

**Minutes of a meeting of Okehampton Town Council held on
Monday 21st August 2023 at 7pm in the Council Chamber, Town Hall, Okehampton**

Members Present: Councillor A Fisher (Mayor)
Councillor C Holt (Chairman, Parks Committee)
Councillor T Leech (Chairman, Planning Committee)
Councillor A Wood (Chairman, Property Committee)
Councillor J Yelland (Chairman, Policy & Resources Committee)
Councillor L Bird
Councillor R Colman
Councillor T Cummings
Councillor M Harding
Councillor M Ireland
Councillor C Marsh
Councillor L Rogers
Councillor B Tolley
Councillor S Weekes

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

Action

- 220 **Apologies for Absence** – On the proposition of Cllr Ireland, seconded Cllr Tolley, it was **RESOLVED** approve apologies tendered by Cllr Cummings (Work).
- 221 **Declarations of Interest** – Declarations were declared as follows:
- Cllrs Fisher and Marsh in Min Ref 233 and 239.3
 - Cllr Harding in Min Ref 234
- 222 **Public Participation** – None
- 223 **Members Questions** – None
- 224 **West Devon Borough Council** – Cllr Leech reported:
- A rough sleeper in Okehampton had been contacted by WDDB with an offer of assistance. Those Charities and residents who provided him with food and offered other help were thanked.
- (Cllr Cummings arrived)
- Summer holidays were impacting on progression with forward planning, internal consultations were commencing the following week.
 - An answer about responsibilities for Market Street public toilets had been requested.
 - Complaints about speeding had been received and the Town Council was requesting volunteers interested in setting up a Speedwatch Group
 - A camera had appeared near the existing speed camera in Exeter Road, investigation into what it was for and who put it there was ongoing
 - Waste being left at the entrance to the Ball Hill footpath was being investigated
- 225 **Devon County Council** – Apologies tendered by Cllr Samuel (DCC) were noted.
- 226 **Questions Arising from Members Reports** – Cllr Samuel was thanked for a response about Station Road resurfacing which would take place in October. Further information about access for residents and other concerns were awaited.

Cllr Leech had investigated support being given to Tavistock Town Council by WDDB in relation to DCC's On-Street Parking Proposals. This was the same as

had been given to the Town Council; that being a joint letter from each Council and WDBC's previous Leader had been sent to DCC earlier in the year.

227 **Full Council Meeting Minutes** – The minutes of the Town Council meeting held on 31st July 2023 were **approved** on the proposition of Cllr Ireland, seconded by Cllr Yelland, to be signed by Cllr Fisher.

228 **Business Improvement District** – The Clerk advised Okehampton Hamlets Parish Council minutes from a meeting on 1st August 2023 stated they had *'resolved to support progression of the project to the next stage as outlined in the report however it was not agreed to make a contribution of one third of the £25k costs as the initiative is principally WDBC and DCC function, not a Town or Parish function, and that there needs to be a revised funding formula with is fair and proportionate to the OHPC precept.'* Disappointment at the decision was expressed.

On the proposition of Cllr Yelland, seconded Cllr Leech (1 abstention), it was **RESOLVED** to defer a decision whilst it was established:

- If the Council could legally fund more of the project given some businesses were outside of the town boundary
- the funding Okehampton Hamlets Parish Council were prepared to contribute.

Clerk

229 **DCC On-Street Parking Charges Proposal** – A meeting with DCC had been held on 17th August.

Councillors' comments included that they could not see any benefit to residents or businesses and the proposals could be detrimental to the economy. Those wishing to park for free would move into the residential areas exacerbating existing issues. The proposals could impact the work being progressed to create a Business Improvement District in the town. DCC had been unable to provide any local evidence as to the benefits listed within the documentation. The money would be better spent on provision of electric charging points not ticket machines.

On the proposition of Cllr Leech, seconded Cllr Harding, it was **RESOLVED** to:

- Object to the proposals.
- To hold a public meeting as part of the consultation process to which DCC be invited to present the proposals.
- To contact the other Councils who were facing the same proposals with a view to jointly opposing the schemes.

Clerk

(Cllr Wood left the meeting.)

230 **Consultation on Railway Station Ticket Office Closures** – On the proposition of Cllr Ireland, seconded Cllr Leech, it was **RESOLVED** to adopt and base a response on the consultation submission by OkeRail.

Clerk

231 **Jim the Walker** –

231.1 The inspection report and a minor required action that could be undertaken 'in-house' was noted.

231.2 On the proposition of Cllr Leech, seconded Cllr Marsh, it was **RESOLVED** that the Statue be the responsibility of the Property Committee.

Clerk

232 **Neighbourhood Plan** – The Clerk provided an update on correspondence received from the group Chairman and a conversation with an Officer at WDBC who had verbally advised there would be no cost to either the Town or Parish Council for the Regulation 16 stage of the process. He requested it be noted a statement in emailed correspondence that he was happy to continue to Reg 16

was not correct. If following the consultation period, the examiner did not approve the documentation, it would need to be revised and Reg 16 undertaken for a second time.

It was noted that the group Chairman was satisfied the requirements had been met.

On the proposition of Cllr Yelland, seconded Cllr Tolley (1 abstention), it was **RESOLVED** to support the plan for progression to Regulation 16.

Clerk

233 **Okehampton Memories** – Cllrs Fisher and Marsh being members of Everything Okehampton had declared personal interests.

On the proposition of Cllr Colman, seconded Cllr Rogers (2 abstentions) it was **RESOLVED** to support by letter an Okehampton Memories project for which Everything Okehampton had been awarded a Lottery Heritage Grant and to make a financial contribution by way of a £500 donation to the project.

Clerk

234 **Finance** – Cllr Harding had declared a pecuniary interest in a payment that had been made during the week commencing 7th August 2023.

On the proposition of Cllr Yelland, seconded Cllr Marsh (1 abstention), it was **RESOLVED** to approve the schedule of payments. Payments made during the week commencing 7th August 2023 were also noted.

A smart meter was being fitted on 21st September in Parks Office.

235 **Simmons Park Charity (1101388)**

235.1 The Council noted a Special Meeting of Trustees had been called by the Chairman for 4th September 2023 when consideration would be given to formally appointing Okehampton Town Council as Sole Trustee of the Charity.

235.2 On the proposition of Cllr Marsh, seconded Cllr Tolley, it was **RESOLVED** to approve the signing and affixing of the common seal to the following documents, subject to resolution of Trustees:

- Deed of Appointment and Retirement of Trustees
- Deed of Indemnity

Clerk

236 **Terms of Reference** - On the proposition of Cllr Marsh, seconded Cllr Yelland, it was **RESOLVED** to approve the Terms of Reference proposed by Okehampton Hamlets Parish Council for a joint working group to plan and organise events for D Day Celebrations on 6th June 2024, with the exception of a budget and financial contribution to be made by the Town Council which would be considered at a later date.

Clerk

237 **General Data Protection Regulations** – A reminder about GDPR and use of emails had been previously circulated to all Councillors by the Clerk.

238 **Mayors Civic Diary** – Cllr Fisher reported on events attended in the last month which included a Green Drinks Evening, Okehampton FA Cup match, Okehampton Show, an Adventure 7 presentation and a Cream Tea in Holsworthy.

239 **Civic Events**

239.1 **Civic Service** – The event was being held on the morning of 17th September.

239.2 **Remembrance Parade and Service** – The Service and Parade was being held on Sunday 12th September.

239.3 Mayors Carols, Edwardian Evening – Everything Okehampton had employed Miss Ivy Events to arrange the occasion this year.

On the proposition of Cllr Rogers, seconded Cllr Holt, it was **RESOLVED** to invite guests at the earlier time of 4.15pm for refreshments followed by the light switch on at 6pm the Mayors Carols.

Clerk

240 Reports of Council Working/Task & Finish Groups –
240.1 Climate Change – No meeting had been held.

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

241.1 Neighbourhood Plan Group – See Min Ref 232 above.

242 Members' Reports and Requests for Agenda Items -

242.1 Rural Market Town Group – Cllr Leech reported on a recently attended meeting which had been themed around the elderly how they were being affected in rural areas.

242.2 20's Plenty for Devon – No meeting.

242.3 Active Travel Project – No meeting.

(Member of the public left the meeting)

243 PART 2 Confidential Matters - On the proposition of Cllr Colman, 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.

244 Charter Hall Roofing Project – A meeting with the Project Manager and Contractor had been held on 18th August. Consideration was given to this and documentation relating to Revision 7 received earlier in the day.

On the proposition of Cllr Tolley, seconded Cllr Colman, it was **RESOLVED** to:

- Agree a commencement date of mid-February/March 2024
- To request a Proof of Title document for the slates which had been purchased along with photographs,
- Costs for replacement of the air handling unit instead of repair to be investigated.

Clerk

245 Jim the Walker – On the proposition of Cllr Leech, seconded Cllr Colman, it was **RESOLVED** to agree the document drawn up by the Clerk with amendments, its signing and the affixing of the common seal.

Clerk

On the proposition of Cllr Tolley, seconded Cllr Leech, it was **RESOLVED** to exit Part 2 and ratify decisions made therein. The meeting was closed at 8.25pm

Councillor Fisher
Mayor