he had requested regular updates from the group so that he could give a report at the next meeting. | |
| 617.4 | <u>Okehampton Community Archive</u> – There had not been a meeting but the | |

coffee morning the previous Saturday had raised in the region of £200.

617.5 Okehampton Community Recreation Association (OCRA) – A meeting had been held on 15th January when it had been reported that finances were improving. The AGM was due to be held on 12th February.

617.6 Parklands Leisure Centre Users Group – A new manager was in place. WDBC had created a Working Group to review Parklands and Meadowlands Leisure Centres and had put forward recommendations.

(Mr McGahey Left the 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 Jessop, seconded by Cllr Yelland.

618 Alms House Resident – Actions requested had been undertaken and the issues resolved. Clerk to thank the resident.

Action

Clerk

619 WDBC/Fusion Lease Agreement – Cllrs Leech, Vachon and Yelland declared interests being Members of WDBC. The Committee noted that the Solicitor was attempting to ascertain the status requirement amendments to the lease.

620 Simmons Park Playing Field Lease – Solicitors advice was noted and draft documentation considered. Comments were noted by the Clerk and it was agreed that Cllr Marsh and the Clerk review these and the documentation for sending to the Solicitor.

Cllr Marsh
& Clerk

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

621 Simmons Park Carpark Agreement – The existing lease was considered and agreed that it should only be between 2 parties rather than 3 as existing. On the proposition of Cllr Marsh, seconded Cllr Ireland, it was **RESOLVED** that the Cllr Marsh and the Clerk review the lease and report back to the Committee.

Cllr Marsh
& Clerk

622 Other Lease and Agreements – Noted by the Committee that other leases and agreements would need to be reviewed by the Solicitor and would be sent to him in due course.

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

The meeting closed at 8.50pm.

Councillor Mrs C Marsh
Chairman