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Okehampton Town Council

**Minutes of a meeting of Okehampton Town Council held on  
Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> January 2026 at 7pm in the Council Chamber, Town Hall, Okehampton**

**Members Present:**

Cllr T Cummings  
Cllr A Fisher  
Cllr M Richards

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)

The meeting was livestreamed through the Council's Facebook page.

The meeting was Chaired by Cllr Bird, Deputy Mayor.

**502. Apologies for Absence**

On the proposition of Cllr Fisher, seconded by Cllr Cummings it was **RESOLVED** to approve apologies tendered by Cllr Colman (illness), Cllr Ireland (illness), Cllr McNeill (illness), Cllr Holt (personal), Cllr Marsh (personal), Cllr Weekes (work) and Cllr Hart (work).

Cllr Goffey (WDBC) had tendered apologies.

**503. Declarations of Interest**

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

**504. Public Participation**

None.

**505. Members' Questions**

None.

**505. Local Government Review**

Local Government Review proposals submitted to the government for Devon were debated, these being:

**DCC - The Case for Devon (9-1-1)**

A Unitary Council comprising all of Devon with Torbay and Plymouth remaining as existing unitary councils.

**WDBC - Reimagining Devon (4-5-1)**

- Torbay and Southern Devon (West Devon, Teignbridge, South Hams and Torbay)
- Exeter and Northern Devon (Torrige, North Devon, Mid Devon, East Devon and Exeter)
- Plymouth

## **Exeter City Council and Plymouth City Council - Four Councils, One Connected Devon**

- Expanded Exeter
- Expanded Plymouth
- Expanded Torbay
- Devon Coast & Countryside

The pros and cons of the proposals were considered, concerns raised and questions to be put to each of the authorities **agreed**.

### **DCC:**

- How will the Neighbourhood Committee be made up, will parish representatives be invited from local councils, or from other organisations?
- The Council has heard that Neighbourhood Committees will not come into fruition if this option is progressed. Can the situation regarding this be clarified?
- How will local assets be managed, and when will DCC engage with local councils in relation to their disposal?

### **WDBC**

- Where will the operational base be, will there be more than one base?
- What consideration has been given to face-to-face accessibility for all, especially those without transport?
- Currently West Devon and South Hams, Teignbridge, and Torbay have separate planning policies (3 policies in total). If the proposal is progressed how will planning policy be determined for effective decision making and what will the impact be on any made Neighbourhood Plans?
- Is there a plan for the rollout of digital communication?

### **Exeter City Council and Plymouth City Council**

- What assurances can you give that the Coastal and Rural Unitary Council would have enough funding to enable provision of services given the funding disparities?

A proposition by Cllr Richards, seconded by Cllr Fisher (2 in favour, 3 against, 2 abstentions) that the Council support the DCC One Devon option was not carried.

On the proposition of Cllr Yelland, seconded by Cllr Tolley (3 in favour, 3 against, 1 abstention) it was **RESOLVED**, following use of the casting vote in favour by the Chairman, that any decision be deferred until responses to the questions had been received.

Councillors were advised that if they were to comment on this matter as an individual, they clearly state it is a personal view and not that of the Council.

The meeting was closed at 8.07pm.

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Councillor Colman, Mayor