

**Minutes of a Meeting of Okehampton Town Council held on  
Monday 2 February 2015 at 7.00 pm in the Council Chamber, Town Hall,  
Okehampton**

**Members Present:**

Councillor P Vachon (Town Mayor)  
 Councillor Mrs J Goffey (Deputy Mayor)  
 Councillor K Ball  
 Councillor T Cummings  
 Councillor Revd M Davies  
 Councillor Dr M Ireland  
 Councillor A Leech  
 Councillor C Letchford  
 Councillor Mrs M McDonald  
 Councillor Mrs C Marsh  
 Councillor B Stephens  
 Councillor B Tolley  
 Councillor D Weekes  
 Councillor Mrs J Yelland

**In Attendance:** P R Snell (Town Clerk)

Before business, prayers were offered by Councillor Revd M Davies.

	<b>Action</b>
<b>478. <u>Apologies for Absence</u></b> - All Members were present.	
<b>479. <u>Deferment of Business</u></b> - (for comment by the public) - A member of the Okement Rivers Improvement Group felt that the response to his recent letter (taken under Deferment of Business at the recent Parks Committee) was somewhat negative. At this point Councillor Marsh declared a personal interest as a trustee of the Okement Rivers Improvement Group. He referred to the volume of litter that had been collected from the three supermarket car parks recently. The Mayor reiterated the consideration of items taken under Deferment of Business before suggesting that the letter be sent to the supermarkets concerned. The Council had already agreed to include the observations raised for referral to Destination Okehampton for its town walkabout survey purposes. The Council's engagement in the forthcoming Okehampton Litter Pick Campaign was also encouraged.	
<b>480. <u>Members' Questions</u></b> - Councillor Weekes commented on the volume of cigarette butts outside the Plymouth Inn and London Inn. It was agreed to include this concern for the attention of Destination Okehampton and its Okehampton walkabout survey.	Chairman Destination Okehampton Working Group
<b>481. <u>West Devon Borough Council</u></b> - Councillor Leech reported that Our Plan had now been published for consultation purposes and encouraged all Members to get involved. He further reported that both Chief Officers were now in post, Steve Jorden and Sophie Hosking.	

482. **Devon County Council** - Councillor Ball reported that all items in his report would be covered under item 10, and it was agreed to defer the report until that item.
483. **Adoption of Minutes of Committees and to Receive Questions from Members Thereon** -
- 483.1 Parks Committee meetings held on 1 and 8 December 2014 - adoption proposed by Councillor Marsh, seconded by Councillor Ireland and agreed.
- 483.2 Minutes of the Policy and Resources Committee meetings held on 24 November and 1 December 2014 - adoption proposed by Councillor Goffey, seconded Councillor Yelland and agreed.
484. **Full Council Meeting Minutes** - The minutes of the Town Council meeting held on 12 January 2015 were received, signed and approved on the proposition of Councillor Ireland, seconded Councillor Leech and agreed.
485. **Matters Arising** -
- 485.1 **Neighbourhood Plan** - The Clerk reported that a joint councils' working protocol had been drafted by the Clerks of the Town and Hamlets jointly and was herewith circulated for consideration and comment, with a final draft to be presented to both councils at the March meetings. It was agreed that any comments would be emailed to the Clerk.
- 485.2 **Okehampton Older Peoples Community Services Network** - After comment, and noting that the meetings would be held during the day time, it was agreed that either Councillor Davies or Councillor Yelland would attend the meetings for the time being.
486. **Civic Diary Report** - The Mayor reported that there had been no civic engagements since the last meeting. There had nevertheless been a full round of coffee mornings and other meetings. The Mayor further noted forthcoming civic events at neighbouring towns and invited expressions of interest from Members to accompany him.
487. **Impact of Funding Cuts on Okehampton Town - Discussion** - The Mayor introduced the discussion noting in particular the public consultation on proposed public transport cuts, the effective loss of the town bus and possible effect on the Sunday Rover. Councillor Ball, as County Council Member, reported that current consultations were in the context of Devon County Council needing to find a further cut of £50million next year and that all the easy wins had been harvested. In the following discussion, points made included:
- Disproportionate effect of cuts in rural areas where public transport was a vital social need, not a commercial equation.
  - Challenging topography of Okehampton town did not lend itself to alternatives like cycling and walking, particularly for senior population.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Devon County Council should look at the bus pass situation and argue the national case with central government.</li> <li>• Importance of delivering a rail link with Exeter and Plymouth is now more significant in the light of loss of public bus services.</li> <li>• Concern of gritting cutbacks and fear of going out in icy conditions leading to social seclusion.</li> </ul> <p>It was agreed that the Mayor should write to the Prime Minister, copy to Mel Stride MP, outlining these concerns and requesting that proposals affecting rural communities such as Okehampton be revisited, this on the proposition of Councillor Davies, seconded by Councillor Ball and agreed unanimously.</p>	Action
488.	<b><u>Nominations Requested -</u></b>	
488.1	<b>Buckingham Palace Garden Party</b> - On the proposition of Councillor Ireland, seconded by Councillor Davies, it was agreed to submit the nominations of the Mayor and the Deputy Mayor.	Mayor
488.2	<b>Annual West Devon Mayoral Awards</b> - (Councillor Marsh declared interest.) The Mayor requested that any nominations for these awards be forwarded to the Town Clerk in advance of the deadline of 27 February 2015. Councillor Marsh clarified that the Council or Councillors could nominate persons from outside the town.	Clerk
488.3	<b>Trustees to the Charities of Holditch and Others</b> - The Clerk to the Charities had informed the Council that Mrs Joan Booth, Mr Charles Letchford and Mrs Christine Marsh were due to retire as trustees in May 2015. All had confirmed they were willing to stand for a further term. The Council agreed to nominate all three for a further term of four years on the proposition of Councillor Davies, seconded Councillor Ball and agreed.	
488.4	<b>Council Committees</b> - The Mayor recorded that Councillor Tolley had volunteered to membership of the Policy and Resources and Parks Committees for the remainder of the Council session.	
489.	<b><u>Dartmoor National Park Authority</u></b> - On the proposition of Councillor Stephens, seconded by Councillor Tolley, it was agreed that Councillors Leech and Cummings would attend the Parish and Town Council Workshop on Wednesday 3 March 2015.	
490.	<b><u>Community Energy Feasibility Study</u></b> - The Committee received the notes of the Working Group meeting of 15 January 2015 and endorsed the Working Group's recommendation to proceed with the application on the proposition of Councillor Cummings, seconded by Councillor Leech.	
491.	<b><u>The Local Government (Electronic Communications) (England) Order 2015</u></b> - The Clerk summarised the effects of the legislation and recommended that the Council: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) note the legislation</li> <li>b) agree that the agenda be circulated by email</li> <li>c) that hard copy agenda and supporting papers be sent by post later in the</li> </ul>	

	week. The Clerk confirmed that there would be no requirement to print off necessary papers at home and that an individual opt-in statement would be prepared for each Member. The Council agreed the recommendations.	<b>Action</b>
<b>492.</b>	<b><u>Fees and Charges</u></b> - A revised fees and charges sheet for premises hire as recommended by the Property Committee had been circulated for endorsement. Further amendments were proposed as follows on the proposition of Councillor McDonald, seconded Councillor Weekes: a) new charge for coffee mornings £30 b) removal of hire of equipment provisions c) to take effect for new bookings from 1 April 2015. The proposals were agreed and the new fees sheet would be prepared by the Clerk for circulation and publication.	Clerk
<b>493.</b>	<b><u>Members' Reports</u></b> - (i) Dementia Awareness - No meeting. (ii) Northern Parishes Link Committee - No meeting. (iii) Okehampton Matters - Minutes of last meeting circulated. (iv) Okehampton Vision Steering Group - Councillor Ireland reported on the emphasis on care needs for elderly people at the Steering Group meeting and on articles that had been published by members of the Destination Okehampton Working Group in professional rail magazines. (Councillor Marsh leaves the meeting at 8.30 pm.) The Mayor added that the following items had also been discussed: CCTV in the town centre, Sunday Rover, Traffic Management Plan, Community Energy Initiative, branding and new town radio station. The Mayor had been invited to present the Vision Group strategy paper to the Devon Heartlands Forum. Councillor Ball added that the Sunday Rover scheme was currently awaiting budget approval for the current year.	

## **PART TWO ITEMS**

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 item as it involves the likely disclosure of sensitive and confidential information. Proposed by Councillor Ball, seconded Councillor Yelland and agreed.

<b>494.</b>	<b><u>Civic Dinner</u></b>	<b>Action</b>
-------------	----------------------------	---------------

The meeting was closed at 8.51 pm.

**Councillor P Vachon**  
**Town Mayor**