

**Minutes of a meeting of Okehampton Town Council held on
Monday 24th February 2020 at 7pm in the Council Chamber, Town Hall, Okehampton**

Members Present: Councillor J Yelland (Mayor)
Councillor M Ireland (Deputy Mayor)
Councillor T Leech (Chairman, Planning)
Councillor C Marsh (Chairman, Parks)
Councillor B Tolley (Chairman, Policy & Resources)
Councillor P Vachon (Chairman, Property)
Councillor G Button
Councillor J Goffey
Councillor C Holt
Councillor P Jessop
Councillor D Sanger
Councillor D Travers
Councillor M Tucker

In Attendance: Mrs E James (Town Clerk)
Cllr M Davies (WDBC)

Cllr Yelland reported that an ex-Mayor, Ray Vallance had passed away, and a minute's silence was held.

Prior to commencement of the meeting Prayers were offered by Cllr Rev M Davies for those who wished to take part.

- 712** **Apologies for Absence** – On the proposition of Cllr Leech, seconded Cllr Tucker, apologies tendered by Cllr Penna who was ill were **approved**. Noted that Cllr Ball (DCC) had also tendered apologies.
- 713** **Urgent Item** – Cllr Yelland reminded Members of the requirement for them to ensure their Register of Interests were kept up to date.
- 714** **Deferment of Business** – None
- 715** **Members Questions** – None
- 716** **West Devon Borough Council** – Cllr Davies advised that WDBC had responded in detail to a Government Consultation – Future Homes, and that he was Chairman of WDBC's Climate Change working group which had recently produced posters in relation to their work on this subject.

Action

Cllr Vachon stated that WDBC had deferred proposed increases to litter and dog waste collection charges to parish and town councils and would undertake a consultation with those affected. WDBC was appointing Climate Change and Economic Officers, investing in renewable energy and making improvements to its IT systems.

Cllr Leech reported regarding increase in Council Tax and advised that WDBC's Rates Panel had met recently. DCC were reporting that 2020/21 was their best budget for years and noted that a large amount of their income came from council tax, which WDBC retained little of although it was collected by them.

Cllr Yelland advised that WDBC had resolved to write to Government in support of reinstatement of the Okehampton to Exeter passenger rail service. Officers had been tasked to look at increasing car park revenue across the

borough, the last review having been in 2018, with a view to covering rising car park maintenance costs.

717 **Devon County Council** – A previously circulated report from Cllr Ball was noted.

718 **Questions Arising from Members Reports** – Cllr Jessop advised that Nottingham City Council had set up a not for profit electricity company.

Cllr Leech noted that there was no mention in Cllr Ball's report of the traffic report.

Cllr Goffey commented upon the item in Cllr Ball's report relating to the railway which was responded to by Cllr Ireland.

(Cllr Davies left the meeting)

719 **Adoption of Minutes of Committees and Members' Questions arising Thereon** –

719.1 **Policy & Resources Committee** meeting held on 13th January 2020 - adoption proposed by Cllr Sanger, seconded Cllr Button and **AGREED**

719.2 **Planning Committee** meetings held on 4th November and 9th December 2019 and 13th January 2020 - adoption proposed by Cllr Ireland, seconded Cllr Jessop and **AGREED**

719.3 **Property Committee** meetings held on 2nd December 2019 - adoption proposed by Cllr Tolley, seconded Cllr Goffey and **AGREED**

720 **Full Council Meeting Minutes** – The minutes of the Town Council meeting held on 27th January 2020 were received, signed and **APPROVED** on the proposition of Cllr Jessop, seconded by Cllr Tolley.

721 **Matters Arising** –

721.1 **Anti-Social Behaviour** – It was noted that a meeting with the Police & Crime Commissioner had been arranged to take place on 2nd March 2020

721.2 **Civic Service** – Noted that the service would be taking place at 11am in All Saints Church on 20th September 2020

721.3 **Preventing Business Crime** – Noted that a date for the survey was awaited.

722 **CCTV** – Cllr Leech reported that he and the Clerk had attended a meeting in Cranbrook with other local councils who were looking to install CCTV. The possibility of joint procurement had been discussed but the councils were all at different stages of the process. There were currently 2 viable hub possibilities and a meeting had been arranged for 27th February 2020.

723 **Town Centre Traffic and Infrastructure** - Noted that a date for the consultation was still awaited and that DCC would be attending the Annual Town Assembly on 30th March 2020 to give a presentation of the proposed options.

724 **Twinning Association** – Cllr Tucker reported upon her previous proposal that the council hosts informal receptions for foreign visitors to the town on behalf of local organisations. It was **agreed** that the Clerk prepare a policy for consideration and approval.

Clerk

- 725** **Simmons Homes Nominated Trustees** – Cllrs Yelland and Marsh declared an interest being Trustees.
On the proposition of Cllr Yelland, seconded Cllr Sanger (1 abstention), it was **RESOLVED** that:
- Rev Davies be re-nominated as non-conformist Minister for a further term of four years as Trustee from expiration of his current term of office in May 2020
 - The other 2 upcoming vacancies for Trustees from May 2020 be advertised without cost to the council requesting applications in writing noting the preferred skills required.
- Clerk
- 726** **Persons of No Fixed Abode** – Consideration was given to a request from a member of the public relating to the possibility of use of the Town Council address as a correspondence address for persons of no fixed above.
Advice from NALC had been received but a response from the council's insurer was awaited.
On the proposition of Cllr Jessop, seconded Cllr Leech, it was **RESOLVED** to defer a decision until information from the insurer had been received.
- Clerk
- 727** **Dartmoor National Park Management Plan Consultation** – On the proposition of Cllr Jessop, seconded Cllr Goffey, it was **RESOLVED** that Cllr Ireland and the Clerk or Assistant Clerk prepare a response for consideration.
- Cllr Ireland
Clerk/ Ass.
Clerk
- 728** **Local Government Finance Settlement** – It was noted it had been confirmed that council tax referendum principles would not be extended to town and parish councils in 2020/21.
- 729** **Proof of Life Certificates** – Cllr Goffey declared a personal interest.
Advice received from DALC regarding the signing of proof of life certificates for British nationals in receipt of pensions from foreign countries was noted. It was also noted that WDBC undertook a similar service for a fee.
- On the proposition of Cllr Jessop, seconded Cllr Leech (2 abstentions) it was **RESOLVED** to continue to offer the service with no charge.
On the proposition of Cllr Jessop, seconded Cllr Leech (2 abstentions) it was **RESOLVED** that a stamp with Okehampton Town Council thereon, not the official Seal, continue to be used on the documentation as at present.
- Clerk
- 730** **Tree Preservation Orders** – On the proposition of Cllr Jessop, seconded Cllr Ireland, it was **RESOLVED** to request TPO's be placed on 5 trees in and around Simmons Park.
- Clerk
- 731** **Annual Town Assembly and Report for 2019/20** – The Clerk reported that DCC would be attending the Annual Town Assembly to give a presentation of the traffic option proposals and there would be a talk from the Okehampton & District History Society. A response from the local Police Cadet Unit was awaited. On the proposition of Cllr Goffey, seconded Cllr Tolley, it was **RESOLVED** to agree the format of the assembly and draft annual report.
- Clerk
- Cllr Marsh tendered her apologies for the Town Assembly
- A motion to suspend Standing Order 3 (bb) to permit extension of the meeting was proposed by Cllr Leech, seconded Cllr Ireland, and agreed.
- 732** **Civic Diary Report** – Events attended by the Mayor during February were noted.

- 733 **Policies/Documents** – On the proposition of Cllr Leech, seconded Cllr Vachon, it was **RESOLVED** to approve the following policies:
- Exclusive Right of Burial in Okehampton Cemetery Policy
 - Strategic Plan 2019-2020 – Workforce Strand
- 734 **Novel Coronavirus** – Advice from the National Joint Council for local government services regarding employees was noted.
- 735 **Payment of Invoices** – On the proposition of Cllr Jessop, seconded Cllr Tucker, the schedule of payments was **APPROVED**.
- 736 **Reports of Council Working/Task & Finish Groups** –
- 736.1 **Charities** – It was noted that the Trustees were meeting on 2nd March 2020
- 736.2 **Climate Change** – On the proposition of Cllr Jessop, seconded Cllr Button, it was **RESOLVED** that Council change the type of paper it generally used to a 100% recycled off white paper.
On the proposition of Cllr Yelland, seconded Cllr Tolley, it was **RESOLVED** that a Repair/Reuse Coffee morning be arranged to be held in the Charter Hall at a future date.
Electric vehicle charging points to be discussed under Part 2.
- 736.3 **Strategic Plan** – No further progress to report
- 737 **Reports on Current Activities by Community Groups with Town Council Representation** -
- 737.1 **Neighbourhood Plan Group** – Cllr Leech reported that he had arranged a meeting with Tom Jones, WDBC, in early March.
- 738 **Members' Reports and Requests for Agenda Items** -
- 738.1 **Okehampton Matters** – Cllr Vachon had been unable to attend the meeting on 30th January. Cllr Tolley reported that attendees had been introduced to the new Neighbourhood Sergeant, issues surrounding the Pretoria, the Skate Park, anti-social behaviour and CCTV had been discussed.

Clerk

Clerk

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 Ireland, seconded by Cllr Jessop.

- 739 **Town Development** – Cllr Yelland advised an update.
- 740 **Climate Change Working Group** – Information regarding a possible contractor for the installation of electric vehicle charging points in Simmons Park was provided by the Clerk. Questions were posed by Members the answers to which would be sought by the Clerk for further discussion.

Clerk

On the proposition of Cllr Ireland, seconded Cllr Jessop, it was **RESOLVED** to exit Part Two

The Chairman closed the meeting at 8.50pm

Councillor Mrs J Yelland
Mayor