

**Minutes of an Okehampton Town Council Parks Committee Meeting held on Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2022 at 7pm in the Council Chamber, Town Hall, Okehampton**

**Committee Members Present:** Councillor C Marsh (Chairman)  
 Councillor T Abbots (Vice-Chairman)  
 Councillor A Wood (Chairman, Property)  
 Councillor J Yelland (Chairman, Policy & Resources)  
 Councillor C Holt  
 Councillor M Ireland  
 Councillor T Leech

**Other Members Present:** Councillor J Goffey  
 Councillor A Fisher

**In Attendance:** Mrs E James (Town Clerk)  
 Mr J McGahey (Park-Keeper)

		<b>Action</b>
<b>297</b>	<p><b><u>Apologies for Absence</u></b> – Apologies from Cllrs Tolley and Jessop were <b>approved</b> on the proposition of Cllr Ireland, seconded Cllr Abbots.</p> <p>Apologies from Cllrs Matravers and Sanger who were not members of the Committee were noted.</p>	
<b>298</b>	<p><b><u>Declarations of Interest</u></b> – None</p>	
<b>299</b>	<p><b><u>Public Participation</u></b> – Cllr Goffey commented on some of the items of business.</p>	
<b>300</b>	<p><b><u>Park Keeper</u></b> – Mr McGahey provided an update which included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tree work due to take place in Simmons Park later in the month including felling of ash trees suffering from dieback disease</li> <li>• Clapps Wood trees were growing well, although a few needed to be replaced</li> <li>• Benches in Simmons Park were gradually being refurbished, pruning of shrubs had begun and winter jobs which included work in the rose garden had been planned</li> <li>• All the bird boxes had been used including by a Nuthatch and there was evidence of Otters in the river.</li> </ul> <p>Questions were posed about squirrel damage to trees and wildflower areas.</p>	
<b>301</b>	<p><b><u>Members' Questions</u></b> – None</p>	
<b>302</b>	<p><b><u>Minutes</u></b> - Minutes of the Parks Committee meetings held on 20<sup>th</sup> June and 22<sup>nd</sup> August 2022 were <b>APPROVED</b> to be signed by the Chairman on the proposition of Cllr Holt, seconded Cllr Yelland.</p>	
<b>303</b>	<p><b><u>Parks Bookings</u></b> -</p>	
<b>303.1</b>	<p>The following events that either had or were scheduled to take place in Simmons Park were noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• August/September - Football Coach (commercial use - £100 fee charged)</li> <li>• 9<sup>th</sup> to 16<sup>th</sup> October - Anderton and Rowland Fair</li> </ul>	
<b>303.2</b>	<p>On the proposition of Cllr Marsh, seconded Cllr Ireland, it was <b>RESOLVED</b> to approve a request from an artist to hold an art exhibition in Simmons Park in 2024 over approximately three weeks. The hirer would need to insure all items and cover the cost of any damage that may be caused in</p>	

	the park. The Council would not accept liability for any damage caused to the exhibits.	
<b>304</b>	<b><u>Parkrun</u></b> - On the proposition of Cllr Leech, seconded Cllr Wood, it was <b>RESOLVED</b> to approve any of the three proposed route options or any alternative as long as only existing hard standing pathways were used.	
<b>305</b>	<b><u>Dog and General Waste Bins</u></b> -	
<b>305.1</b>	<b><u>Crediton Road/Chichacott Road Junction</u></b> – It was noted that feedback was awaited from Okehampton Hamlets Parish Council in relation to additional bins they were considering providing in this area. Cllr Wood advised that they had written to Barratts and the management committee and were awaiting a response.	
<b>305.2</b>	The Committee noted that WDBC had confirmed an additional waste bin sited at the Westbridge Close end of Clapps Wood could be added to their collection schedule. Clerk to arrange purchase of a bin as previously resolved.	
<b>306</b>	<b><u>Simmons Park Information Boards</u></b> – Item deferred to later in the meeting	
<b>307</b>	<b><u>Bus Shelters</u></b> - On the proposition of Cllr Wood, seconded Cllr Ireland, it was <b>RESOLVED</b> to approve the proposal from Fernbank.	
<b>308</b>	<b><u>Tennis Club Agreement</u></b> – Cllr Leech reported that WDBC were of the opinion the agreement had finally been terminated.	
<b>309</b>	<b><u>Drinking Water Fountains/Refill Points</u></b> – The feasibility of provision of drinking water fountains/refill points in Simmons Park was considered. On the proposition of Cllr Marsh, seconded Cllr Ireland, it was <b>RESOLVED</b> not to progress with the project as the annual maintenance costs would exceed £2,600 which was unsustainable in the current economic climate.	
<b>310</b>	<b><u>Old Band Stand Base</u></b> – On the proposition of Cllr Marsh, seconded Cllr Yelland, it was <b>RESOLVED</b> to progress a proposal to enhance the old band stand base in Simmons Park to create a multiuse space and that it be dedicated to the late HM Queen Elizabeth II. Cllr Marsh to progress the project in conjunction with the Admin Officer.	
<b>311</b>	<b><u>Correspondence</u></b> received from members of the public was considered:	
<b>311.1</b>	<b><u>Cycling in Simmons Park</u></b> – The Clerk confirmed there was an existing bylaw prohibiting cycling in the park and that this would be indicated on the information boards when they were installed. It was noted that it was difficult to police and stop.	
<b>311.2</b>	<b><u>Putting Green</u></b> – On the proposition of Cllr Ireland, seconded Cllr Yelland, it was <b>RESOLVED</b> to investigate the feasibility of further enhancing the putting green to create a more family friendly facility. Publicity of the facility was raised, options to be considered including the provision of a large banner and management of the putting.	
<b>312</b>	<b><u>Planning Application 2670/22/TCA</u></b> – It was noted that planning consent for an application submitted by the Clerk for work to trees at Fairplace to enable better CCTV coverage of the area and pruning around the lighting column had been received and that the work would be undertaken in conjunction with tree work in Simmons Park.	

<b>313</b>	<b><u>Replacement Trees in Simmons Park</u></b> – The Committee noted that Fairplace Church were donating some Cherry Trees to replace Ash Trees due to be felled because of dieback disease in Simmons Park.	
<b>314</b>	<b><u>Cemetery</u></b>	
<b>314.1</b>	A summary of burials since 1 <sup>st</sup> April 2022 was noted.	
<b>314.2</b>	The Clerk reported that annual routine inspection of the memorial stones had been undertaken in August. Relatives of the two memorial stones found to need maintenance had been contacted and were taking action to make repairs.	
<b>315</b>	<b><u>Payment of Invoices</u></b> – On the proposition of Cllr Wood, seconded Cllr Leech, it was <b>RESOLVED</b> to approve the schedule of payments.	
<b>316</b>	<b><u>Reports of Council Working/Task and Finish Groups -</u></b>	
<b>316.1</b>	<b><u>Cemetery Management</u></b> – An update was to be provided in Part Two Confidential items of business.	
<b>317</b>	<b><u>Members’ Reports and Requests for Agenda Items -</u></b>	
<b>317.1</b>	<b><u>Dartmoor National Park Forum</u></b> – No report	
<b>317.2</b>	<b><u>Everything Okehampton</u></b> – Cllr Marsh advised a fundraising dinner was taking place on 21 <sup>st</sup> October, plans for Edwardian Evening were progressing, a Coffee Morning was being held on 19 <sup>th</sup> November and plans were being made for the Okehampton Celebrates event in 2023.	
<b>317.3</b>	<b><u>North Dartmoor Search &amp; Rescue Team</u></b> – Cllr Ireland had no update to report.	
<b>317.4</b>	<b><u>Okehampton Community Archive</u></b> – Cllr Holt advised no meeting had been held.	
<b>317.5</b>	<b><u>Okehampton Community Recreation Association (OCRA)</u></b> – Cllr Marsh advised that OCRA was working with the football club in relation to various aspects including opening times.	
<b>317.6</b>	<b><u>Okehampton &amp; District Community Transport Group</u></b> - Cllr Leech reported that the group was continuing to run and had some new clients due to bus service cutbacks, volunteer bus drivers were needed and general costs were increasing.	
<b>317.7</b>	<b><u>Parklands Leisure Centre Users Group</u></b> – The ‘Meet the Manager’ event had been postponed.	
<b>317.8</b>	<b><u>Beacon Path Sticklepath to Okehampton</u></b> – No report.	
<b>318</b>	<b><u>Simmons Park Information Boards</u></b> –	
<b>318.1</b>	It was noted that a grant of £2,913 had been awarded from GWR towards a project entitled ‘From Platform to Town and Park’ for the purpose of the provision of a range of informative wayfinding and information guiding pedestrians from the railway station through Simmons Park to the town centre.	
<b>318.2</b>	On the proposition of Cllr Marsh, seconded Cllr Holt, it was <b>RESOLVED</b> to approve the final version of the Simmons Park information boards including the reduction in size of the phone box image, the approval of a planning	

application submission and to ask the Simmons Park Trustees to note the decision.

(Cllr Goffey left the meeting.)

- 319** **Part Two Confidential Items** – On the proposition of Cllr Leech, seconded Cllr Ireland, 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 are 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.
- 320** **Land Adjacent to Skate Park** – No further information had been received. The Committee agreed that should the proposer wish to progress with the scheme, information must be provided by 5<sup>th</sup> December which was the next scheduled meeting date.
- 321** **Cemetery Land Purchase** – The Clerk reported that the offer had been submitted and a response was awaited.
- 322** **Replacement Mower** – The Park-Keeper reported on potential mowers. On the proposition of Cllr Wood, seconded Cllr Ireland, it was **RESOLVED** to approve the purchase of a Honda mulching mower at approx. £625 from Devon Garden Machinery.
- 323** **Play Equipment Repair** – It was noted that only two quotations had been able to be obtained for replacement parts for the Typhoon Swing seat. On the proposition of Cllr Marsh, seconded Cllr Leech, it was **RESOLVED** to approve the purchase of parts from HAGS at the cost of £1,684.65.
- 324** **Parks Office Heating** – On the proposition of Cllr Yelland, seconded Cllr Wood it was **RESOLVED** to approve the quotation for replacement of the three-night storage heaters with a single more efficient ceramic core electric heater at £800 from AJ Electrics.
- 325** **Parking Permits** – On the proposition of Cllr Ireland, seconded Cllr Yelland it was **RESOLVED** to approve the purchase of 500 self-cling single sided parking permits from Ink Print at the cost of approx. £169. Permits to not include the liability clause as on the existing ones.
- 326** **The Rest, Simmons Park** – It was noted that the property, owned and managed by Simmons Homes, had recently become vacant and some work was needed to make the garden area which was the responsibility of the council safe and tidy. The Clerk reported that she was working with the Simmons Home Clerk to arrange the work needed and organisation of a joint skip to save costs.
- 327** **Urgent Item** – Concern was raised about a motorcycle that had been seen on more than one occasion driving through Simmons Park.

On the proposition of Cllr Holt, seconded Cllr Ireland, it was **RESOLVED** to exit Part Two and ratify decisions made therein. The meeting was closed at 8.30pm

**Councillor Marsh**  
**Chairman**