

Concern was raised about whether the proposal could affect the Okehampton to Tavistock project.

67. Members' Questions

Cllr Richards reported Sunday construction noise from an excavator working 25 metres from a bedroom window at 7am, contrary to WDBC restrictions on noisy Sunday construction work.

(2 members of the public left)

68. Minutes

On the proposition of Cllr Cummings and seconded by Cllr Tolley it was **RESOLVED** to approve the minutes of the Planning Committee meetings held on 26th January and 16th February 2026.

69. Planning Applications for Consideration

[1412/26/TPO](#) - TPO N16 A1; T1: Leylandii - section fell to ground level due to evidence of stem movement and decay. T2: Birch - section fell to ground level due to root relating lifting of adjacent paving creating trip hazard. Land adjacent to Okehampton Rugby Club, Oaklands Park, Okehampton

On the proposition of Cllr Yelland, seconded by Cllr Ireland (1 abstention), it was **RESOLVED** to support the felling of the Leylandii, subject to replacement with indigenous species. The Committee did not support the felling of the Birch and proposed that lesser works be considered, such as root pruning or improvements to the surrounding ground.

70. Planning Applications for Information

The following applications were noted.

[0642/26/CLP](#) – Certificate of lawfulness for proposed timber framed garden room in rear garden. 34 Quarry Fields, Okehampton

[1384/26/ARC](#) – Application for approval of details reserved by condition 5(Drainage Design/Surface Water) & 6 (CEMP) of planning consent 3041/22/FUL

71. Planning Authority Decisions

The Committee reviewed the list of decisions made by WDBC and noted that the Town Council objected to application 2354/25/FUL rather than a neutral response.

72. National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

The South Hams and West Devon Joint Local Plan will apply to the areas of South Hams District Council and West Devon Borough Council that fall outside the Dartmoor National Park boundary. It will provide the planning framework for managing change across the plan area, including the allocation of development sites and the policies used to determine planning applications.

- Scoping consultation: 16th July to 25th September.
- Gateway 1 self-assessment summary: to be published on 23rd October.
- Consultation on the proposed plan: 4th February to 24th March.
- Gateway 2 observations and advice from the Gateway assessor: 28th May 2027.
- Final consultation: 21st October to 16th December 2027.
- Gateway 3: 24th March 2028.
- Submission to the Secretary of State: 21st July 2028.
- Adoption of the plan: February 2029.

Questions included:

Would planning officers have more power which would speed planning decisions up or will it be determined on the planning officers' own preferences?

Parish councils will have a higher responsibility for comments being more policy based; does it give the parishes more weight?

Is the list of material considerations still relevant?

73. Okehampton to Bodmin Rail Link

Cllr Ireland reported that the proposed line would become a government-funded initiative if a clear need for the population and area were demonstrated. Direct engagement with Government was considered important to the project's success. Cllr Ireland would attend the GWR conference on 2nd July to promote the line.

Cllr Yelland emphasised that support for the proposal should not adversely affect the Tavistock to Plymouth reinstatement project.

The Committee also queried whether OkeRail remained active in supporting the Okehampton to Tavistock route.

On the proposition of Cllr Yelland and seconded by Cllr Bird it was **RESOLVED** that Okehampton Town Council support the initiative.

74. Payment of Invoices

On the proposition of Cllr Colman, seconded by Cllr Cummings it was **RESOLVED** to approve the schedule of payments, the BACS payments totalling £42950.31 exclusive of VAT including staff salaries for June.

75. Members' Reports and Requests for Agenda Items

75.1 Citizens Advice

No report

75.2 Devon Communities Together

A Devon County Council sponsored conference on digital inclusion would be held at the Rougemont Hotel, Exeter, on 23rd June, from 10am to 4pm. The event was open to groups interested in tackling digital exclusion, although booking was recommended. Devon Integrated Care Group had allocated £100,000, and the conference would consider how this funding could best be used.

75.3 Ockment Centre

The Ockment Centre were very pleased that they had received a grant.

75.4 Okehampton & Area Health & Wellbeing Alliance (CVS)

The next meeting was in the OCRA Pavillion on 1st July.

75.5 Okehampton & District Community Transport Group

The group was doing well and had recruited additional volunteer drivers, which would help improve the service available to the public. The group was seeking a secretary. An application to GWR's Last Mile grant scheme had been submitted but was unsuccessful.

75.6 OkeRail Forum

OkeRail Forum had been suspended, as regular meetings were no longer considered necessary. OkeRail was currently focusing on the Okehampton to Exeter route.

A quarterly rail forum meeting would be held in Tavistock on 16th July, with the Tavistock via Bere Alston to Plymouth route on the agenda.

The Rail Forum would now press for progress on the Okehampton to Tavistock route.

The GWR conference would take place in Swindon on 2nd July.

Cllr Ireland reported that the Devon Rail Forum and Peninsula Rail Forum both appear to have become less active.

75.7 Rural Market Town Group

The next meeting was in July.

PART TWO – CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS

76. On the proposition of Cllr Ireland, seconded Cllr Colman 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.

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

77. Enforcement Issues

The enforcement report was noted.

On the proposition of Cllr Tolley, seconded by Cllr Ireland it was **RESOLVED** to reinstate Standing Orders and the meeting was closed by the Chairman at 9pm

Cllr Leech, Committee Chairman