

**Minutes of an Okehampton Town Council Parks Committee Meeting held on  
Monday 9<sup>th</sup> March 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

**In Attendance:** Mrs E James (Town Clerk)  
Mr J McGahey (Park-Keeper)  
2 members of the public

- |   | <b>Action</b> |
|---|---------------|
| <b>745</b> <u>Apologies for Absence</u> – Apologies tendered by Cllr Sanger who was not a member of the Committee was noted.  |               |
| <b>746</b> <u>Deferment of Business</u> – None  |               |
| <b>747</b> <u>Mr McGahey, Park-Keeper</u> – Mr McGahey reported on issues following recent storm including a tree down into a garden damaging plants and that parts of the river bank in Simmons Park had been washed out and would need reviewing.<br><br>Low level anti-social behaviour was continuing in the park and the police had stepped up patrols again.  |               |
| <b>748</b> <u>Members' Questions</u> – None   |               |
| <b>749</b> <u>Minutes</u> - The minutes of the Parks Committee meeting held on 20 <sup>th</sup> January 2020 were <b>APPROVED</b> and signed by the Chairman on the proposition of Cllr Ireland, seconded Cllr Jessop.  |               |
| <b>750</b> <u>Matters Arising</u> –   |               |
| <b>750.1</b> <u>CCTV</u> – Cllr Leech reported that a meeting with a possible monitoring hub had been cancelled and they had withdrawn their offer due to a revamp and possible move. Talks with another possible option were continuing.<br><br>The Clerk reported that Bodycam was moving forward the units having been purchased and received and a policy had been drafted. It was hoped to have the paperwork and system in place by the end of April. |               |
| <b>750.2</b> <u>Volunteers</u> – Noted that StOC would be undertaking some work in the meadow on 20 <sup>th</sup> March under the direction of the park-keeper.   |               |
| <b>750.3</b> <u>Skate Park</u> – no information from Room 13 had been received.   |               |
| <b>750.4</b> <u>Landmark Tree</u> – It was reported that the Council had been awarded a Hornbeam Tree which was being collected by Cllr Marsh on 13 <sup>th</sup> March. It was <b>agreed</b> on the advice of the park-keeper that it be planted on the  |               |

Putting Green as part of the refurbishment of that area and a short ceremony be arranged prior to the end of March.

**750.5** Putting Green – The park-keeper reported that he was hoping to base the course on the layout of Okehampton’s Golf Course but that had not proven possible and he was drawing up alternative plans. Sand had been ordered and work would commence when the weather improved.

**750.6** Fairplace – The garden area had been cleared ready for planting. On the proposition of Cllr Button, seconded Cllr Marsh, it was **RESOLVED** that the park-keeper decide the most suitable tree to be planted in the centre of the garden area.

**750.7** Moor Otter 2020 – Distribution of the Otters was due to commence on 18<sup>th</sup> May.

**750.8** Hanging Basket Competition – The Clerk report that Everything Okehampton had agreed to provide a first prize of £50 and Country Lanes Garden Centre £25 for second. Posters advertising the competition had been produced and would be distributed, Cllr Marsh volunteered to do so. A possible judge was suggested and on the proposition of Cllr Goffey, seconded Cllr Marsh, **RESOLVED** to continue with the competition as outlined by the Clerk.

Clerk

**751** Bookings –

**751.1** On the proposition of Cllr Leech, seconded Cllr Ireland, it was **RESOLVED** to approve the following requests for events in Simmons Park subject to receipt of required paperwork and insurance details:

- 20<sup>th</sup> March 2020 – Wren Music Lantern Procession
- 8<sup>th</sup> May 2020 - VE Day Event in Simmons Park (Okehampton Town Council)
- 12<sup>th</sup> July 2020 Okehampton and District Lions Club – Request to hold a ‘Picnic in the Park’ with family sports entertainment  
It was noted that this may be combined with the Fields in Trust Have a Field Day event on 4<sup>th</sup> July
- 16<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup> April 2021 – Request from the New Life Church to hold a 3 day event consisting of 2 days of Teaching, Worship and Ministry with evening celebrations. The final day being a community fun day with an evening Evangelism event.

Clerk

The Park-keeper reported that he was hoping to be able to open the ‘pilbox’ to the public on VE Day

**751.2** Previously approved, subject to receipt of required paperwork, upcoming events in Simmons Park were noted:

- 24<sup>th</sup> to 26<sup>th</sup> July 2020 - Bouncearound Inflatable Theme Park
- 4<sup>th</sup> July 2020 – ‘Fields in Trust ‘Have a Field Day’ 2020 (OCRA)
- 12<sup>th</sup> September 2020 – Hospicecare Wild Tri event

Further requests for annual regular events received were noted and would be approved following receipt of paperwork by the Clerk:

- 24<sup>th</sup> May 2020 – Okehampton Rotary Club May Fair
- 28<sup>th</sup> June 2020 – Dog Show

**752** Trees – It was noted that:

- To note that a tree had fallen into the garden of a private dwelling in Station Road during the recent storms and that no damage was caused

other than to plants

- That permission has been given by Cllr Marsh and the Clerk for tree trimming work to be undertaken at Fairplace by BT Openreach
- That an application for a TPO to be placed on 4 trees had been agreed by the Tree Officer

*(2 members of the public arrived)*

**753** **West Bridge Wildflower Planting** – On the proposition of Cllr Leech, seconded Cllr Jessop, it was **RESOLVED** that 1kg of each of the 3 suggested types of seeds be purchased at a cost of approx. £568

**754** **BT Phone Box** – On the proposition of Cllr Vachon, seconded Cllr Yelland, it was **RESOLVED** that parts to refurbish and site the phone box in Simmons Park at a cost of approx. £807 be purchased, including replacement glass as detailed by the Park-keeper.

**755** **Parks Vehicles** –

**Tractor** – The Park-keeper outlined recent repairs that have been needed and investigation undertaken into the different types of suitable replacement tractors. On the proposition of Cllr Marsh, seconded Cllr Jessop, it was **RESOLVED** to recommend to full Council the trade in of the tractor for a new model STW37 with a new roller mower and loader at a cost of approx. £24,750, including the trade in value of the existing tractor. It was noted that there would be a reduction from the trade in of the old mower/loader.

**Van** – The reasons for a request for a 2<sup>nd</sup> vehicle were outlined by the Park-keeper and on the proposition of Cllr Ireland, seconded Cllr Jessop, it was **RESOLVED** to recommend to full Council the purchase of a Peugeot 2017 van as sourced by the Park-keeper, if still available, at a cost of £7,395, and if necessary a small deposit to hold the vehicle be made prior to full Council ratification.

The possibility of a magnetic Town Council sign to be investigated by the Park-keeper

**756** **Memorial Request** – A request was noted, and a decision deferred for further information to be received.

**757** **Cashless Car Parking Payment System** – The Committee noted a letter from a member of the public requesting a cashless system for Simmons Park be considered.

It was noted this has been considered in September 2019 when, due to the additional fees to the Council, it had been resolved not to install such a system. Clerk to advise the member of the public.

Clerk

**758** **Cemetery Management, All Saints Church** – The paper and an update from the Clerk detailing the potential solutions was noted. The Clerk advised that the insurance company had been advised of the situation and that legal advice was awaited.

On the proposition of Cllr Leech, seconded Cllr Yelland, it was **RESOLVED** to defer any resolution for consideration at next full Council when legal advice should have been received.

Clerk

**759** **Invoices and Charges** – Cllr Yelland declared a personal interest having

submitted expenses for approval.

- 759.1** On the proposition of Cllr Jessop, seconded by Cllr Ireland (1 abstention), it was **RESOLVED** to approve the schedule of payments. The schedule of payments agreed on 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2020 outside of a Council meeting was noted.
- 759.2** Additional Solicitors costs for progression of the Charities work was noted.
- 760** **Reports of Council Working/Task and Finish Groups -**  
**760.1** Open Space, Sports & Recreation (OSSR) – No meeting or progress to report upon
- 761** **Members' Reports and Requests for Agenda Items -**  
**761.1** Dartmoor National Park Forum – No meeting to report upon.
- 761.2** Everything Okehampton – Cllr Marsh reported that the Food and Music Festival was being held on 27<sup>th</sup> June.
- 761.3** North Dartmoor Search & Rescue – Cllr Ireland advised that he had requested regular updates from the group so that he could give a report at the next meeting.
- 761.4** Okehampton Community Archive – Cllr Holt reported that a meeting had been held on 18<sup>th</sup> February and an anniversary event at 2Rivers had also taken place in February. It was hoped the group would provide a display for the Market and Fairs event being planning for June and the last Coffee morning had raised £166.
- 761.5** Okehampton Community Recreation Association (OCRA) – 2 new members of staff had been appointed.
- 761.6** Parklands Leisure Centre Users Group –Cllr Leech reported that meet the Manager meetings were being held instead of user groups meetings. The pool floor was current working and Sports England were being consulted regarding the possibility of funding for a better floor. Issues with cleaning were being addressed and there had been no complaints about the cashless system. Investigating was ongoing into solar panels on the roof of the building.
- (Mr McGahey Left the meeting)*
- 761.7** Two Museums Walk – Cllr Goffey reported that the leaflet had been revamped but it had been too wet to walk the route to check it.

*(2 members of the public 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 Yelland, seconded by Cllr Ireland.

- 762** **Land Behind Lidl** – A quote had been received from the contractor who originally installed the platform to replace rotten decking and a structural pillar, and to also refurbish 2 benches in the area.

**Action**

Clerk

On the proposition of Cllr Marsh, seconded Cllr Leech, it was **RESOLVED** to

approve the quotation of £600 due to the potential difficulty in matching the non-slip surfacing pattern and because the contractor originally installed the structure.

**763** **WDBC/Fusion Lease Agreement** – No progress to report

**764** **Simmons Park Playing Field Lease** – Cllr's Yelland, Vachon and Leech declared interests being member of WDBC. The Trustees reported following a meeting on 2<sup>nd</sup> March that comments on draft Heads of Terms had been made to the Solicitor.

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

**765** **Simmons Park Carpark Agreement** – The Clerk reported that no progress had been made as she had been concentrating on the Playing Field lease

**766** **Other Lease and Agreements** – To be reviewed in due course.

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

The meeting closed at 8.00pm.

---

**Councillor Mrs C Marsh**  
**Chairman**