

**Minutes of Okehampton Town Council Policy and Resources Committee Meeting
held on Monday 17th March 2025 at 7pm in the Council Chamber,
Town Hall, Okehampton**

Committee Members Present: Councillor J Yelland (Chairman)
Councillor A Fisher (Mayor)
Councillor R Colman (Chairman, Property)
Councillor T Leech (Chairman, Planning)
Councillor B Tolley (Chairman, Parks)
Councillor C Marsh
Councillor S Weekes

In Attendance: Mrs E James (Town Clerk)

	Action
<p>664 <u>Apologies for Absence</u> – On the proposition of Cllr Colman seconded Cllr Leech, it was RESOLVED to approve apologies tendered by Cllr Bird (personal) and Cllr Hart (personal).</p>	
<p>665 <u>Declarations of Interest</u> – None</p>	
<p>666 <u>Public Participation</u> – None</p>	
<p>667 <u>Members' Questions</u> – None</p>	
<p>668 <u>Minutes</u> – On the proposition of Cllr Colman, seconded Cllr Weekes, it was RESOLVED to approve the minutes of the meetings held on 6th and 20th January 2025 which were signed by Cllr Yelland.</p>	
<p>669 <u>Town Council Grant</u></p>	
<p>669.1 Feedback received from the following groups and organisations was noted:</p> <p>Museum of Dartmoor Life and Tourist Information Point for grants respectively of £3,500 and £1,500 awarded in June 2024. Feedback received included the financial report for 2024/25.</p>	
<p>669.2 Allotments – On the proposition of Cllr Tolley, seconded Cllr Leech, it was RESOLVED to approve the request from Okehampton United Charities for the annual contribution towards the provision and maintenance of allotments within the 2024/25 financial year of £3,948.81.</p>	Finance Officer/ Clerk
<p>670 <u>Okehampton Town Centre Grant Initiative</u> – No further applications could be considered. The Clerk advised that WDBC had indicated verbally that the Council could retain surplus funds to be used against capital works undertaken during the financial year. Written confirmation had been requested but not received.</p>	
<p>671 <u>Okehampton Town Youth Council</u> – The Youth Council had met earlier in the day to write their contribution to the Annual Council Report and prepare a presentation for the Annual Town Meeting in April. The Devon Multi-Academy Trust's CEO had agreed to meet with them. Cllr Leech requested the CEO be approached to see if she would also meet with the Council.</p>	Clerk
<p>672 <u>VE Day 80th Anniversary, 8 May 2025</u> – (Cllr Marsh arrived and declared a personal interest in this item)</p> <p>A report from the working group was considered. The 2025/26 budgeted amount for the event was £1,367 which included £867 of unspent event funding from the 2024/25 financial year. On the proposition of Cllr Tolley, seconded Cllr Colman</p>	Finance Officer/ Clerk

(1 abstention), it was **RESOLVED** to approve the spending of the whole budget as required in relation to the report.

673 **CCTV** – Agreements with Torbay Council were due for renewal later in the year, the line rental was fixed until 31st December 2027.

674 **Effectiveness of Internal Controls** – The effectiveness of the councils' internal controls was reviewed. On the proposition of Cllr Marsh, seconded Cllr Colman, it was **RESOLVED** to recommend the report to Full Council.

Clerk

675 **Policies and Documents** – (Cllr Fisher arrived)

675.1 **Civic/Council Protocol** - On the proposition of Cllr Weekes, seconded Cllr Tolley, it was **RESOLVED** to recommend the document to Full Council with amendments as agreed.

Delegation Scheme - On the proposition of Cllr Tolley, seconded Cllr Colman, it was **RESOLVED** to recommend the document to Full Council with amendments as agreed.

Financial Regulations - On the proposition of Cllr Marsh, seconded Cllr Weekes, it was **RESOLVED** to recommend the document to Full Council including amendments and clarification of the procurement process regulations for the council.

Financial Risk Assessment and Management Policy – On the proposition of Cllr Colman, seconded Cllr Fisher, it was **RESOLVED** to recommend the document to Full Council with amendments as agreed.

Internal Control Statement – On the proposition of Cllr Weekes, seconded Cllr Tolley, it was **RESOLVED** to recommend the document to Full Council.

Standing Orders – It was **agreed** to defer the review to await expected updates, as indicated by the Devon Association of Local Councils.

Treasury and Investment Policy & Strategy – On the proposition of Cllr Tolley, seconded Cllr Colman, it was **RESOLVED** to recommend document to Full Council.

Clerk

675.2 **Terms of Reference** – On the proposition of Cllr Tolley, seconded Cllr Colman, it was **RESOLVED** to recommend the Policy & Resources and Personnel Sub-Committee ToRs for the 2025/26 Mayoral Year to Full Council for consideration at the appropriate meeting

Clerk

676 **Finance and Governance**

676.1 **Councillor Audits** – Cllr Marsh reported she had undertaken an audit of the bank reconciliations, online payments and Lloyds Debit Card transactions for January 2025 and there were no issues to raise.

The Clerk advised that a potentially fraudulent transaction had been identified by the Finance Officer the previous week. Immediate action had been taken resulting in a full refund of £36.80 by the bank, cancellation of the direct debit and instigation of investigation by the bank.

676.2 **Management Accounts** – On the proposition of Cllr Fisher, seconded Cllr Weekes, it was **RESOLVED** to approve the management accounts, as circulated, for months ended 31st December 2024 (month 9) and 31st January 2025 (month 10).

- 676.3 Investments** – Investments and interest rates were reviewed and noted along with the distribution of council funds across different financial institutions in accordance with the Council’s Treasury and Investment Policy and Strategy.
- 676.4 Payment Schedule** – On the proposition of Cllr Fisher, seconded Cllr Colman, it was **RESOLVED** to approve the schedule of payments.
- 676.5 Virement** – On the proposition of Cllr Tolley, seconded Cllr Fisher, it was **RESOLVED** to approve the virement of burial income received up to 31st March 2025 to the Earmarked Reserve for the purchase of additional cemetery land.
- 676.6 John Lewis/Waitrose Business Account/Card** – The upcoming closure in June of the account/scheme, used by the Council for the sale and return as necessary of alcohol for the Mayors Civic Dinner was noted.
- 676.7 Bank Signatories** – On the proposition of Cllr Fisher, seconded Cllr Marsh, it was **RESOLVED** to approve the schedule of bank signatories for Council accounts and online banking facilities, including those for the new Lloyds account to be opened for the purpose of a lease rent deposit.
- 677 Reports of Council Working/Task & Finish Groups** –
- 677.1 VE Day 80th Anniversary, 8 May 2025** – Updated at Min Ref 672 above.
- 678 Members’ Reports and Requests for Agenda Items** –
- 678.1 Citizens Advice** – Cllr Leech advised there was no update to report upon.
- 678.2 DALC Larger Councils Sub-Committee** – A meeting about Devolution had been held virtually. The next meeting was in early April.
- 678.3 Devon Climate Emergency Group** – No report.
- 678.4 Fairtrade** – Cllr Weekes advised a Quiz Night was being held on 4th April.
- 678.5 Museum of Dartmoor Life** – The Museum had reopened and there was an exhibition, ‘Dartmoor Dying’.
- 678.6 Police Council Advocate Scheme, Northern Links and West Devon Matters** – Cllr Yelland advised she was no longer able to attend the Police Advocate Scheme meetings. A West Devon Matters meeting was taking place the following week and Cllr Yelland was going to request the re-establishment of the Northern Links Meetings. Cllr Leech suggested they review how the Links Meetings worked prior to the most recent format.
- 679 On the proposition of Cllr Leech, seconded Cllr Marsh 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.**

(Cllr Weekes left the meeting)

Finance Officer/
Clerk

Finance Officer/
Clerk

Cllr Yelland/
Clerk

It was **agreed** that Cllr Yelland and the Clerk review a lease in relation to one of the outstanding balances to establish the situation and report back to the Committee.

681 **Staffing Matters**

681.1 The Clerk reported that annual appraisals performance reviews had been undertaken for all members of staff, workload being the main concern raised. An update on absences was provided.

681.2 On the proposition of Cllr Marsh, seconded Cllr Leech, it was **RESOLVED** to ratify the increase of the apprentice's salary from 1st April 2025 in accordance with the rates issued by the Government.

Finance
Officer/
Clerk

682 **Clerk's Annual Appraisal and Performance Review and Pay Review** – The Committee reviewed the Clerk's annual salary in line with her employment contract and it was acknowledged that the Clerk was extremely diligent and hardworking in all she does. Due to budgeting constraints, it was **RESOLVED** on the proposition of Cllr Marsh, seconded Cllr Tolley, not to award an incremental increase for this year.

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

Cllr Yelland, Chairman

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