

**Minutes of a meeting of Okehampton Town Council held on
Monday 27th February 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 J Goffey
Councillor C Holt
Councillor M Ireland
Councillor T Leech

In Attendance: Mrs E James (Town Clerk)
2 members of the public

The meeting was Livestreamed through the Council Facebook page.

Action

Condolences were expressed on the passing of a former town Councillor, Mr John Stockwell.

677 Apologies for Absence – Apologies tendered by Cllrs Botton, Fisher and Wood, due to illness and personal matters, were **approved** on the proposition of Cllr Ireland, seconded Cllr Yelland.

678 Declarations of Interest – Cllr Leech declared a personal interest in Min Ref 692. Cllr Yelland advised she had declared an interest at the WDBC meeting when the Community Governance review (Min Ref 692) was discussed and had left the room for the duration.

679 Public Participation – None

680 Members Questions – Cllr Marsh advised she would like Livestreaming of council meetings to be reconsidered. Any Councillors of the same view to contact the Clerk requesting that it be included on an agenda in accordance with the requirements in Standing Orders for reconsideration of a resolution within six months of being made.

Councillors

681 West Devon Borough Council – Cllr Yelland reported WDBC would be in a position to assist the Council in drawing up a letter opposing the installation of on-street parking charges.

Cllr Leech advised the currently weekly update was concentrating on feeding animal family members, too many of whom were being discarded nationally. The housing crisis was a long term problem made worse by the Ukraine war and other global issues. Cost of energy for people living in mobiles homes and other similar accommodation was being addressed and £400 per property could be applied for. The requirement for elector ID in order to be able to vote in May was highlighted.

682 Devon County Council – Cllr Samuel had tendered apologies which were noted and an email in relation to on-street parking charges was read out.

683 Questions Arising from Members Reports – Cllr Ireland commented the report relating to animal friends was informative.

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

684.1 Parks Committee meeting held on 5th December 2022 - adoption proposed by Cllr Marsh, seconded Cllr Leech and **approved**.

685	<u>Full Council Meeting Minutes</u> – The minutes of the Town Council meeting held on 30 th January 2023 were approved on the proposition of Cllr Marsh, seconded by Cllr Ireland, and signed by Cllr Tolley.	
686	<u>Proposed Installation of On-Street Parking Meters</u> – On the proposition of Cllr Leech, seconded Cllr Ireland, it was RESOLVED to undertake a survey of businesses to ascertain their views about the proposals for on-street charging for parking and to take up the offer of assistance from WDBC in relation to written opposition to them.	Clerk
687	<u>Okehampton Hospital</u> – A presentation by One Devon had been given at the DALC annual conference in the autumn of 2022 by the Chief Executive when it had been established that One Devon was the organisation who would make the decision about any potential reopening. Clerk to obtain contact details.	Clerk
688	<u>DCC Regeneration Project</u> – Cllr Marsh declared a personal interest being a Trustee of the Sports & Skills Trust. A quick win had been identified, that being a Town App proposed by Everything Okehampton which was due to be launched to businesses in March. Traffic congestion and parking issues in the town centre were mentioned in report as was the lack of business coordination.	
689	<u>CCTV Scheme</u> – Cllr Leech reported that Phase 2 was progressing but could not be completed in some areas until DCC's contractor was able to undertake some work to the lighting columns. Other cameras within this final phase were anticipated to go live by the end of March.	
690	<u>Speedwatch</u> – It was agreed that interest for the setting up of a community-led group be ascertained.	Clerk
691	<u>Charter Hall Roofing Project</u> – The Clerk reported donations towards the Sponsor a Slate appeal had reached £760, and the planning application was live on WDBC's portal. On the proposition of Cllr Yelland, seconded Cllr Goffey, it was RESOLVED to ratify the letter of intent issued the previous week.	
692	<u>Community Governance – Boundary Review</u> – The Council noted WDBC had approved the Terms of Reference for the review which had commenced on 23 rd February 2023 and had created a page on their website detailing the stages and a link for comments to be submitted.	
693	<u>Finance</u>	
693.1	<u>Payment Schedule</u> - On the proposition of Cllr Tolley, seconded Cllr Matravers, it was RESOLVED to approve the schedule.	
693.2	<u>Trustees Fees</u> – On the proposition of Cllr Tolley, seconded Cllr Marsh, it was RESOLVED that the Council continue to pay any legal or other fees incurred by Simmons Park Charity (1101388) and the same solicitor be used for all matters for continuity.	
694	<u>Asset Register</u>	
694.1	Nomination of a Councillor to undertake checks of elements of the Asset Register was deferred until after the elections in May.	Clerk
694.2	On the proposition of Cllr Leech, seconded Cllr Marsh, it was RESOLVED to approve the additions of £30,307.72 and disposals totalling £8,290.00 as listed on the schedule. The Clerk reported that the 'Jim the Walker' mural/statue had been added to the insurance policy.	

695 Policies and Documents –

695.1 Policies - On the proposition of Cllr Marsh, seconded Cllr Yelland, it was **RESOLVED** to approve the below listed documents as recommended by the Policy & Resources Committee and following staff consultation:

- Absence Management Policy
- Grievance Policy
- Leave Policy
- Social Media, IT and Phone Use Policy for Employees
- Training and Development Policy for Employees and Councillors
- Uniform Policy for Employees

695.2 Risk Assessments - On the proposition of Cllr Leech, seconded Cllr Goffey, it was **RESOLVED** to accept and approve the risk assessments, including those relating to COSHH.

696 Meeting Dates - On the proposition of Cllr Tolley, seconded Cllr Yelland (1 abstention), it was **RESOLVED** to approve the draft Schedule of Meetings and Civic Events for the 2023/24 Council Year.

697 Events -

697.1 Commonwealth Day, 13th March 2023 – The event that was taking place outside of St James' Chapel at 9.20am was noted.

697.2 Annual Town Assembly and Report for 2022/23 - On the proposition of Cllr Goffey, seconded Cllr Yelland, it was **RESOLVED** to approve the presentations arranged by the Clerk, those being from Read Easy and the Devon and Police Cyber Protect Team.

On the proposition of Cllr Tolley, seconded Cllr Marsh, it was **RESOLVED** to approve the draft 2022/23 annual report, noting that some information had still to be included.

697.3 Coronation of King Charles III, 6 May 2023 – Admin Officer and Clerk to liaise with Cllr Marsh with regards to road closure signs and marshals.

697.4 Okehampton Celebrates in the Park, 9th July 2023 – Cllr Marsh reported it was hoped the OUC would fund the marquee and some other costs.

697.5 Royal Garden Party Nomination – Cllr Leech had been nominated, but his name had not been drawn.

698 Civic Diary – Cllr Tolley reported he had presented grant cheques to Citizens Advice and Okehampton United Charities towards the cost of allotments, had planted a tree in Simmons Park donated by Fairplace Church and the joint fundraising coffee morning held with the Mayor of WDBC had raised £180 for each respective chosen charity.

699 Reports of Council Working/Task & Finish Groups -

699.1 Climate Change – Cllr Goffey reported the display on the Charter Hall doors was in aid of green heart week encouraging love of the environment.

699.2 Charter Hall Roof Replacement – Previously discussed at Min Ref 691.

699.3 Placemaking Working Group – It was commented that this had been superseded by the DCC Regeneration and BID projects.

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

700.1 Neighbourhood Plan Group – Cllr Goffey reported the plan had been sent to WDBC for progression to the next stage.

Clerk

Admin
Officer/
Clerk

701 Members' Reports and Requests for Agenda Items -

701.1 Okehampton Matters – No meeting to report thereon.

701.2 Okehampton Ukraine Support Group – Cllr Leech advised he was of the understanding that meetings had been cancelled due to low turnout, but support was still ongoing. New hosts and rented accommodation were needed.

701.3 Rural Market Town Group – Cllr Goffey reported the group had been undertaking a cost-of-living crisis survey which was ongoing.

(Members of the public left the meeting)

702 PART 2 Confidential Matters - On the proposition of Cllr Ireland, seconded Cllr Yelland 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.

703 Health & Safety Audit – On the proposition of Cllr Marsh, seconded Cllr Yelland, it was **RESOLVED** to approve that a full Health and Safety audit be undertaken and to appoint James Hallam Risk Management at the cost of £1,500. No further quotations had been sought as the company was linked to and worked with the council's insurance agent, was competent and knowledgeable about specific council requirements.

Clerk

704 Parks Equipment - On the proposition of Cllr Marsh, seconded Cllr Goffey, it was **RESOLVED** to approve the purchase of Cramer battery powered hedge trimmers, batteries and charger at the cost of £1,083.30. The order included an offer that would provide the council with two free batteries, giving a saving of £499.98, therefore no other quotations had been sought.

Clerk

It was **RESOLVED** to suspend Standing Order 3 (bb) to permit extension of the meeting which would exceed the set time limit, following a proposal by Cllr Leech, seconded Cllr Ireland.

705 Insurance Quotations – Quotations for the renewal of the Council's insurance which was due to expire on 31st March 2023 were reviewed.

On the proposition of Cllr Goffey, seconded Cllr Ireland, it was **RESOLVED** to accept the three year quotation from WPS Hallam at £17,428.90 noting that costs for fleet vehicle and engineering cover for the lift were awaited and would be additional. The quotation was deemed to be best value by virtue that the council had been insured through the agent for some years giving them good overall knowledge of the council and therefore there was less risk of unplanned requirements following a survey which was a requirement of all quotations. Virement of savings on the budgeted amount to be considered in the new financial year.

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 8.40pm

Councillor Tolley
Mayor