

**Minutes of a remote meeting of Okehampton Town Council held on
Monday 26th October 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)
Councillor K Ball (DCC)
Cllr M Davies (WDBC)
1 Member of the public

343 **Apologies for Absence** – None

344 **Deferment of Business** – None

345 **Members Questions** – None

346 **West Devon Borough Council** – Cllr Davies reported that the Government had announced £1bn funding from which WDBC had received £151,414 and a Leisure funding scheme had recently been announced. Participation at Parklands Leisure Centre was growing but numbers were down on last year, swim school had restarted.

(A member of the public and Cllr Travers arrived)

WDBC's audit in October had been successful. The auditor had been asked how they had performed in relation to other councils, the response being 'as going as they were going to get'. The Council's accounts were going to be simplified so that they were more understandable to the public, however the revised reports would cost more to produce.

Cllr Leech reported that Parklands Leisure Centre was fully open but those attending need to book in advance to enable COVID regulations to be complied with. WDBC had obtained a grant to assist in fuel poverty. A mishap had happened the previous week whereby a cluster group skype meeting had inadvertently been cancelled, the meeting had been rearranged for 18th November.

347 **Devon County Council** – Cllr Ball advised he would send a written report to the Clerk following the meeting. He advised that outlining planning permission had been granted for a special school in Okehampton, which was hoped to be open for September 2022. Free school dinners over the October half term period was commented upon and that DCC supported a large number of families across the board, government funding was being investigated.

Action

Bill Horner, DCC Archaeologist, had obtained an old granite milestone marker with Okehampton 2 miles thereon. The marker had been stolen from the area years ago and was recently discovered, it had been returned to Devon and would be re-sited in due course.

Stagecoach student travel to/from Exeter College/University had settled down. There had been recent reports of busses trying to pass each other on Mill Road and a meeting was being arranged. 'My Care' provision had ended and DCC had taken over the service completely.

The COVID situation in Exeter was stable, the University having a testing regime on site and had confined students where necessary.

DCC's Road Infrastructure Consultation webinar had been held last week, the introduction and presentation would be made available online. Questions would be followed up with written responses.

- 348** **Questions Arising from Members Reports** – Cllr Ireland enquired if GP referrals to the Leisure Centre had been restarted yet, believed they were due to recommence in early November.

(Cllr Leech left the meeting)

It was commented that at the end of the previous week the hedge in Vicarage Road was cut, the road was left in poor state by the contractor. 2 residents swept the road, pavement and some drives in order to clear up but around a 1/3rd had been left. Cllr Ball advised that he was aware of the issue and that the work was not undertaken by or for DCC but he would request DCC attendance to clear up.

A further complaint had been raised about hedge cutting in Fatherford Road when damage was caused to the hedge and property. No attempt had been made by the contractor to clear up and a stump that had been left in a dangerous state had been removed by a member of the public.

(Cllr Leech reattended)

It was noted that DCC had posted information to some households in relation to the road consultation that was underway. Cllr Ball advised that households and businesses that would be directly affected by any change had been contacted.

(Cllr Ball left the meeting)

- 349** **Adoption of Minutes of Committees and Members' Questions arising Thereon** –
- 349.1** **Policy & Resources Committee** meeting held on 14th September 2020 - adoption proposed by Cllr Tolley, seconded Cllr Marsh and **approved**.
- 349.2** **Planning Committee** meetings held on 6th July, 3rd and 24th August, 14th and 25th September 2020 - adoption proposed by Cllr Leech, seconded Cllr Ireland and **approved**.
- 349.3** **Full Council Meeting Minutes** – The minutes of the Town Council meeting held on 28th September 2020 were received and **APPROVED** on the proposition of Cllr Yelland, seconded by Cllr Holt noting that they would be signed at a later date.

350 **Matters Arising** –

350.1 **WDBC Public Space Protection Orders, Dog Control Articles Consultation** – WDBC had advised a delay in the consultation.

350.2 **Anti-Social Behaviour** – A letter from the PCC had been circulated to members prior to the meeting. Cllr Yelland had discussed the potential for partnership working with the Community Safety Partnership Group. Local Police Officers had been regularly patrolling in Simmons Park.

The importance of reporting all offences and incidents to the police was reiterated so that the issues and need for police presence in the area was evidenced.

350.3 **Public Transport** – The previously circulated response was noted.

350.4 **Sheep Grazing on Dartmoor** – Responses as previously circulated from Natural England and Mel Stride MP were noted.

351 **Council Committee and External Bodies Membership** – On the proposition of Cllr Yelland, seconded by Cllr Leech it was **RESOLVED** that Cllr Wood be nominated representative on the following external bodies:

- Okehampton Matters
- Twinning Association

On the proposition of Cllr Yelland, seconded by Cllr Goffey it was **RESOLVED** that the WDBC Emergency Cluster Group representative would report to the Policy & Resources Committee.

Clerk

352 **Asset Register** – On the proposition of Cllr Yelland, seconded by Cllr Ireland it was **RESOLVED** to approve the addition of the part exchanged tractor, the CCTV camera and the laptop to the asset register.

Clerk

353 **External Audit Report** – The receipt of the completed external audit which contained no issues or concerns had been received. Congratulations was passed to members of staff who had worked hard to achieve this in particularly difficult times.

The Clerk reported that the interim internal audit was being undertaken remotely on 11th November.

354 **WDBC Supporting our Towns** – WDBC had confirmed that they Mill Road car parking would be 'Free after 3' during December to follow the annual initiative in Simmons Park. They were also funding advertising in Okehampton Times through Everything Okehampton, this consisted of 10 x ¼ page advertisements.

355 **Town Centre Traffic and Infrastructure** –

355.1 A webinar had been held on 16th October and a drop-in remote session was scheduled to take place on 5th November. Individual responses from Members were encouraged.

355.2 Plans of the proposals were on display on the Charter Hall doors in Market Street.

On the proposition of Cllr Ireland, seconded by Cllr Leech it was **RESOLVED** that the plans and details be on display in the Charter Hall in a COVID secure way at times to be confirmed on 6th and 7th November 2020 to ensure that the proposals were accessible to the general public

	who did not have internet access, a member of DCC to be invited to attend.	Clerk
355.3	On the proposition of Cllr Leech, seconded by Cllr Goffey it was RESOLVED that a Task & Finish Group consisting of Members who attended the webinar put together response for approval of the full Council. (Cllr Davies left the meeting)	Clerk
356	<u>Consultation – Dartmoor National Park Settlement Profile Update 2020</u> – On the proposition of Cllr Yelland, seconded by Cllr Wood it was RESOLVED that as a profile for a settlement in Okehampton was not included no response be would submitted.	
357	<u>Consultation – Okehampton United Charities</u> – Cllr’s Yelland, Marsh and Ireland declared personal interests being Trustees. On the proposition of Cllr Ireland, seconded by Cllr Leech it was RESOLVED that Members respond with their comments to the Clerk by 6 th November, responses would be collated by the Clerk and Cllr Goffey and submitted on behalf of the Council.	Cllr Goffey/ Clerk
358	<u>Free After 3 Parking</u> – On the proposition of Cllr Marsh, seconded by Cllr Goffey it was RESOLVED that parking in Simmons Park be free after 3pm on weekdays and all-day Saturday’s throughout December.	Clerk
359	<u>Civic Events -</u>	
359.1	<u>Mayors Award Presentation</u> – A Cheque presentation to OkePads, the Mayor’s Chosen Charity for 2019/20 had taken place on 12 th October.	
359.2	<u>Remembrance Parade and Service</u> – The Clerk advised that there would be no Parade in 2020 and that the Mayor would be representing the Council at an external service being organised by Rev Cook. The Clerk and one of the Caretakers would be in attendance assisting Rev Cook as stewards at his request.	
360	<u>Christmas Events</u> – The Clerk reported on proposals for events by the Admin Officer: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Reindeer Trail through the town for children with a small prize for all those who completed the trail and a larger prize for an overall winner. • A shop window Christmas Tree festival, however a variation was suggested. • A Quiz sheet for adults <p>Costs arising for the Reindeer Trail would be funded from the grant received from WDBC for the regeneration/reopening of the high streets. All events would be run in conjunction with the Carnival Committee and Everything Okehampton.</p> <p>On the proposition of Cllr Leech, seconded by Cllr Goffey it was RESOLVED that all ideas be taken forward and arrangements made by the Clerk as necessary</p> <p>Cllr Marsh advised that a tree in Red Lion Yard was being removed to make way for a large Christmas tree by the Lions.</p>	Clerk

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

361	<u>Investment</u> – On the proposition of Cllr Goffey, seconded by Cllr Wood it was RESOLVED to invest the sum of £5,000 in the Tamar Energy Community Solar Roofs Project in line with previously circulated documentation and the recommendation of the Policy & Resources Committee.	Clerk
362	<u>Finances</u> – Cllr Marsh declared an interest being a member of Everything Okehampton. On the proposition of Cllr Yelland, seconded Cllr Ireland (1 abstention) it was RESOLVED to approve the schedule of payments.	
363	<u>Policies and Documents</u> – On the proposition of Cllr Marsh, seconded by Cllr Leech it was RESOLVED to approve the Annual Leave Policy as previously circulated and recommended by the Policy & Resources Committee.	Clerk
364	<u>Reports of Council Working/Task & Finish Groups -</u>	
364.1	<u>Charities</u> – No meeting had been held as the draft Management Agreement was awaited.	
364.2	<u>Climate Change</u> – Cllr Goffey reported that no meeting had been held but that she had attended other Parish Council groups. On the proposition of Cllr Tolley, seconded by Cllr Holt it was RESOLVED to approve the revised Terms of Reference.	Clerk
364.3	<u>COVID19 Recovery</u> – No meeting had been held. On the proposition of Cllr Goffey, seconded by Cllr Ireland it was RESOLVED to approve the revised Terms of Reference.	Clerk
364.4	<u>Cemetery Management</u> – Deferred to Part 2	
365	<u>Reports on Current Activities by Community Groups with Town Council Representation -</u>	
365.1	<u>Neighbourhood Plan Group</u> – The consultant had been appointed with the agreement of the Town and Hamlets Parish Councils and was working on a draft document.	
366	<u>Members' Reports and Requests for Agenda Items -</u>	
366.1	<u>Okehampton Matters</u> – Cllr Tolley reported that a meeting had been held on 7 th October when the following matters had been raised: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The possibility of Speed Watch in Crediton Road by the new school, schemes currently running would continue, others were on hold due to the pandemic. • A CCTV update from Cllr Leech and an update in relation to antisocial behaviour in Simmons Park. • The Yes Tor Project whose aim was to link the community, school and young people together, led by the Neighbourhood Beat Manager. • It was noted that there had only been 6 reported crimes in Simmons Park in 2020 and that incidents needed to be reported to the police in order to evidence the need for police presence in the area. • A Street Pastors report and drug concerns The next meeting was due to be held on 20 January 2021.	
366.2	<u>Okehampton COVID19 Support Group</u> – Cllr Button reported that test results were coming back a bit quicker, the group had sent out crochet packs, and were in the process of putting 25 wellbeing packs together. The current focus was on stone painting in aid of Remembrance Day for	

which grant funding had been received from Cllr Ball's Locality fund. The stones would be placed on war memorial initially.

It was noted that mobilisation of the group in the event of an increase in cases may be an issue as some volunteers had returned to work.

(A member of the public left)

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.

367 **CCTV** – Cllr Leech reported on ongoing issues in relation to connection to a monitoring hub.

A revised tender from the appointed preferred contractor had been received at less than the original quote, this was because the town and park systems had been merged into one. A £300 grant from WDBC Community Safety Partnership Group had been offered towards the system. Fibre connection to a monitoring hub at a later date would be a large additional cost. There would also be additional costs for associated electrical work for the installation of the system, and some tree pruning in park and around the town would be required.

On the proposition of Cllr Yelland, seconded by Cllr Travers it was **RESOLVED** to approve the revised cost of £56,232.82 for the supply and installation of the system in the town and park plus the initial annual maintenance cost of £1,078 for the first year.

Clerk

368 **Cemetery Management** – The previously circulated report was considered. On the proposition of Cllr Yelland, seconded Cllr Marsh it was **RESOLVED** to approve 1tems 1a) through to 1g), the other items were noted.

Clerk

369 **Charter Hall Roof Project** – The previously circulated report and documentation was considered, it was noted that one invitation to tender had not been returned, and one had been received after the closing date and not in the format requested.

On the proposition of Cllr Goffey, seconded Cllr Ireland, it was **RESOLVED** to appoint the company who had returned the tender on time and in the required format, because of their experience working for local councils previously and that the figure quoted (£25,435) was similar to a professional fees costing within the other received tender. The accepted tender would include both the Charter Hall and Cinema roofs at this time, retaining the option to remove the Cinema roof element in the future.

Clerk

Any members able to volunteer time to help in seeking and writing grant applications for financial assistance with the project to contact the Clerk.

Cllrs

370 **Electrical Testing Repairs** – On the proposition of Cllr Goffey, seconded Cllr Travers, it was **RESOLVED** to appoint the contractor to undertake required repairs at the sum of £4,875. The quotation was not the lowest, however it was thought to be best value as the other had not included all aspects and some queries had been raised which could increase the overall cost. One invitation had not been returned.

Clerk

371 **Staffing Matters** – On the proposition of Cllr Marsh, seconded by Cllr Ireland it was **RESOLVED** to ratify the Policy & Resources Committees decision to approve and fund a training request by the Clerk and in accordance with the agreement.

Clerk

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

The Chairman closed the meeting at 9.15pm

Councillor Mrs J Yelland
Mayor