

**Minutes of a meeting of Okehampton Town Council held on
Monday 16th January 2023 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 Botton
Councillor A Fisher
Councillor J Goffey
Councillor C Holt
Councillor M Ireland

In Attendance: Mrs E James (Town Clerk)
1 member of the public

Action

- 577 **Apologies for Absence** – Apologies tendered by Cllrs Wood and Leech, both of whom were unwell, were **approved** on the proposition of Cllr Ireland, seconded Cllr Marsh.
- 578 **Declarations of Interest** – None
- 579 **Public Participation** – None
- 580 **Members Questions** – Cllr Ireland had been approached by members of the public about the reduced bus service.
- 581 **DCC (Various Road, Devon) (Weight Restriction) Amendment Order** – On the proposition of Cllr Marsh, seconded Cllr Abbots, it was **RESOLVED** to object to DCC’s proposal to permit vehicles over the specified weight limit (7.5T) to travel through the centre of Okehampton when following an official National Highways diversion route due to closure of the A30 on the following grounds:
- Day to day general traffic through the town centre is already high and the roads become congested, particularly at the beginning and end of the school and work day
 - Currently when the A30 is closed due to an incident, traffic through the town becomes even more heavy and congested without the addition of heavy vehicles
 - Increased use of the road through the town centre will potentially damage historic and listed buildings
 - Road infrastructure will be damaged and there is concern that the bridges are not strong enough to take the additional weight of the large vehicles – has this been checked?
 - Air pollution will be exacerbated, particularly when vehicles are waiting at traffic lights and junctions. This in turn will prove detrimental to the health and wellbeing of residents and pedestrians.
 - Potential to cause a decrease in footfall in the town centre thereby negatively affecting the local businesses
 - On street parking along New Road already reduces the width of the road so a car and van cannot pass. Additional large freight vehicles will cause problems along this stretch of road and will restrict traffic flow in/out of the town causing further congestion and pollution levels to rise in this area to the detriment of the health and wellbeing of residents and pedestrians
 - Improved rail links could be utilised to remove more heavy freight traffic from the roads

Clerk

582 **PART 2 Confidential Matters** - On the proposition of Cllr Yelland, 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 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.

583 **Charter Hall Roofing Project** – Cllrs Ireland, Marsh, Yelland, Tolley and Fisher declared personal interests, being members of Okehampton United Charity (OUC) to whom a grant application for financial assistance with the project had been submitted.

A paper prepared by the Clerk in relation to the finances was noted. The Clerk advised that in addition there would be an insurance cost to the council and removal of any asbestos discovered during the required survey would be an additional cost.

Concern was raised about the time it could take for planning consent to be received from WDBC.

On the proposition of Cllr Yelland, seconded Cllr Fisher, it was **RESOLVED** to award the contract subject to confirmation of acceptable figures and ratification by full Council, and that virements to move funds be considered once the contract price had been confirmed and the outcome of the grant application to the OUC was known.

Clerk

On the proposition of Cllr Fisher, seconded Cllr Goffey it was **RESOLVED** to exit Part 2 and ratify decisions made therein. The meeting was closed at 7.30pm

Councillor Tolley
Mayor