



Okehampton Town Council

Town Hall  
Fore Street  
Okehampton  
Devon  
EX20 1AA

01837 53179

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**Minutes of a meeting of Okehampton Town Council held on  
Monday 15<sup>th</sup> September 2025 at 7pm in the Council Chamber, Town Hall, Okehampton**

**Members Present:**

Cllr R Colman (Mayor)  
Cllr T Cummings  
Cllr C Holt  
Cllr M Ireland  
Cllr C Marsh  
Cllr D McNeill  
Cllr M Richards  
Cllr S Weekes

Cllr L Bird (Chairman, Property)  
Cllr B Tolley (Chairman, Parks)  
Cllr T Leech (Chairman, Planning)  
Cllr J Yelland (Chairman, Policy & Resources)

**In Attendance:**

Mrs E James (Town Clerk)  
Rev J Hall

Prior to commencement of the meeting prayers were offered by the Mayor's Chaplain, Rev Hall.

The meeting was livestreamed through the Council Facebook page.

**243 Apologies for Absence**

Apologies tendered by Cllr Fisher (personal), Holt (personal) and Cllr Hart (illness) were **approved** on the proposition of Cllr Cummings, seconded Cllr Leech.

**244 Declarations of Interest**

None.

**245 Public Participation**

None.

**246. Members' Questions**

None.

**247. West Devon Borough Council**

Reports from Cllr Leech and Cllr Dexter had been previously circulated

Cllr Dexter expanded on the Local Government Association (LGA) and the WDBC community engagement event that both he and Cllr Leech had attended. The Link Road had opened in the last few weeks following negotiation with the relevant parties enabling the road to be opened earlier than planned to assist with the road closure pressures. A member of the public who had spent a lot of time assisting was thanked. Other matters from within Cllr Leech's report were expanded upon including footpaths and Kellands Lane.

#### **248. Devon County Council**

No report had been received.

#### **249. Questions Arising from Member reports**

Cllr Grainger, DCC, to be asked his intention regarding submission of reports to meetings of the Council, which were expected, particularly in relation to the Local Government Review.

#### **250. Adoption of Minutes of Committees and to Receive Questions from Members Thereon**

**250.1** On the proposition of Cllr Leech, seconded Cllr Bird it was **RESOLVED** to adopt the minutes of the **Policy & Resources Committee** meetings held 21<sup>st</sup> July and 18<sup>th</sup> August 2025.

#### **251. Full Council Meeting Minutes**

On the proposition of Cllr Yelland, seconded Cllr Tolley it was **RESOLVED** to approve the minutes of the Town Council meetings held on 28<sup>th</sup> July and 18<sup>th</sup> August 2025 for signing by the Mayor.

#### **252. Projects and Consultations**

##### **252.1 English Devolution White Paper/Local Government Reorganisation**

The meeting with WDBC to investigate potential transfer of assets and services had been rescheduled to 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2025.

##### **252.2 Community Governance Boundary Review**

Correspondence relating to the transfer of assets from Okehampton Hamlets Parish Council was awaited. The Clerk was working on FAQs for consideration of the Council at a later meeting.

##### **252.3 Okehampton Neighbourhood Plan**

On the proposition of Cllr Richards, seconded Cllr Cummings it was **RESOLVED** to approve the area to be included in the Neighbourhood Plan and accompanying statement to be submitted to WDBC.

##### **252.4 Pulse Smart Hubs**

Planning consent for one of hubs to be located in West Street had been submitted.

##### **252.5 Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP)**

Cllr Leech, being a Member of WDBC, declared a personal interest.

In principle the council were supportive of the ideas, many of which were described as excellent but not suitable for Okehampton. In most areas the widening of pavements and narrowing of roads was not a practical solution, and removal of roadside parking would likely lead to an increase in vehicular speed and exacerbate the already difficult parking situation, for example in Station Road.

Whilst the promotion of cycling was acknowledged to be of benefit, it was commented that 'when places of work are 20 miles away and the topography of the town is that only experienced by a spider in a bathtub', then Okehampton is not an ideal location for cycling from. It was felt that the spending of funding on other projects such as a shuttle bus, secure cycle storage and charging facilities would be more beneficial.

On the proposition of Cllr Yelland, seconded Cllr Cummings (1 abstention) it was **RESOLVED** that the Clerk respond to the proposals in accordance with the comments made. Review of the proposals by the Council could be undertaken once town congestion, infrastructure and footpath issues had been resolved.

## **252.6 North Dartmoor Health Initiative**

Cllr Yelland declared a personal interest.

A [survey](#) which could be completed by councillors as individuals was noted. The demographic of responses to date was mainly of the older generation and it was reported that some were not able to complete the electronic survey. Younger people to be encouraged to complete the survey through the schools, Youth Council and Health Watch.

## **253. Letters of Recognition**

On the proposition of Cllr Marsh, seconded Cllr Weekes (1 abstention) it was **RESOLVED** to support a proposal from Cllr Colman for a letter of recognition for service of 10 years or more to members of the emergency services, in accordance with the circulated report. The letter would be personalised on an individual basis.

(Rev Hall left the meeting)

## **254. Finance and Governance**

### **254.1 Payments**

On the proposition of Cllr Marsh, seconded Cllr Bird it was **RESOLVED** to approve payment of invoices in accordance with the schedule, the BACS payments which included September salaries totalling £30,149.67. The schedule included the SWW direct debit invoice missing from the previous week, and the Clerk confirmed the payment to Buzzweld was for the purchase of paint for Jubilee Bridge.

### **254.2 2024/25 External Audit**

The External Auditors Report and Certificate which did not raise any concerns or recommend actions was noted. Congratulations were extended to the Clerk and her team.

### **254.3 Notice of Conclusion of Audit**

On the proposition of Cllr Tolley, seconded Cllr Bird it was **RESOLVED** that the notice, published on 5<sup>th</sup> August 2025, remain in situ until 30<sup>th</sup> September 2025.

## **255. Policies and Documents**

On the proposition of Cllr Leech, seconded Cllr Weekes it was **RESOLVED** to approve the following documents as recommended by the Policy & Resources Committee, the Company Mobile Phone Policy to be included within the Employee Handbook, if possible. The Grant Policy had been deferred by the Policy & Resources Committee for amendment following a change to the scheme.

- a) Asset Register and Disposal Policy
- b) Co-Option Policy
- c) Company Mobile Phone Policy
- d) Discretions Policy (Pensions)
- e) Employee Handbook
- f) Financial Regulations
- g) Financial Risk Assessment and Management Policy
- h) Town Centre Business Grant Initiative Policy
- i) Waste Management & Recycling Policy

## **256. Okehampton Foundation**

Okehampton United Charities was now operating name of Okehampton Foundation, a charitable incorporated organisation and registered charity in England and Wales (charity number 1210636).

## **257. Civic**

### **257.1 Mayor's Diary Report**

Cllr Colman had attended a VJ Day event

## **257.2 Annual Council Meeting and Mayor Choosing May 2026**

On the proposition of Cllr Leech, seconded Cllr Cummings it was **RESOLVED** to approve the recommendations and arrangements in accordance with the circulated report, with an amendment that committees be introduced by Councillors.

(Cllr Dexter left the meeting)

## **PART TWO – CONFIDENTIAL**

On the proposition of Cllr Leech, 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 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.

## **258 Lease and Agreements**

Consideration was given to a report outlining information relating to a lease, associated agreements and the potential financial impact on the council. On the proposition of Cllr Cummings, seconded Cllr Marsh it was **RESOLVED** to agree the content of the report.

## **259. Urgent**

An update regarding staff absence and the impact on workloads was provided by the 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 8.15pm.

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Councillor Colman  
Mayor