

**Minutes of a meeting of Okehampton Town Council held on
Monday 28th November 2022 at 7pm in the Council Chamber, Town Hall, Okehampton**

Members Present: Councillor B Tolley (Mayor)
Councillor C Marsh (Chairman, Parks Committee)
Councillor B Matravers (Chairman, Planning Committee)
Councillor J Yelland (Chairman, Policy & Resources Committee)
Councillor T Abbots
Councillor C Holt
Councillor A Fisher
Councillor M Ireland
Councillor T Leech

In Attendance: Mrs E James (Town Clerk)
4 members of the press/public and Carnival Committee

Action

464 Apologies for Absence – Apologies tendered by Cllrs Goffey and Wood due to ill health were **approved** on the proposition of Cllr Ireland, seconded Cllr Fisher.

Apologies tendered by Cllr Davies (WDBC) were noted.

465 Declarations of Interest – None

466 Public Participation – A member of the Carnival Committee asked the Council for assistance with road closures for future Carnivals which was due to be considered later in the meeting.

467 Members Questions – None

468 West Devon Borough Council – Cllr Leech reported on items including:
The cost-of-living crisis and regular communication being issued by WDBC, the current focus highlighting that downsizing could decrease the cost of living.
St James' Primary School playing field where it was hoped that progress was being made and the Kellands Land blockage.
WDBC were adopting parts of Devon Carbon Plan.
The Health & Wellbeing focus was currently on youth mental health.
Workshops had recently been held at two schools, feedback from which was positive and had been extremely helpful to students and staff. Three more schools had taken up the offer of workshops.
WDBC had agreed to renew funding for key partnerships including Community Transport and OCRA for a further 2 years.

Cllr Yelland reported that the key partners for whom grant funding had been agreed for further 2 years were the CVS, OCRA, Community Transport, Young Devon and Citizens Advice.

WDBC would be updating their plans to show how they would contribute to the Devon Carbon Plan.

Cost of living posters with a QR code would provide up to date information of where and how can help could be accessed had been displayed in various locations.

469 Devon County Council – No report received.

470 Questions Arising from Members Reports – None.

471 Adoption of Minutes of Committees and Members' Questions arising Thereof –

471.1 Policy & Resources Committee meeting held on 24th October 2022 - adoption proposed by Cllr Fisher, seconded Cllr Tolley and **approved**.

471.2 Planning Committee meeting held on 17th October 2022 - adoption proposed by Cllr Ireland, seconded Cllr Leech and **approved**.

472 Full Council Meeting Minutes – The minutes of the Town Council meeting held on 31st October 2022 were **approved** on the proposition of Cllr Marsh, seconded by Cllr Ireland, and signed by Cllr Tolley.

473 Co-Option – No applications had been received.

474 Road Closures for Town Events – The request by the Carnival Committee for assistance with future road closures was considered. It was noted that this would mean the Council taking responsibility for all aspects of the road closure including the preparation of the risk assessment, traffic management plan, placing of signage and insurance. Staff availability, costs and the possibility that a similar requests would be received from other groups or organisations would need to be taken into consideration.

It was suggested that an appeal for assistance could be made by the Carnival Committee through the local press and that the Policy & Resources Committee would consider any grant applications received to cover the costs of road closure training.

At the request of Cllr Marsh, it was **agreed** that further consideration be given to this item of business under Part 2 Confidential matters later in the meeting.

475 Cost of Living Crisis – Okehampton Library was giving out items including coats or blankets and it was thought WDBC would be doing something similar. The Food Bank was expecting a 20% increase in demand, and it was commented that they could apply to the Council for a grant. Warm spaces were being offered in various locations and there was a community fridge in the Ockment Centre.

476 Rail Impact Survey – The draft survey instigated by Cllr Ireland was reviewed and it was noted that information about its purpose needed to be included as did a closing date, and that Questions 5 and 6 needed to be reworded.

477 Okehampton Railway Station Parking – Correspondence received from Mel Stride MP consisting of a letter he had been sent by a member of the public who had experienced difficulty parking at the station was noted as were parking issues raised by others.

The Clerk reported that an update received from GWR on 21 November 2022 advised that:

- Signage had been changed to make payment requirements clearer
- From 28 November 2022 customers would no longer need to display a ticket if they were parking for under an hour.
- APCOA had reviewed all parking tickets sent to GWR through the BBC and were ensuring the parking machine was as robust as possible

478 Speedwatch – Cllr Leech suggested there could be one Speedwatch group covering Okehampton and the surrounding hamlets potentially reducing the number of volunteers needed.

	<p>The Clerk advised that Cllr Southcott (WDBC) had agreed to do a presentation to the Town Council and any other local councils who wished to be involved. Clerk to make the necessary arrangements for a date in early 2023.</p>	Clerk
479	<p>Audits</p>	
479.1	<p>It was noted that PFK Littlejohn had been reappointed as External Auditor to smaller authorities in Devon for the five financial years from 2022/23 to 2026/27.</p>	
479.2	<p>The Council noted the report from the interim internal audit undertaken on 8th November 2022, previously circulated, and actions taken in line with recommendations made.</p>	
480	<p>Finances</p>	
480.1	<p>Cllrs Marsh and Fisher declared personal interests being members of a group receiving a grant payment listed on the schedule.</p> <p>On the proposition of Cllr Tolley, seconded Cllr Matravers (2 abstentions), it was RESOLVED to approve the schedule of payments.</p>	
480.2	<p>On the proposition of Cllr Marsh, seconded Cllr Yelland, it was RESOLVED to approve the virement of the £15,000 grant income from the Office of the Police & Crime Commissioner to the CCTV budget heading as recommended by the Policy & Resources Committee</p>	Clerk/ Ass. Clerk
481	<p>S106 Funds - Cllrs Marsh and Tolley declared personal interests being Trustees of OCRA.</p> <p>The Council noted that S106 funding had been secured by WDBC from developments in the area for open space, sport and recreation in Okehampton and that the Clerk was working with the OCRA Manager to undertake an associated audit of sports groups and facilities.</p>	
482	<p>CCTV Phase 2 – Cllr Leech reported that the light columns had been replaced and the Clerk advised it was hoped that work on this phase of the project would commence in December although some outstanding issues needed to be confirmed.</p> <p>The Clerk provided an update in relation to the quality of footage from the mobile camera situated behind Lidl. It was agreed that these matters needed to be resolved before an additional mobile camera was obtained.</p>	Clerk/ Cllr Leech
483	<p>Past Mayors Badges - On the proposition of Cllr Marsh, seconded Cllr Yelland, it was RESOLVED to approve the recommendation of the Policy & Resources Committee to purchase 10 badges of the existing design from the previous supplier, Thomas Fattorini Ltd, at the cost of £1,047.60. The cost to be recovered from each receiving Mayor's expense budget and used to rebuild the Civic Regalia earmarked reserve for future purchases. The inscription of any wording to be obtained by each Mayor if required.</p>	Clerk
484	<p>Terms of Reference - On the proposition of Cllr Yelland, seconded Cllr Abbots (2 abstentions), it was RESOLVED to approve the Terms of Reference for the King Charles III Coronation Task & Finish Group as recommended by the Policy & Resources Committee.</p>	Clerk
485	<p>Civic Diary – Cllr Tolley reported that in November he had presented grant cheques to the Wellbeing Café, Immersion and Duke of Edinburgh Award</p>	

Group. Attended Hospicecare and Everything Okehampton Coffee Mornings, a Remembrance Service on 11th and the Remembrance Parade and Service on 13th, and earlier in the day the one-year anniversary of the reopening of the passenger rail service with the Clerk.

Cllr Yelland reported that in the absence of a Deputy Mayor she had attended the Remembrance Service at St Boniface Church as the last retiring Mayor.

486 Christmas and New Year Office Opening Hours – The Council noted that the Council Office would close to the public at 4pm Thursday 22nd December and reopen on Tuesday 3rd January 2023 and that there would only be minimal staff working reduced hours on normal working days throughout this period

487 Reports of Council Working/Task & Finish Groups -

487.1 Climate Change – Cllr Leech advised that no meeting had been held

487.2 Charter Hall Roof Replacement – Cllr Leech reported that this was due to be considered within confidential part 2 matters later in the meeting.

487.3 Placemaking Working Group – No meeting had been held

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

488.1 Neighbourhood Plan Group – Cllr Matravers reported that a meeting was due to be held on 8th December.

489 Members' Reports and Requests for Agenda Items -

489.1 Okehampton Matters – No report

489.2 Okehampton Ukraine Support Group – Cllr Leech had been unable to attend a meeting to date.

489.3 Rural Market Town Group – No report.

490 PART 2 Confidential Matters - On the proposition of Cllr Ireland, seconded Cllr Leech 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 items which were CONFIDENTIAL by virtue of relating to legal and/or commercial matters, staffing and/or the financial or business affairs of a person or persons other than the Council.

491 Road Closures for Town Events – In response to a query about use of qualifications funded by the Council, it was agreed there was no reason employees should not use them in other circumstances.

492 Charter Hall Roofing Project –

492.1 An update was provided by Cllr Leech and the Clerk including the amended scope of the project, planning consent and the type of slate to be used.

On the proposition of Cllr Yelland, seconded Cllr Ireland, it was **RESOLVED** to progress the project and negotiations with the preferred contractor. It was envisaged that a final decision would be able to be resolved at the December meeting.

492.2 Cllrs Tolley, Yelland, Ireland, Fisher and Marsh declared personal interests being members of Okehampton United Charity.

Clerk

The draft grant application prepared by Cllr Wood, the Clerk and Admin Officer was reviewed.

It was **RESOLVED** to suspend Standing Order 3 (bb) to permit extension of the meeting following a proposal by Cllr Leech, seconded Cllr Yelland.

On the proposition of Cllr Leech, seconded Cllr Abbots (5 abstentions) it was **RESOLVED** to submit a grant application to Okehampton United Charity in accordance with the following:

- The Clerk and Chairman of the Property Committee were nominated to present to the charity
- Suggestion of free sessions for local users be removed from the draft as the Council already subsidised use of the hall incurring a loss
- An amount equal to £170,000 be applied for

Chairman
Property/
Clerk

On the proposition of Cllr Ireland, seconded Cllr Leech it was **RESOLVED** to exit Part 2 and ratify decisions made therein. The meeting was closed at 8.36pm.

Councillor Tolley
Mayor

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