

**Minutes of a remote meeting of Okehampton Town Council held on
Monday 28th September 2020 at 7pm**

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

In Attendance: Mrs E James (Town Clerk)
2 members of the public

Action

- 287** **Apologies for Absence** – Apologies tendered by Cllr Ball DCC, and Cllr Davies WDBC, were noted.
- 288** **Deferment of Business** – None
- 289** **Members Questions** – None
- 290** **West Devon Borough Council** – Cllr Leech reported that the Leisure Centres in Okehampton and Tavistock were due to fully reopen having received funding support from WDBC. WDBC had agreed a revised budget for 2020/21, although some crucial decisions were awaited from the government. A climate report that was due to be considered last week had been referred to a meeting of the full Council and they would be responding to the 2 planning consultations that were currently live.
- (A member of the public arrived)
- The Leader of WDBC had attended the Super Links Meeting last week, which had been well attended.
- 291** **Devon County Council** – The report received earlier that day from Cllr Ball had been circulated.
- 292** **Questions Arising from Members Reports** – Cllr Leech had requested through WDBC that medical referrals were restarted as soon as possible. Both Leisure Centres were running on skeleton staff and opening hours had been reduced.
- Cllr Goffey commented that the full and comprehensive report received from Cllr Ball was appreciated.
- 293** **Adoption of Minutes of Committees and Members' Questions arising Thereon** –
- 293.1** **Policy & Resources Committee** meetings held on 13th July and 10th August 2020 - adoption proposed by Cllr Tolley, seconded Cllr Goffey.
- 293.2** **Personnel Sub-Committee** meeting held on 18th October 2020 - adoption proposed by Cllr Tolley, seconded Cllr Goffey (1 abstention).

- 293.3 **Parks Committee** meeting held on 9th March 2020 - adoption proposed by Cllr Marsh, seconded Cllr Ireland.
- 294 **Full Council Meeting Minutes** – The minutes of the Town Council meetings held on 27th and 30th July and 10th August 2020 were received and **APPROVED** on the proposition of Cllr Yelland, seconded by Cllr Ireland, noting that they would be signed at a later date.
- 295 **Councillor Vacancy** – It was noted that there were 2 vacancies, 1 on each Ward, following the resignations of Mrs Tucker and Mr Penna. The Notice of Vacancies had been published.
- 296 **Matters Arising** –
- 296.1 **WDBC Public Space Protection Orders, Dog Control Articles Consultation** – The Clerk reported that no further information had yet been received from WDBC but feedback was expected in the near future.
- 296.2 **Anti-Social Behaviour** – The previously circulated response from the Police & Crime Commissioner was noted. The Clerk advised that the local Inspector also had replied indicating that they were open to discussions with the Council and highlighted work that they were doing.
- It was commented that the crime rate in the area could be low because people had given up reporting issues. Council staff had been issued with BodyWorn CCTV and a CCTV camera was due to be installed in Simmons Park on 1st October 2020.
- Cllr Leech had been in contact with the Community Safety Partnership group, the idea of the partnership being to work with other agencies, who were not aware of the issues.
- On the proposition of Cllr Goffey, seconded by Cllr Yelland, it was **RESOLVED** to write to the Police & Crime Commissioner, Mel Stride MP and Cllr McInnis to draw his attention to the issues.
- 297 **Council Committee and External Bodies Membership** -
- 297.1 On the proposition of Cllr Yelland, seconded by Cllr Ireland, it was **RESOLVED** that Cllr Wood be appointed to the Planning and Property Committees.
- 297.2 On the proposition of Cllr Goffey, seconded by Cllr Tolley, it was **RESOLVED** that Cllr Button be the nominated Town Council Member to sit on WDBC's Cluster Group for emergencies including the COVID19 pandemic.
- 298 **Admin Officer and Mayor's Assistant** – It was noted that Mrs Horn had been appointed and commenced work for the Council on 14th September 2020
- 299 **CCTV** – Cllr Leech reported that the pandemic and lockdown had caused a delay, there were ongoing issues relating to the monitoring hubs and he would be contacting the PCC in due course to discuss the situation. The mobile standalone camera due to be installed in Simmons Park would be integrated into the full system when installed.
- 300 **WDBC Supporting our Towns** – The last meeting had been held in early August. It was possible that further funding may be allocated to the Town Councils by WDBC. A free business school had been funded by WDBC

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which benefited approximately 50 local businesses and further free training was hoped to be able to be provided. A further marketing campaign had been published by WDBC and they had confirmed they were happy to support the Town Council's 'free after 3' parking policy for the Christmas period and other events.

301 **Town Centre Traffic and Infrastructure** – It was noted that a public consultation commencing on 16th October, running until 15th November 2020 would be held by DCC Highways and that a webinar session would take place at 6pm on 21st October 2020. Paper copies of the documentation would be available at the Town Hall.

302 **DCC Local Flood Risk Management Strategy Consultation** – Cllr's Goffey and Wood agreed to review the document and on the proposition of Cllr Yelland, seconded by Cllr Ireland, it was **RESOLVED** that the item be delegated to the Policy & Resources Committee meeting for the approval of a response.

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303 **Public Transport** – Correspondence received from a member of the public in relation to bus transportation for students attending Exeter College or University was noted. The Clerk reported that it was understood that Mel Stride MP had taken action and a 2nd bus had been made available. However, students had earlier that day been asked to leave the bus to allow passengers from the railway station in Exeter to board the bus. It was commented that this was further evidence for the need of a regular passenger rail link between Exeter and Okehampton.

On the proposition of Cllr Ireland, seconded Cllr Goffey it was **RESOLVED** to write to DCC, copying in Mel Stride MP and send a response to the member of public who had written to the Council.

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304 **Sheep Grazing on Dartmoor** – Cllr Leech reported on a recent press release regarding the removal of sheep from Dartmoor over the autumn and winter months.

On the proposition of Cllr Ireland, seconded Cllr Leech it was **RESOLVED** to write to Natural England, Dartmoor National Park, Mel Stride MP and the local papers in line with an email from Cllr Goffey.

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305 **Councillor Surgeries** – On the proposition of Cllr Marsh, seconded by Cllr Ireland it was **RESOLVED** to suspend the surgeries after the October event for reconsideration at the annual meeting of the Council in May 2021.

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306 **Civic Events**

306.1 **Mayors Award Presentation** – Cllr Yelland reported that the event had been cancelled due to the tightening of the COVID restrictions, the presentations would be made at Mayor Choosing in May 2021.

The Okehampton Times would be running an article in relation to the award recipients and presentation of the cheque to OkePads was in the process of being arranged.

306.2 **Remembrance Parade and Service** – The Clerk reported that she was awaiting contact from Rev Cook but it was envisaged there may be a small external service at the war memorial at which the Mayor could lay a wreath. There would be no Parade.

- 306.3 Edwardian Evening** – Cllr Marsh reported that the event had been cancelled. The Christmas lights would still be going up and an official switch on may be possible. Some late-night shopping events were being considered.

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

- 309 Finances** – On the proposition of Cllr Ireland, seconded Cllr Tolley it was **RESOLVED** to approve the schedule of payments

310 Reports of Council Working/Task & Finish Groups -

- 310.1 Charities** – The documentation had been sent to the Charity Commission by the Solicitor. On the proposition of Cllr Goffey, seconded Cllr Leech it was **RESOLVED** to approve the Solicitors quoted cost of between £680 and £850 for the preparation of a management agreement between the Trustees and the Council.

- 310.2 Climate Change** – A meeting to be arranged in the next few weeks.

- 310.3 COVID19 Recovery** – The group had met the previous week. Cllr Button reported that the last COVID Support Group meeting had been cancelled and rearranged. It had been suggested that the Council could act in some supporting role for children who had been at home for the duration and assist with helping them back to the level they should be attaining.

- 310.4 Cemetery Management** – Deferred to Part 2

- 310.5 Budget Review** – The group had met and made suggestions for inclusion within the budget for 2021/22.

311 Reports on Current Activities by Community Groups with Town Council Representation -

Neighbourhood Plan Group – A meeting had been held and agreed that the funding held by the 2 Councils needed to be ascertained. The Clerk reported that the Town Council had an amount of £7,108.35 in an earmarked fund. Cllr Leech reported that the Community Group could possibly apply for grant funding for the consultation and printing stage of the process.

On the proposition of Cllr Wood, seconded Cllr Travers, it was **RESOLVED** to accept the quotation of the existing consultant who had already been working on the project up to a maximum amount £7500 for the next stage.

Clerk

- 312 Members' Reports and Requests for Agenda Items -**
Okehampton Matters – The next meeting was due to be held on 7th October.

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 Goffey.

- 313 Cemetery Management** – The working group had recently met, reported upon correspondence received from Rev Cook and that further investigation was ongoing.

On the proposition of Cllr Marsh, seconded Cllr Goffey, it was **RESOLVED** to write to the Church requesting that inappropriate planting be removed from the cemetery and that no further planting be permitted.

Clerk

On the proposition of Cllr Yelland, seconded Cllr Goffey it was **RESOLVED** to move back into Part 1 and ratify resolutions made.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 9pm

Councillor Mrs J Yelland
Mayor