

Okehampton Town Council
Policy & Resources Meeting 27th September 2021
Meeting Report

Date:	17 th September 2021
Name:	Emma James

9. **Rail Reinstatement, Traffic and Parking** – To note an update, previously circulated and resolve any action required

To note the updates received from DCC's Transportation Strategy & Road Safety Manager:

16th September:

We are working towards commencing the mitigation works on Station Road on 19th October and are proposing the following method:

- The works will take place during the day using full road closures but maintaining access
- It is anticipated that the works would take approximately 3 days using this method
- Access to businesses and properties would be maintained at all times but vehicles would be marshalled through the closures. Parking would be suspended.
- Only essential access would be permitted through the road closure

Discussing the above with xxx, he was content as long as sufficient access was maintained for residents and businesses while ensuring that the H&S of the contractors staff would be paramount.

Pre-rail opening video surveys are also being organised for the start of October to monitor traffic volumes / conflicts along Station Road as well as recording traffic movements at the Fore Street / Market Street / George St junction.

9th September:

Things have moved on since my last update so I would suggest that you share the following information...

- We've had confirmation from the Traffic Management Team that the proposed restrictions (i.e. limited double yellows to enable longer sections to pull-in and give way) can be progressed as an Experimental Traffic Regulation Order (ETRO) – such an approach means we can monitor things and amend the order during and/or remove at the end of the experiment.
- A site visit has been conducted to establish the required works and take the required measurements for the advertising of the ETRO.
- A draft ETRO advertising plan has been generated.
- Roadspace permit applications have been granted for the end of October to undertake the works. TTRO Application for restricted parking on Station Road has been submitted.
- Network Rail have confirmed that 'heavy' vehicle movements around the station should end on the second week of October so should not conflict with the carriageway patching works.
- A procurement exercise has been completed and a chosen contractor has now been notified. Discussions are progressing about the full scope and programming of the works.

I can also advise that I am finalising an agreement with Network Rail to commission the next stage of the design (PACE1) for Okehampton Parkway station. This will use the remaining Invest in Devon monies and will be topped up with contributions from the rail industry.

**13. Okehampton & Hamlets Neighbourhood Plan Group (OHNPG) –
13.1 To consider correspondence from Okehampton Hamlets Parish Council and
resolve actions with a view to progressing the plan to completion**

Dear Emma

Okehampton & Hamlets Neighbourhood Plan

Thank you for your letter of 3rd August.

At the request of the OHPC Councillors I have had conversations with both the WDBC officer and the Consultant to gain their feedback first hand. Findings from those conversations were as follows –

- Both Consultants advise the Plan is close to being finalised and that it would be a shame if it failed at this late stage. It is estimated that 6 months could see the work completed.
- Both Consultants are willing to support the Neighbourhood Plan Group to enable completion of the Plan providing it is done in a positive and constructive manner.
- Both feel their previous advice has not always been listened to. They accept their advice may not always be taken, however it should be considered.
- The NP Group need to look forward and not dwell on what has happened in the past.
- There is nothing wrong in ending up with a very 'generic' plan. 90% of all NPs are exactly the same as each other.
- If the Plan can be finalised, it can easily be added to/amended later.
- Lack of evidence for some policies has been an issue.

These findings have been shared and discussed by OHPC Councillors.

Councillors feel that the amended Terms of Reference are a good starting point to try and move completion of the Plan forward and they have agreed the following –

1. Both Clerks should be involved as minute takers but that their role should also be to act as 'gatekeepers' and liaison for communications with outside bodies and professionals.

This would mean additional hours having to be paid to the OHPC Clerk and a reduction in the time available for the OTC Clerk for 'business as usual' activities. Are OTC prepared to loose some of the time their Clerk is available for her usual duties? How would the additional costs be covered? This would need further consideration but is something that can be resolved.

2. All 3 OHPC nominated Councillors to the Group have work or volunteering commitments during the daytime and daytime meetings would be very difficult to accommodate. It is also understood the Chair of the Group now works during the daytime as well. Alternating daytime/evening meetings may be a possibility but the majority of meetings would need to be evenings. Dates of meetings would need to be carefully arranged in

advance. It is also understood that on that basis the OHPC Clerk would need to 'Clerk' more meetings than the OTC Clerk. The OHPC Clerk would be prepared to do this on a short term basis.

3. Introduce 'fresh blood and ideas' into the Group
OTC to increase their membership to 3 Councillors, OHPC have already done this.

Re-engage with the Community with the aim of 'recruiting 2 or 3 individuals to the Group. This could be sold on the basis – nearly there, just need 6 months to get it done, help us get there.
Promoting the Group to the Community could be done through a NPG Coffee Morning in the Charter Hall as soon as a date is available. Minimal costs would be involved.

Ask for additional support from other local NP Groups who have just completed their plan eg North Tawton or Bridestowe.

Councillors also considered bringing the NP back 'in house' ie make it a Councils initiative and not Community initiative. This would involve additional involvement by the Clerks (therefore costs) and potentially Councillors. Existing community members could remain involved. However at this stage they did not see the benefit of this as it was hoped the other actions agreed should see progression of the Plan to a conclusion.

They felt a target date for completion of the Plan should also be included within the Terms of Reference and suggested the date of 31st March 2022.

The amended Terms of Reference were adopted by the Council subject to the points above.

Councillors hope that all parties involved can work together to move the Plan forward to reach a successful conclusion.

Yours sincerely

Jane

Jane Gillard
Parish Clerk
Okehampton Hamlets Parish Council

23. **External Audit Report and Certificate –**

23.1 To note that the External Audit Report and Certificate, previously circulated, has been returned with no issues or comments raised

Section 3 – External Auditor Report and Certificate 2020/21

In respect of **OKEHAMPTON TOWN COUNCIL – DV0277**

1 Respective responsibilities of the body and the auditor

This authority is responsible for ensuring that its financial management is adequate and effective and that it has a sound system of internal control. The authority prepares an Annual Governance and Accountability Return in accordance with *Proper Practices* which:

- summarises the accounting records for the year ended 31 March 2021; and
- confirms and provides assurance on those matters that are relevant to our duties and responsibilities as external auditors.

Our responsibility is to review Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return in accordance with guidance issued by the National Audit Office (NAO) on behalf of the Comptroller and Auditor General (see note below). Our work **does not** constitute an audit carried out in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK & Ireland) and **does not** provide the same level of assurance that such an audit would do.

2 External auditor report 2020/21

On the basis of our review of Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR), in our opinion the information in Sections 1 and 2 of the AGAR is in accordance with Proper Practices and no other matters have come to our attention giving cause for concern that relevant legislation and regulatory requirements have not been met.

Other matters not affecting our opinion which we draw to the attention of the authority:

None

3 External auditor certificate 2020/21

We certify that we have completed our review of Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return, and discharged our responsibilities under the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, for the year ended 31 March 2021.

External Auditor Name

PKF LITTLEJOHN LLP

External Auditor Signature

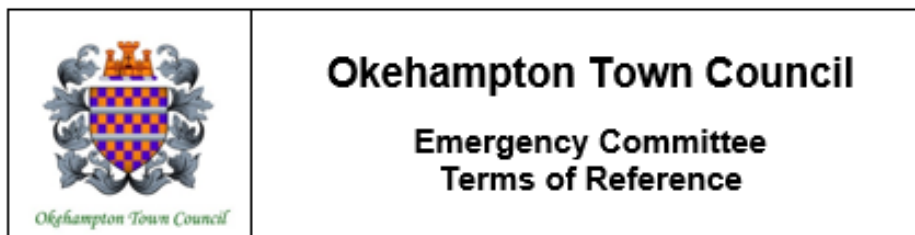
Date

07/09/2021

* Note: the NAO issued guidance applicable to external auditors' work on limited assurance reviews in Auditor Guidance Note AGN/02. The AGN is available from the NAO website (www.nao.org.uk)

26. Terms of Reference –

26.2 To consider and resolve to approve the Terms of Reference for the Emergency Committee



Membership

The core constitution of the Emergency Committee shall be the Mayor and the Chair of each of the Council's Committees (Parks, Planning, Policy & Resources and Property).

Emma James
Added for clarity

The Chairman of the Committee shall be chosen from the Members serving on the Committee.

¹Due to the nature of the Committee in the event of an emergency meetings may be called with little, or no notice, without agendas or papers and may be held in any available venue. To enable the Committee to sit at short notice the quorum is 2 Members.

Purpose

This committee will only normally convene, at the request of the Clerk or Assistant Clerk, in the event of a major disruption or emergency which:

- is likely to affect the Council's overall ability to undertake its normal day to day business or the running of its services as set out in the Business Continuity Plan, or
- in the event that there is a major emergency affecting the larger Okehampton area as set out in the Emergency Policy

Terms of Reference

1. Following an incident directly affecting the Council, to assess the overall impact on the delivery of the council's services in line with the Business Continuity Plan
2. Following a major emergency affecting the larger Okehampton area, to assess the overall impact to the community and how the council can assist Emergency Services and residents

Budget

In the that immediate remedial action is required, the Committee may consider suspension of the council's Financial Regulations allowing work to be undertaken without the need to obtain 3 quotations or estimates, up to a value of £2,000.

Emma James
Added

Payment of Expenses – To have authority to authorise cheque and BACS payments for all invoices and expenses.

Reporting

The Committee shall report to meetings of the full Council as and when necessary.

¹ Standing Orders

4 d vi) The Council 'shall determine the place, notice requirements and quorum for a meeting of a committee and a sub-committee which, in both cases, shall be no less than three'

26 b) 'A motion to add to or vary or revoke one or more of the Council's standing orders, except one that incorporates mandatory statutory or legal requirements, shall be proposed by a special motion, the written notice by at least two councillors to be given'

28. Civic Diary Report – To note events attended by the Mayor and Deputy Mayor during August 2021

Date	Event
3 rd August 2021	Friendly Circle Meeting
5 th August 2021	Telling Our Stories Presentation
12 th August 2021	Okehampton Show
17 th August 2021	Launceston Town Council Ceremonial Induction
18 th August 2021	Beating of the Bounds Okehampton Hamlets
20 th August 2021	Rotary Adventure 7 Certificate Presentation
23 rd August 2021	Probus
28 th August 2021	Great Torrington Cavaliers Mayflower Bonfire Event
29 th August 2021	Rotary Fair