

**Minutes of Okehampton Town Council Meeting held on
Monday 7 July 2014 in the Council Chamber, Town Hall, Okehampton
at 7.00 pm**

Members Present: Councillor P Vachon (Town Mayor)
Councillor M Davies
Councillor Mrs J Goffey
Councillor Dr M Ireland
Councillor A Leech
Councillor C Letchford
Councillor Mrs M McDonald
Councillor Mrs C Marsh
Councillor B Stephens
Councillor D Weekes
Councillor Mrs J Yelland

In Attendance: Mr P R Snell (Town Clerk)

Before proceeding with business, prayers were offered by Father Darline.

Declaration of Interests - Councillor Mrs Marsh and Councillor Stephens recorded interests in items 2.2 and 11 on the agenda.

98. **Apologies for Absence** - Apologies for absence were presented on behalf of Councillor K Ball and Councillor T Cummings.
99. **Deferment of Business** - On the proposition of Councillor Leech, seconded by Councillor Weekes, it was agreed to suspend Standing Orders for the presentation by Mr Fisher.

Mr Allenton Fisher, a member of the Okehampton Branch Royal British Legion, introduced a short paper on the concept of introducing a new memorial to the town. The envisaged project would run from 2014 to 2018 and involve consultation, funding and project implementation phases. The briefing paper is attached at Annex A. In subsequent discussion it was questioned if the parade would stay in its present format. Mr Fisher felt that the aim was to get more people to follow the parade. Councillor Davies noted that there were two war memorials in the town, one at All Saints and one at St Boniface. After a brief discussion, on the proposition of Councillor Mrs Goffey, seconded by Councillor Weekes, Standing Orders were reinstated. All in favour.

100. **Members' Questions** - None.
101. **West Devon Borough Council** - Councillor Leech reported that the Members of the Borough Council had recently agreed to a 1% increase in Members' expenses. Current priorities were Our Plan and the Electoral Boundary Commission's recommendations for ward boundary changes.

102. **Devon County Council** - No report. It was commented that it would be helpful to have a brief written report, in the event that the County Councillor was not present.
103. **Adoption of Minutes of Committees and to Receive Questions from Members Thereon** -
- 103.1 **Property Committee held on 7 April 2014** - Adoption proposed by Councillor Davies, seconded by Councillor Letchford and approved.
- 103.2 **Planning Committee held on 28 April 2014** - Adoption proposed by Councillor Mrs McDonald, seconded by Councillor Mrs Goffey and approved.
- 103.3 **Parks Committee held on 19 May 2014** - Adoption proposed by Councillor Ireland, seconded by Councillor Weekes and approved.
- 103.4 **Policy and Resources Committee held on 27 May 2014** - Adoption proposed by Councillor Leech, seconded by Councillor Mrs Yelland and approved.
104. **Full Council Meeting Minutes** - The minutes of the Town Council meeting held on 3 June 2014 were received, signed and approved on the proposition of Councillor Leech, seconded by Councillor Mrs Yelland with all in favour.
105. **Matters Arising** - Before proceeding with the agenda, the Mayor noted that meetings were generally longer and that the Standing Orders were currently under review. The Mayor encouraged all Members to adhere to the current Standing Orders and to speak with brevity. In the ensuing short discussion, it was generally agreed that Standing Orders did require revision, and there was a general welcome for shorter meetings.
- 105.1 **Deposit Account Investments** - The Clerk reported that investigations for a better interest-bearing deposit account were ongoing and were being taken forward by the Policy and Resources Committee.
- 105.2 **New Electoral Arrangements for West Devon Borough Council** - Councillor Leech reported that he had met with the Chairman and Clerk of Okehampton Hamlets Parish Council, who were content with the current proposals. Regarding the wider picture, Councillor Leech reported that there was little leeway for further significant change, but there was a need to address an extra Member for Hatherleigh and North Okehampton. He reminded Members that both the Council and individuals had the opportunity to reply in the consultation.
106. **Civic Diary Report** - The Mayor reported that June had been a busy month. In addition to attending the Old English Fayre at South Molton and the Barnstaple Civic Service, he had attended a number of committees and meetings in his capacity as Mayor and ex officio trustee.
107. **Destination Okehampton** -
- 107.1 Councillor Ireland reported on the meeting of 19 June 2014, notes of which had been circulated to all Members (Annex B). Adoption of these notes was proposed by Councillor Ireland, seconded by Councillor Leech and agreed.

107.2 Councillor Ireland then reported on the action points arising from this meeting, noting that there had been progress in approaching local County Councillors for support from the Locality Fund.

107.3 Funding the Rail Professional advertisement - Councillor Ireland recalled that participating council representatives had agreed to taking the concept of 1% of precept funding to their respective town and parish councils, and proposed that the Council now commit 1% of the 2014/15 precept to support costs of advertisement and consultancy. After discussion, it was agreed to underwrite the cost of the advertisement (approximately £700) on the proposition of Councillor Mrs Goffey, seconded by Councillor Leech, with all in favour. Members further agreed that it was important to seize this opportunity, appreciating the efforts that had been committed to this project and recommended that a funding proposal based on the equivalent of 1% of the Council's precept be brought to the next Policy and Resources Committee.

108. Okehampton Remembers: Royal British Legion - The Royal British Legion paper on the proposal to establish new Remembrance activity in Okehampton town centre was considered, together with comments made earlier in the meeting. After discussion, it was agreed to encourage RBL to consult widely on public opinion in Okehampton and that this should be an RBL-led project which would consult with the Town Council as a matter of due process, rather than it being a joint initiative, this on the proposition of Councillor Davies, seconded by Councillor Ireland and agreed.

109. Our Plan/Neighbourhood Plan - The Mayor noted that, at Rebecca Black's presentation on Our Plan earlier in the month, the recommendation to set up a small working party to draft a process for establishing a Neighbourhood Plan was discussed. There ensued a discussion on Council processes, the difficulties of time-lag between Committees, and reporting structures within the Council. On the proposition of the Mayor, seconded by Councillor Ireland, it was agreed that a small working group consisting of the Mayor, Councillor Ireland as Chairman of Destination Okehampton, Councillor Leech as Chairman of the Planning Committee and the Clerk meet to draft a process for constructing a Neighbourhood Plan. Agreed.

Councillor Mrs Marsh left the meeting at 8.18 pm.

110. Members' Reports -

- (i) Dementia Awareness - Councillor Mrs Goffey reported on the forthcoming Dementia Awareness Day in Okehampton on 11 July and on the campaign to keep the dementia unit at Wardhayes.
- (ii) Northern Parishes Links Committee - Councillor Mrs McDonald noted that she and Councillor Cummings had attended the last meeting, which was poorly attended. Some questions had been raised about the travellers, and on the subject of highways, all had been encouraged to report pothole defects directly via the Devon County Council website. The next meeting was scheduled for 11 September 2014 in Hatherleigh.
- (iii) Okehampton Matters - It was noted that the next meeting was scheduled for 10 July.
- (iv) Okehampton Vision Steering Group - The Mayor reported that the last meeting had considered railway matters, the Okehampton Show survey,

settlement profiles in new areas and the Our Plan update, in addition to comments on the library and children's survey and consultation. A new version of the Strategy Statement was in preparation.

- (v) West Devon/Okehampton Liaison Group - The Clerk reported that the next meeting was scheduled for 14 July.

The meeting closed at 8.32 pm.

Councillor P Vachon
Town Mayor