

**Minutes of a meeting of Okehampton Town Council held on
Monday 22nd August 2022 at 7pm in the Council Chamber, Town Hall, Okehampton**

Members Present: Councillor B Tolley (Mayor)
Councillor D Sanger (Deputy Mayor)
Councillor P Jessop (Chairman, Planning Committee)
Councillor J Yelland (Chairman, Policy & Resources Committee)
Councillor T Abbots
Councillor J Goffey
Councillor C Holt
Councillor M Ireland
Councillor T Leech
Councillor C Marsh
Councillor B Matravers
Councillor D Travers

In Attendance: Mrs E James (Town Clerk)
Cllr Mott (WDBC)
WDBC Officer
1 Member of the Public

Action

205 **Declarations of Interest** – None

206 **Apologies for Absence** – Apologies tendered by Cllr Wood who was ill were **approved** on the proposition of Cllr Marsh, seconded Cllr Ireland.

207 **Deferment of Business** – None

208 **Members Questions** – None

209 **Visiting Speaker** – An Officer from WDBC Officer reported on progress that had been made with investigation into the feasibility of the creation of a Business Improvement District (BID) in Okehampton. Further interviews and meetings were to be held with the business community in the coming weeks and a presentation of the results would be made to the Council at a date to be agreed.

210 **Placemaking** – With the **agreement** of those present this item of business brought forward.

On the proposition of Cllr Goffey, seconded Cllr Marsh, it was **RESOLVED** there would be a dedicated full Council meeting at 4pm on Monday 17th October 2022 to consider the results of the BID feasibility study.

(The WDBC Officer left the meeting)

Cllrs/Clerk

211 **West Devon Borough Council** – Cllr Leech reported that WDBC's staff had been working hard on various matters, in particular those relating to housing inspections and payments to Ukraine hosts and guests and would be recruiting additional staff to assist. Cllr Leech thanked WDBC staff who had worked hard trying to accommodate everyone and waste collection staff who worked all through the heatwaves.

New challenges were facing local authorities including a Government Displacement Order detailing how many refugees each authority would have to accept and rehouse, which would be difficult due to the housing crisis.

WDBC was working with other organisations including DCC to assist where possible with the Cost-of-Living crisis.

212 **Devon County Council** – no report.

213 **Questions Arising from Members Reports** – None.

(Cllr Mott left the meeting)

214 **Adoption of Minutes of Committees and Members' Questions arising Thereon** –

214.1 **Personnel Sub-Committee** meeting held on 9th December 2021 - adoption proposed by Cllr Ireland, seconded Cllr Tolley and **approved**.

215 **Full Council Meeting Minutes** – The minutes of the Town Council meeting held on 25th July 2022 were **approved** on the proposition of Cllr Marsh, seconded by Cllr Jessop, and signed by Cllr Tolley.

216 **Councillor Vacancy** – The Clerk reported that the closing date for the calling of a by-election was 23rd August 2022. It was hoped that the vacancy could be advertised later in the week so the Council would be able to co-op a Councillor to fill the vacancy at the meeting on 26th September 2022.

217 **Charter Hall Roofing Project**

217.1 The Clerk reported on an update received from the Project Manager (PM) and it was noted that the tender closing date had been extended to 6th September 2022. The PM had asked if contractors could have a choice of who they used as the M&E contractor which was **agreed**.

217.2 On the proposition of Cllr Goffey, seconded Cllr Leech, it was **RESOLVED** to agree the sponsor a slate fundraising appeal suggested by Cllr Goffey to assist with the cost of the project.

Cllr
Goffey/
Clerk

It was noted that Cllr Goffey and the Clerk had been unable to source potential grant funding to date but details of a Government Grant which might be available to the Council to bid for was awaited.

218 **Fore Street Parking** - On the proposition of Cllr Ireland, seconded Cllr Leech, it was **RESOLVED** to support the proposal by the DCC Highways Officer for the addition of double yellow lines in the area between Bridge House and St James's Church.

Clerk

219 **Community Governance** – Cllr Leech declared a personal interest being a Member of WDBC.

The Clerk reported that signatures on the petition for a boundary review had exceed the required number and thanks were given in particular to Cllrs Sanger and Goffey who had collected a large number.

On the proposition of Cllr Jessop, seconded Cllr Sanger (1 abstention), it was **RESOLVED** that Cllr Tolley and/or the Clerk present the petition to WDBC at their full Council meeting on 27th September 2022.

Cllr Tolley/
Clerk

220 **Okehampton United Charity (OUC)** – Cllrs Marsh, Ireland, Tolley and Yelland declared personal interests being Trustees.

On the proposition of Cllr Goffey, seconded Cllr Matravers (5 abstentions, it was **RESOLVED** to respond to the proposal by OUC to amend the

	composition of the Trustees stating the support of the Council that Trustees manage the Charity in the way they consider best fits its needs. It was commented that organisations needed to evolve whilst remembering their ethos, but it was a shame the Charity was moving away from tradition.	Clerk
221	<u>WDBC My Place, My Views Consultation</u> – It was commented that the results of the survey would form part of the evidence of need. Councillors could complete the survey as individuals.	
222	<u>Levelling up Strategy</u> – Councillors were encouraged to read the Levelling Up Executive Summary previously circulated if they had not done so. It was commented that the document did not contain mention of any support for agriculture and food production, in relation to the rural economy or support for transportation and isolation. There was also no mention about the appointment of Plymouth as a Free Port, the area of which would cover Dartmoor up to North Devon and would affect planning laws as well as other matters.	
223	<u>Neighbourhood Plan Group</u>	
223.1	On the proposition of Cllr Yelland, seconded Cllr Goffey, it was RESOLVED to agree a three-month extension of time until 31 st October 2022 for the target completion date.	Clerk
223.2	It was commented that version 7 of the draft plan included a policy to pedestrianise the town centre (policy PP12) which included the statement ‘It is acknowledged that for this policy to be realised, a suitable alternative route needs to be created for traffic.’ On the proposition of Cllr Travers, seconded Cllr Yelland (2 abstentions), it was RESOLVED to approve version 7 of the draft plan, noting that the front cover was labelled version 4, subject to consideration by the group of the following comments and that it be proofread before being published: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There was no mention of sports provision and consultation to establish the need for local sport facilities • Evidence of need would strengthen any future potential funding provision Comments from Councillors for inclusion in the feedback to the group to be forwarded to the Clerk by 30 th August 2022.	Cllrs/ Clerk
223.3	On the proposition of Cllr Goffey, seconded Cllr Ireland, it was RESOLVED to nominate Cllr Matravers as Councillor representative to the group.	Clerk
224	<u>Charter Celebration Event</u> – Cllr Marsh reported that Everything Okehampton were organising an event to be held on 9 th July 2023 incorporating different events that could include the 400 th Charter anniversary, the 150 th anniversary of Okehampton United Charity and Fields in Trust. On the proposition of Cllr Jessop, seconded Cllr Sanger (1 abstention), it was RESOLVED to support the event in principle.	
225	<u>External Audit 2021/22</u>	
225.1	It was noted that the External Auditors Report and Certificate, previously circulated, which raised no concerns or opinions for attention had been received.	

225.2 On the proposition of Cllr Jessop, seconded Cllr Goffey, it was **RESOLVED** to approve the timescale of the Notice of Conclusion of Audit, previously published, from 3rd to 31st August 2022.

226 **Finances** – Queries were raised in relation to electricity costs in Simmons Park to which the Clerk advised that the pond fountain pumps were costing in the region of £90 p/month to run as reported to the Parks Committee earlier in the year, and an expense claim which the Clerk explained was a requirement of the HSE and as detailed within the Council's Health & Safety Policy.

On the proposition of Cllr Leech, seconded Cllr Travers it was **RESOLVED** to approve the schedule of payments.

227 **Okehampton Hamlets Parish Council (OHPC)** – Cllr Tolley reported he and the Clerk had met informally with the Chairman and Clerk of OHPC on 28th July. Matters including the Neighbourhood Plan, Cemetery, and Community Governance boundary review had been discussed. A further meeting would be held in the autumn.

228 **Working Group Membership and Town Council Representatives** - On the proposition of Cllr Jessop, seconded Cllr Sanger, it was **RESOLVED** to defer the nomination of Councillors as representatives of the following groups/ organisations until a new Councillor had been co-opted:

- Climate Change Working Group
- Placemaking Working Group
- Okehampton Primary School
- Okehampton Ukraine Support Group

Clerk

229 **Civic Diary Report** – Events attended by the Mayor during July and August were noted and included an informal meeting with Okehampton Hamlets Parish Council, hosting a Mayors Coffee Morning at which £200 had been raised for Dream-A-Way, Okehampton Show and an award presentation at Adventure 7.

230 **Reports of Council Working/Task & Finish Groups -**

230.1 **Climate Change** – Cllr Goffey reported that no meeting had been held.

230.2 **Charter Hall Roof Replacement** – Previously considered above.

230.3 **Placemaking Working Group** – Previously considered above

230.4 **Community Governance** – Previously considered above

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

231.1 **Neighbourhood Plan Group** – Previously considered above

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

232.1 **Okehampton Matters** – No meeting had been held to report upon.

232.2 **Okehampton Primary School** – No representative.

232.3 **Okehampton Ukraine Support Group** – No representative.

(A member of the 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 Leech, seconded by Cllr Ireland

233 Cemetery Land Purchase - On the proposition of Cllr Tolley, seconded Cllr Marsh, it was **RESOLVED** to approve the recommendation of the Parks Committee that that the valuation sum of £40K be offered to the landowner, that a pre application planning enquiry be sent to WDBC for the change of use of the land, and if both of those were positive the Environment Agency and/or relevant companies be appointed to undertake checks including a land use risk assessment.

Clerk

On the proposition of Cllr Leech, seconded Cllr Ireland it was **RESOLVED** to exit Part 2 and ratify decisions made therein. The meeting was closed at 8.25pm.

Councillor Tolley
Mayor