

**Minutes of a meeting of Okehampton Town Council held on
Monday 28th April 2025 at 7pm in the Council Chamber, Town Hall, Okehampton**

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

In Attendance: Mrs A Horn (Assistant Clerk)
 Cllr G Dexter (WDBC)

Action

- 727 Apologies for Absence** – On the proposition of Cllr Colman, seconded Cllr Yelland, it was **RESOLVED** to approve apologies tendered by Cllr Weekes (Work) and Cllr Hart (Illness). Cllr Samuel (DCC) apologies were noted
- 728 Declarations of Interest** – Cllr Colman declared a pecuniary interest in Min Ref 742.
- 729 Public Participation** – None
- 730 Members Questions** – Cllr Cummings raised parking in Westbridge Close which was blocking the entrance to the block of flats. It was suggested that emergency vehicle parking bays be lined on the road outside the doors.
- Cllr Richards questioned why the Neighbourhood Plan was not on the agenda. This was due to the Assistant Clerk clerking the meeting and she did not have the background knowledge of the subject. It would be added to the next appropriate agenda.
- 731 West Devon Borough Council** – Reports from Cllrs Leach and Dexter had been previously circulated.
- Cllr Leech added that the new S106 agreement for the Crediton road footpath had been completed, but there was currently no timeline. He thanked the Heads of Planning and Legal Departments for their work and negotiations to get to this point.
- Kellands Lane Blockage had made some progress with the pressure from the public and press and it was hoped that this would achieve a permanent solution. Notice had been served on the developer to remove the whole wall, and the Health and Safety Executive had been informed.
- He had met with Inspector Jones who was open to meetings with the councillors but was not aware of Heritage Watch and asked the Clerk to forward any information she had.
- 732 Devon County Council** – No report
- 733 Questions Arising from Members Reports** – Cllr Richards reported that the smell from Forthglade had been particularly bad again and he would pass the details to Cllr Leech.

734	<u>Full Council Meeting Minutes</u> – The minutes of the Town Council meeting held on 31 st March 2025 were approved on the proposition of Cllr Fisher, seconded by Cllr Cummings, and signed by the Mayor.	
735	<u>Devolution White Paper</u> – It was noted that WDBC had agreed to meet to review assets and services, but DCC were not willing to meet or discuss these matters with individual councils and would communicate through DALC.	
736	<u>Meetings, Projects and Consultations</u>	
736.1	Community Governance Boundary Review – A list of the assets that would be transferred to the Town Council from Okehampton Hamlets Parish Council was awaited.	
736.2	Okehampton Castle – An informal meeting with Okehampton Hamlets Parish Council (OHPC) was taking place at 10am on 7 th May and the petition had been forwarded to OHPC at their request. Cllr Leech was meeting with 2 Heritage Officers on 30 th April, he had asked around the town for feedback and would report back to the council.	
737	<u>Finance and Governance</u>	
737.1	Payments – On the proposition of Cllr Colman, seconded Cllr Tolley, it was RESOLVED to approve the schedule of payments (BACS payments totalling £22,821.19 plus VAT).	
737.2	Mayor's Charity – On the proposition of Cllr Marsh, seconded Cllr Bird, it was RESOLVED that the amount of £3,573.74 plus monies still to be collected from the bowls competition on Sunday, obtained from fundraising activities throughout the Mayoral year be donated to the Mayor's Charity leaving £100 in the account to cover banking charges.	Clerk/ Finance Officer
737.3	End of Year Bank Reconciliation/Balance Sheet – On the proposition of Cllr Yelland, seconded Cllr Colman, it was RESOLVED to approve the bank reconciliation/balance sheet for the year ended 31 st March 2025 which was signed by the Mayor.	
737.4	Rollover of Funds from 2024/25 to 2025/26 Budget and Virements – On the proposition of Cllr Yelland, seconded Cllr Colman, it was RESOLVED to approve the rollover of funds totalling £11,937 and virements in accordance with the report and as considered within the budget setting process for 2025/26.	Clerk/ Finance Officer
737.5	Meeting Apologies – On the proposition of Cllr Cummings, seconded Cllr Marsh, it was RESOLVED to approve the protocol in relation to the tendering and acceptance of apologies from Councillors, to be included within the Civic/Council Protocol document.	Clerk
738	<u>Civic Diary Report</u> - Cllr Fisher had attended various events including Tavistock Civic Dinner, hosting the Mayors Quiz, opening the Bowls Club, The Wellness Singers, the Wellbeing Café Evening and Auction, a Concert at Fairplace Church, Hearts and Hedgehogs Coffee Morning, West Devon Borough Council Civic Dinner, the Scouts St George's Day Parade and St James' School Church Service. Upcoming this week were The Oke Tree Network, Great Torrington May Fair and Ten Tors.	
739	<u>Reports of Council working/Task & Finish Groups:</u>	
739.1	Climate Change – No meeting	
740	<u>Members' Reports and Items for Agendas</u>	
740.1	DCC Regeneration Board – Cllr Tolley reported the last meeting was on 4 th March and the date for the next meeting had yet to be decided.	

740.2 Business Improvement District – Cllr Tolley reported that the new Bid Manager, Kathy James Castle, had been appointed. 70 participants had taken part in the easter egg hunt.

740.3 Okehampton Community Hospital – Cllr Colman reported that there had been no meeting, but the next step was to assess needs of town by doing a survey to see what the hospital could provide.

740.4 Rural Market Town Group – Cllr Leech reported there had been no meeting of the Rural Market Town Group and the Rural Services Network Meeting was this Wednesday.

740.5 Transition Town Okehampton – Cllr Cummings had been unable to attend the last meeting but the group was moving on with various projects.

741 PART TWO – CONFIDENTIAL

On the proposition of Cllr Ireland, 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 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 Colman left 19:34)

742 Market Street Office Refurbishment - On the proposition of Cllr Marsh seconded Cllr Leech, 1 abstention, it was **RESOLVED** to accept the quote from H Hughes Plumbing and Heating at £1,739.83 plus VAT including replacement of the water heater.

(Cllr Colman returned 19:41)

743 BMX/Pump Track Tender – Tenders had been invited through Contracts Finder and were opened by the Clerk in the presence of Cllr Yelland. On the proposition of Cllr Marsh, seconded Cllr Tolley, it was **RESOLVED** to award the contract to Forte Trailscapes at a value of £49,991.36 +VAT.

On the proposition of Cllr Ireland, seconded Cllr Bird, it was **RESOLVED** to exit Part 2 and ratify decisions made therein. The meeting was closed at 7:42pm

Mayor