



Okehampton Town Council

Town Hall
Fore Street
Okehampton
Devon
EX20 1AA

01837 53179

www.okehampton.gov.uk

**Minutes of a meeting of Okehampton Town Council held on
Monday 1st June 2026 at 7pm in the Council Chamber, Town Hall, Okehampton**

Members Present:

Cllr R Colman (Mayor)
Cllr T Cummings
Cllr A Fisher
Cllr M Ireland
Cllr C Marsh
Cllr D McNeill

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

In Attendance:

Mrs E James (Clerk)

Prior to commencement of the meeting prayers were offered by Rev Reynolds

43. Apologies for Absence

On the proposition of Cllr Ireland, seconded by Cllr Richards, it was **RESOLVED** to approve apologies tendered by Cllr Holt (illness).

Cllr Dexter (WDBC) and Cllr Grainger (DCC) had tendered apologies which were noted.

Absent: Cllr S Weekes

44. Declarations of Interest

The Clerk advised that from 29th June 2026, section 65 of the English Devolution and Community Empowerment Act 2026 removed the requirement for Members home addresses to be published in registers of interest, unless explicitly requested by a Member. However, the details must still be declared for internal council use.

Cllrs Yelland, Ireland, Tolley and McNeill declared a personal interest, being either an Okehampton United Charity or Allotment holder, in Minute Reference 52.4

Cllr Fisher declared a personal interest, being the council representative, in Minute Reference 53.2.

Cllr Bird declared a personal interest, being a Trustee, in Minute Reference 53.1.

45. Public Participation

None

46. Members' Questions

Cllr Cummings advised there were a number of loose paving slabs throughout the town which were trip hazards. It was advised that this could be reported direct to DCC through the Report It page of their website.

Cllr McNeill spoke about the upcoming twinning visit from Craon and that the Twinning Group may be in touch to request the support of the council.

(Cllr Ricketts arrived)

47. West Devon Borough Council

Reports from Cllrs Dexter, Goffey and Leech had previously been circulated.

Cllr Leech highlighted Local Government Reorganisation and advised that WDBC were expecting an update on 2nd June. Cllr Edmonds was the new Mayor and Cllr Cunningham the Deputy Mayor. From 1st June the management of the leisure centre was changing to Parkwood on a 1 year contract. The English Heritage bluebell Sunday event at the Castle had gone very well. Other projects that were being progressed were also touched upon.

48. Devon County Council

No report.

49. Questions Arising from Member reports

Cllr Ireland provided an update about the Leisure Centre's new management.

50. Adoption of Minutes of Committees and to Receive Questions from Members Thereon

50.1 On the proposition of Cllr Tolley and second by Cllr Ireland it was **RESOLVED** to adopt the minutes of the Parks Committee meeting held on 16th February 2026.

50.2 On the proposition of Cllr Yelland, seconded by Cllr Leech it was **RESOLVED** to adopt the minutes of the Personnel Sub-Committee meeting held on 30th March 2026.

51. Full Council Meeting Minutes

On the proposition of Cllr Colman, seconded by Cllr Cummings it was **RESOLVED** to receive, sign and approve the minutes of the Town Council meetings held on 27th April and 13th May 2026.

52. Projects and Consultations

52.1 Local Government Reorganisation

DCC were hosting an event for Town and District Council representatives to discuss challenges and opportunities. This was open to attendance by a Councillor and an Officer, Cllr Colman would be attending with the Assistant Clerk as the Clerk was unavailable.

52.2 Community Governance Boundary Change

No updates

52.3 Neighbourhood Plan

Okehampton Hamlets Parish Council had responded and submitted the required information to WDBC.

52.4 Allotments

The working group was meeting in June to review documentation.

52.5 Community Emergency Plan

A proposition by Cllr Richards that the council take the lead, had oversight and the ability to give authority, provide continuity and make arrangements to cover insurance was not carried.

Cllr Cummings outlined his preference, which remained that this should be a community led project using local knowledge, skills and support networks already in place, and advised that he was happy to lead this as an individual.

Comments included that the council had a basic plan in place, that DCC was the overall responsible authority, the council should take the lead, that the council should be involved on a partnership level only and Cllr McNeill suggested that it would be sad to reject the enthusiasm of Cllr Cummings.

A proposition by Cllr Colman that a decision was deferred for 3 months to give council members time to investigate further was not carried.

On the proposition of Cllr Fisher, seconded by Cllr Marsh (1 against) it was **RESOLVED** that Cllr Cummings, as an individual if he was willing, set up a community group and report progress back to the council.

52.7 Banking Hub

The Clerk reported that an appeal for a banking hub could be launched after September 2026 and that evidence of issues reported were being collated. She was also meeting with a representative from a bank later in the week who appeared to be interested in assisting with the appeal.

It was commented that within the first week of the Lloyds closure the cash machines including at Whitehouse Services were empty and that this was a regular occurrence, there was very little counter space within the Post Office and cheques from some banks could not be paid in there.

53. Correspondence

53.1 Museum of Dartmoor Life

Correspondence from the Museum was considered and it was suggested that the BID could promote the Museum along with the town.

53.2 Okehampton Fairtrade Group

On the proposition of Cllr Marsh, seconded by Cllr Fisher it was **RESOLVED** that the council continue to support the group and their upcoming application for renewal of the town's Fairtrade status.

54. Finance

54.1 Payments

On the proposition of Cllr Bird, seconded by Cllr Marsh it was **RESOLVED** to approve the schedule of payments, the BACS payments totalling £4,033.88 exclusive of VAT. Payments made the previous week totalling £1,596.33 exclusive of VAT were noted.

54.2 Budget Workshops

Committee budget workshops open to all councillors would be held in the summer and early autumn prior to commencement of the budget setting process for 2027/28.

54.3 Financial Checks

On the proposition of Cllr Colman, seconded by Cllr Ireland it was **RESOLVED** to appoint Cllr Marsh to continue to undertake monthly Council financial checks including bank reconciliations, debit card purchases and BACS payments.

54.4 Asset Audit

On the proposition of Cllr Colman, seconded by Cllr Bird it was **RESOLVED** to appoint Cllr Fisher to undertake an audit of elements of the assets held by the Council including regalia, silverware and paintings.

54.5 Management Accounts

Cllr Marsh reported that the year-end audit had been undertaken and was in order. On the proposition of Cllr Fisher, seconded by Cllr Yelland it was **RESOLVED** to agree and adopt the management accounts (as circulated) for month ended 31st March 2026 (month 12) and the balance sheet.

55. 2025/26 Year End Audits and Reports

55.1 Internal Audit Certificate and Report

On the proposition of Cllr Cummings, seconded Cllr Richards, it was **RESOLVED** to acknowledge the 2025/26 year-end certificate and report including observations previously noted and actioned.

55.2 AGAR Section 1 - Annual Governance Statement 2025/26

The council's internal control processes and their effectiveness were considered, each statement being read out separately. On the proposition of Cllr Yelland, seconded Cllr Leech, it was **RESOLVED** to agree a 'yes' response to each statement which was then signed by Cllr Colman and the Clerk.

55.3 AGAR Section 2 - Accounting Statements 2025/26

On the proposition of Cllr Marsh, seconded by Cllr Richards, it was **RESOLVED** to approve the accounting statements which were duly signed by Cllr Colman, having previously been signed by the Clerk/Responsible Finance Officer prior to the meeting.

Cllr Cummings commended the work of the council employees.

55.4 Electors' Rights

On the proposition of Cllr Tolley, seconded Cllr Marsh, it was **RESOLVED** to approve the dates for the exercise of Electors Rights as Thursday 25 June to Wednesday 5 August 2026.

56. Council Tie

Cllr Colman was requested to provide ideas for the redesign of the Council Tie.

It was **RESOLVED** to suspend Standing Order 3 (bb) to permit extension of the meeting following a proposal by Cllr Ireland, seconded Cllr Fisher.

57. Mayor's Diary Report

Cllr Colman reported that he had attended Launceston Town Council's Mayor Choosing event and had been present at Ten Tors where he had the opportunity to liaise with the organisers about collaboration with town and local traders. He had also attended the Rotary Fair in Simmons Park.

A Mayor's Coffee Morning was taking place in the Charter Hall on 13th June.

On the proposition of Cllr Cummings, seconded by Cllr Ireland Standing Orders were reinstated and the meeting was closed by the Mayor at 8.38pm

Councillor Colman, Mayor