

**Minutes of a Remote Okehampton Town Council Parks Committee Meeting held on  
Monday 1<sup>st</sup> March 2021 at 7pm**

**Committee Members Present:** Councillor C Marsh (Chairman)  
Councillor J Goffey (Chairman, Property)  
Councillor T Leech (Chairman, Planning)  
Councillor B Tolley (Chairman, Policy & Resources)  
Councillor T Abbots  
Councillor C Holt  
Councillor M Ireland  
Councillor P Jessop

**Other Members Present:** Councillor B Matravers  
Councillor D Sanger

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

**Action**

**707**     **Apologies for Absence** – Apologies tendered by Cllr Yelland due to internet issues were **approved** on the proposition of Cllr Goffey, seconded Cllr Leech.

Cllr Button, who was a member of the Committee, was not present.

**708**     **Deferment of Business** – None

(A member of the public arrived.)

**709**     **Mr McGahey, Park-Keeper** – Mr McGahey reported that the ponds had been cleared and frog spawn had appeared. The flower beds had been mulched, the phone box had been sited near Jubilee Bridge and the glass would be installed at a later date. The tree in the sensory garden at Fairplace was budding, looking healthy and fitted in well with a National Trust initiative to plant blossoming trees into cities to add colour and help mental health and wellbeing. Plants for the sensory garden had been purchased and seeds were growing in the office.

It was reported that the Zip Wire been condemned and quotations for replacement were being sought.

The wildflower verge at West Bridge would be sown in the next few weeks. 12 bird boxes to suit a variety of birds had been made by the Parks team and put up in up in the park. Good feedback from the public had been received in relation to the recent addition of bird feeders. The roses were in the process of being pruned.

**710**     **Members' Questions** – The type of seed being sown in the verge at West Bridge was queried.

**711**     **Minutes** - The minutes of the Parks Committee meetings held on 16<sup>th</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2020, and 18<sup>th</sup> January 2021 were **APPROVED** to be signed by the Chairman at a later date on the proposition of Cllr Ireland, seconded Cllr Holt.

<b>712</b>	<b><u>Matters Arising</u></b> –	
<b>712.1</b>	<b><u>Putting Green</u></b> – Bunkers had been dug and sand was about to be ordered. The grass would be scarified in next few weeks and the Landmark tree was doing well and budding.	
<b>712.2</b>	<b><u>Fairplace</u></b> – Plants had been ordered and it was hoped to have the area completed by summer.	
<b>712.3</b>	<b><u>Moor Otter 2020</u></b> – The initiative had been cancelled in 2020 due to the pandemic and was planned to take place at Easter 2021. The Council's Otter would be sited in the park.	
<b>712.4</b>	<b><u>Hanging Basket Competition</u></b> – The competition had been advertised and would continue to be publicised over the coming months, to be judged by the Mayor of WDBC in July.	
<b>712.5</b>	<b><u>Simmons Park Leaflet</u></b> – Mrs Horn had continued to work on this project and had obtained a draft for consideration at the next meeting.	
<b>713</b>	<b><u>Deloitte Ride Across Britain</u></b> – It was noted that Stage 1 of the event on 4 <sup>th</sup> September ended in Okehampton and Stage 2 continued the following day.	
<b>714</b>	<b><u>Antisocial Behaviour and Criminal Damage in Simmons Park</u></b> – Mr McGahey reported that another group was beginning to emerge and cause issues in the town.	
<b>715</b>	<b><u>Clapps Wood</u></b> – Approximately 60% of the trees in the area were Ash and had all been identified as having ash dieback in the recent tree survey. Quotations for their felling were being obtained, work would be carried out in the autumn due to nesting birds.	
<b>716</b>	<b><u>Fields in Trust</u></b> – It was noted that it was hoped to be able to hold an event in conjunction with OCRA on 3 <sup>rd</sup> July.	
<b>717</b>	<b><u>Memorial Request</u></b> – A request to place a memorial plaque on a bench in the vicinity of the ponds in Simmons Park had been received. On the proposition of Cllr Marsh, seconded Cllr Goffey it was <b>RESOLVED</b> that the Park-Keeper and Clerk agree the location with the applicant and appropriate fee.	Clerk/Park-Keeper
<b>718</b>	<b><u>Walkers are Welcome</u></b> – On the proposition of Cllr Goffey, seconded Cllr Leech, it was <b>RESOLVED</b> not to join the scheme, noting that if the organisation became more proactive it would be more worthwhile, of benefit to the public, encourage tourists and could then be reconsidered in the future.	Clerk
<b>719</b>	<b><u>Feasibility Study for Proposed Cycle Track from Sticklepath to Okehampton</u></b> – On the proposition of Cllr Ireland, seconded Cllr Tolley it was <b>RESOLVED</b> to recommend to full Council that Cllr Jessop be nominated to represent the Council on the working group and Cllr Sanger to attend if he was unavailable.	Clerk
<b>720</b>	<b><u>Public Footpath</u></b> – On the proposition of Cllr Ireland, seconded Cllr Marsh, it was <b>RESOLVED</b> to purchase and install two drop down	

posts to prevent unnecessary vehicle access along the footpath at an approximately cost of £100 each. Clerk

**721** **Payment of Invoices** – On the proposition of Cllr Ireland, seconded by Cllr Jessop, it was **RESOLVED** to approve the schedule of payments.

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**722** **Reports of Council Working/Task and Finish Groups -**

**722.1** Open Space, Sports & Recreation (OSSR) – No meeting had been held.

**722.2** Cemetery Management – Final paperwork had been approved and was being circulated later that week.

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**723** **Members' Reports and Requests for Agenda Items -**

**723.1** Dartmoor National Park Forum – No meeting had been held.

**723.2** Everything Okehampton – The Christmas lights had been successful with the help of volunteers.

**723.3** North Dartmoor Search & Rescue – Cllr Ireland reported that the group had been involved in the recent dispersal of people in Exeter in relation to the unexploded WWII bomb that had been found and detonated in the previous few days.

**723.4** Okehampton Community Archive – Cllr Holt reported that no meeting had been held.

**723.5** Okehampton Community Recreation Association (OCRA) – Cllr Tolley reported that the Pavilion was closed, and the AGM was being held on 14<sup>th</sup> April.

**723.6** Parklands Leisure Centre Users Group – Cllr Leech reported that he was presenting a report to WDBC on behalf of Fusion in relation to potential reopening dates and GP referrals in the next few days.

## **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 involved the likely disclosure of sensitive and confidential information. Proposed by Cllr Leech, seconded by Cllr Holt.

**724** **Shed to the Rear of the Rock** – On the proposition of Cllr Goffey, seconded Cllr Leech it was **RESOLVED** to appoint the contractor who had quoted on the required specification to undertake the work. **Action**  
Clerk

**725** **Business Venture Request** – On the proposition of Cllr Ireland, seconded Cllr Abbots, it was **RESOLVED** to decline the request on the grounds that there was already enough similar provision in the immediate area and the town. Clerk

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**726** **Leases and Agreements** – On the proposition of Cllr Marsh, seconded Cllr Ireland (2 abstentions) it was **RESOLVED** to recommend to the Trustees that leases and agreements for land owned by the Charity should be between the Charity and Tenants but managed by the Council. Clerk

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Cllr's Marsh and Goffey declared personal interests in The Rock being members of Simmons Homes.

On the proposition of Cllr Leech, seconded Cllr Jessop (2 abstentions) it was **RESOLVED** to approve the agreement for the use of the shed behind The Rock between Simmons Homes and the Council.

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On the proposition of Cllr Tolley, seconded Cllr Leech, it was **RESOLVED** to exit Part Two.

The meeting closed at 7.57pm

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