

**Minutes of a meeting of Okehampton Town Council held on
Monday 28th February 2022 at 7pm in the Charter Hall, Market Street, Okehampton**

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

In Attendance: 1 Member of the Public
Economic Development Specialist, WDBC
Mrs E James (Town Clerk)

Action

751 **Declarations of Interest** – None

752 **Apologies for Absence** – Apologies tendered by Cllr Travers due to personal matters were **approved** on the proposition of Cllr Goffey, seconded Cllr Ireland.

Apologies tendered by Cllr Davies (WDBC) and Cllr Samuels (DCC) were noted.

753 **Deferment of Business** – None

754 **Members Questions** – None

755 **Visiting Speaker** – An Officer from WDBC's Placemaking Team presented the results and feedback from an Okehampton Business Survey that had been undertaken in January and February. The report recommended that WDBC and Okehampton Town Council worked together to support the creation of a Business Improvement District (BID) within the town. The initial estimated cost was in the region of £30,000 to which both councils would need to contribute.

Questions posed by Councillors included the potential of other local councils being asked to contribute towards the costs, especially if included businesses were located within their boundary, and how small businesses could be included within the process and be able to vote if a BID was formed.

(WDBC's Officer left the meeting)

756 **West Devon Borough Council** – A written report had been previously circulated by Cllr Yelland.

Cllr Leech reported that the Planning Application for St James' Primary School was going through the process. Nominations for WDBC Mayor's Awards were being sought.

- 757 **Devon County Council** – A written report had been circulated by Cllr Samuels earlier in the day.
- 758 **Questions Arising from Members Reports** – None
- 759 **Adoption of Minutes of Committees and Members' Questions arising Thereon** –
- 759.1 **Planning Committee** meetings held on 22nd November and 13th December 2021, and 7th February 2022 - adoption proposed by Cllr Tolley, seconded Cllr Goffey and **approved**.
- 759.2 **Parks Committee** meeting held on 13th December 2021 - adoption proposed by Cllr Matravers, seconded Cllr Ireland and **approved**
- 759.3 **Policy & Resources Committee** meeting held on 17th January 2022 - adoption proposed by Cllr Button, seconded Cllr Tolley and **approved**.
- 760 **Full Council Meeting Minutes** – The minutes of the Town Council meeting held on 31st January 2022 were **approved** on the proposition of Cllr Ireland, seconded by Cllr Marsh, and signed by Cllr Tolley.
- 761 **Placemaking Presentation** – Cllr Matravers declared a personal interest being a local business owner.

It was felt important that the businesses be provided the results and feedback from the survey so that they could make an informed decision about the way forward. A large number of businesses in Okehampton were small, independent shops run by a single person or family; the formation of a BID could help them to obtain funding for a variety of purposes. The setup of a BID would need to include a way for small businesses to be a part of it and have a say on any decisions that were made.

On the proposition of Cllr Tolley, seconded Cllr Goffey it was **RESOLVED** to defer any decision until further liaison had been undertaken and more information was available. WDBC Officers to be requested to report back in writing at the next meeting.

Clerk

- 762 **CCTV** – Cllr Leech reported that a date for replacement of lighting columns was still awaited from DCC Highways. A meeting had been held earlier in the day with a representative from the Monitoring Hub who had visited to obtain CCTV footage from recent incidents in Simmons Park which would be passed to the police.
- 763 **Remote Council Meetings** – A response from Mel Stride MP to correspondence sent by the council supporting a call to the government for a review of legislation to permit local council meetings to be held virtually was noted.
- 764 **Community Links** – Correspondence received from the group who were unwillingly having to move from their location within Okehampton College was considered. It was believed that Tor Support Services would be provided alternative accommodation within the College.
- 765 **Local Councillor Panels – Rural Vulnerable Young and Older People** – On the proposition of Cllr Goffey, seconded Cllr Sanger it was **RESOLVED** to nominate Cllr Leech to join the panels.

Cllr Leech/
Clerk

- 766 **Storm Damage** – It was agreed to consider the item within Part 2 later in the meeting due to a quotation received.
- 767 **Neighbourhood Plan** - On the proposition of Cllr Yelland, seconded Cllr Wood it was **RESOLVED** to approve the revised Terms of Reference which extended the completion date to 31st July 2022. Clerk
- 768 **Policies and Documents** - On the proposition of Cllr Goffey, seconded Cllr Wood, it was **RESOLVED** to approve the following documents as recommended by the Policy & Resources Committee: Clerk
- Cemetery Brochure
 - Cemetery Memorial Management Plan
 - Cemetery Rules and Regulations
- 769 **WDBC's Mayoral Awards** - On the proposition of Cllr Marsh, seconded Cllr Yelland it was **RESOLVED** to nominate the Street Cleaner for the Green Award. Clerk
- 770 **Finances** – Cllr Sanger declared an interest having submitted expenses for approval.
- On the proposition of Yelland, seconded Cllr Holt (2 abstentions) it was **RESOLVED** to approve the schedule of payments.
- 771 **Commonwealth Day, 14th March 2022** – It was noted that a small ceremony would take place outside of St James' Chapel at 9.20am. Councillors and members of the public were invited to attend.

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

- 772 **Asset Register** - On the proposition of Cllr Jessop, seconded Cllr Ireland it was **RESOLVED** to nominate Cllr Goffey to undertake the annual check of elements of the Asset Register. Cllr Goffey
- 773 **Annual Town Assembly and Report for 2021/22**
- 773.1 On the proposition of Cllr Tolley, seconded Cllr Marsh it was **RESOLVED** to agree the format of the meeting to be in line with that held previously and as outlined by the Clerk. Clerk
- 773.2 On the proposition of Cllr Tolley, seconded Cllr Ireland it was **RESOLVED** to approve the draft Annual Report prepared to date. Clerk
- 774 **Civic Diary Report** – The Mayor had held a Coffee Morning on 12th February in aid of his chosen Charity, Dream-A-Way and attended another on 26th February.
- 775 **Community Governance** – Cllr Tolley provided a brief history of the situation and the reasons for having requested that a boundary review be considered by the Council.
- Cllrs Leech and Yelland declared personal interests being members of WDBC.
- On the proposition of Cllr Jessop, seconded Cllr Ireland, 2 abstentions, it was **RESOLVED** to petition the town residents to establish their views about the boundary so that the situation could be democratically considered. Clerk

In order to progress the project, on the proposition of Cllr Sanger, seconded Cllr Goffey, it was **RESOLVED** to create a Working Group consisting of Cllrs Sanger, Goffey, Ireland, Matravers, Tolley and the Clerk.

Clerk

776 Reports of Council Working/Task & Finish Groups -

776.1 Climate Change – Cllr Goffey reported that the group was considering supporting the water refill scheme.

776.2 Charter Hall Roof Replacement – Cllr Goffey reported that the project was progressing, and expressions of interest were being sought by the Project Manager.

776.3 Placemaking Working Group – Cllr Marsh reported that the next meeting was being held on 2nd March.

776.4 Memorandum of Understanding Task & Finish Group – Cllr Yelland reported that the Clerk had advised the group that Community Governance was due to be considered by the Council as this could affect the work of the group. It had been agreed that any further work on the project be paused.

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

777.1 Neighbourhood Plan Group – No information to report.

778 Members' Reports and Requests for Agenda Items -

778.1 Okehampton Matters – The next meeting was being held on 16th March.

778.2 Okehampton COVID19 Support Group – Cllr Button advised that the group was still providing support in relation to the pandemic and to homeless persons.

778.3 Okehampton & Hamlets Combined Archive Project – The Clerk reported that she was due to visit the Heritage Centre in Exeter with the Clerks from Okehampton United Charity and Okehampton Hamlets Parish Council on 3rd March. The aim of the visit was to establish if the Heritage Centre could provide any support or advice.

778.4 Okehampton Primary School – No report was available.

779 Urgent Items –

779.1 Ukrainian Crisis – Cllr Ireland reported that he was arranging a Coffee Morning on Saturday 5th March to raise funds to support those affected by the Russian invasion. Funding raised would go to the Red Cross Ukraine.

779.2 Okehampton Hospital – Cllr Goffey reported there was concern that Force may no longer offer chemotherapy in Okehampton from the end of March.

(The member of public left the meeting)

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 Ireland, seconded by Cllr Holt.

780 Replacement Trailer - On the proposition of Cllr Leech, seconded Cllr Jessop it was **RESOLVED** to ratify the recommendation of the Parks Committee to purchase a replacement trailer at the cost of £2,470 and disposal of the existing trailer by way of part exchange.

Clerk

781 Public Toilet Cleaning Contract – Cllrs Yelland and Leech declared personal interests being members of WDBC

On the proposition of Cllr Wood, seconded Cllr Jessop, 2 abstentions, it was **RESOLVED** to appoint WDBC for three years, subject to inclusion of a clause permitting cancellation of the contact at the end the first year subject to the review of fees for years 2 and 3.

Clerk

782 Redevelopment Opportunity – The proposal received was considered but would not be actioned.

Clerk

783 Storm Damage - The Clerk reported that the roof of a building owned by the Council, Lower Market Hall, had been damaged in the storm. One quotation had been received; others were awaited.

On the proposition of Cllr Jessop, seconded Cllr Goffey, it was **RESOLVED** to defer a decision whether to submit an insurance claim or not until further quotes had been received.

The Clerk reported that a large Sycamore tree had fallen across the main path during the storm and had to be removed by contractors urgently without obtaining the usual number of quotations because it was preventing vehicle access to dwellings and the parks office. Orders for the work, the cost being unknown, had been placed with the agreement of the Mayor, Deputy Mayor and the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Parks Committee. On the proposition of Cllr Ireland, seconded Cllr Leech it was **RESOLVED** to ratify the decision taken by the Clerk.

Clerk

On the proposition of Cllr Ireland, seconded Cllr Goffey it was **RESOLVED** to move out of Part 2 and ratify decisions made therein. The meeting was closed at 9.30pm.

Councillor Tolley
Mayor