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 30th June 2026 at 7pm in the Council Chamber, Town Hall, Okehampton

Members Present:
Cllr R Colman (Mayor)
Cllr A Fisher
Cllr M Ireland
Cllr C Marsh
Cllr D McNeill
Cllr L Bird (Chairman, Property)
Cllr T Leech (Chairman, Planning)
Cllr B Tolley
Cllr M Richards
Cllr M Ricketts

In Attendance:
Mrs E James (Clerk)
3 Members of the Public
Cllr J Goffey (WDBC)
Cllr G Dexter (WDBC)
Cllr J Grainger (DCC)

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

78. Apologies for Absence
On the proposition Cllr Fisher, seconded by Cllr Ireland, it was **RESOLVED** to approve apologies tendered by Cllr Cummings (illness), Cllr Yelland (illness) and Cllr Holt (illness).

Absent: Cllr Weekes

78. Declarations of Interest
Cllr Tolley declared a personal interest in Minute Reference 86.4
Cllr Marsh declared a personal interest in Minute Reference 87.1
Cllr McNeill declared a personal interest in Minute Reference 86.4

79. Public Participation
Members of the public addressed the council about concerns with grass cutting and overhanging trees at The Glen and a recent incident whereby a car windscreen had been smashed by a falling branch. The Town Council is not responsible for this area and Cllr Grainger (DCC) who was present would investigate the issues raised.

Members of the public asked if there were any volunteer groups that would be able to assist with some gardening work. Sticklepath and Okehampton Conservation Group (StoC), the Community Garden and Transition Town were suggested.

A Member of the public advised that the bank around a Town Council owned bench located near the Fern Meadow/Crediton Road junction was overgrown and the bench inaccessible. The Clerk would action.

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80. Members' Questions

Cllr Ireland reported overgrown trees/vegetation by the bus stop on the opposite side of the road to Costcutter. This had been reported to DCC who had advised it would not be actioned at this time.

Cllr Ireland advised he was attending the Annual GWR conference in July because a proposal for an Okehampton/Launceston/Bodmin rail service was being discussed.

Cllr Ricketts commented that there had not been any representation from the Mayor/Deputy Mayor at the recent RBL Service. The Mayor had been working and the Deputy Mayor had other commitments.

81. West Devon Borough Council

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

Cllr Leech went through his report, Cllr Goffey offered to answer any questions raised and Cllr Dexter expanded on his report in particularly relation to waste and recycling service changes.

82. Devon County Council

Cllr Grainger provided information about Traffic Regulation Orders in relation to restrictions around the new station and amendments that had been made to the original plans following consideration of feedback. The plans would be sent to the Clerk for circulation.

Cllr Grainger had made a note of issues raised regarding hedge cutting, commenting that the bird nesting season impacted on the work that could be done.

Footpath 41 (Castle Road to Leeze Park) had been reopened. Cllr Grainger advised he was going to ask for steps to be installed in place of the slope as it was now too steep for pushchairs and other similar methods of use.

Footpath 42 (Mill Road) Cllr Grainger was hoping to work with WDBC on its reopening

83. Questions Arising from Member reports

Cllr Leech commented on Footpath 42 which he believed was with building control to investigate. Steps had previously been refused for Footpath 41 as this was the only sensible way for people with prams etc to access these areas by foot, and that the developer should be forced to do what they were supposed to do.

Cllr McNeill thanked the waste collection staff and commended them, especially for working in the hot weather/rain.

Cllr Ricketts commented on the state of the roads, especially in Mill Road.
Cllr Grainer would take this back to DCC and advised that Highways were waiting for Wales and West to finish all work in the town before resurfacing would take place in 2027, stating that large potholes would be patched in the interim.

Cllr Marsh thanked the WDBC Cllrs for their reports and especially Cllr Grainger for coming to the meeting.

Cllr Ireland commented on the road conditions, commending road resurfacing on Crediton Road and Cllr Richards reminded Cllrs about DCC's rules on potholes before they would be patched.

Cllr Bird requested information from Cllr Goffey about the local walking and cycling infrastructure plan that would be investigated.

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Cllr Colman commented on the state of the pavements and advised of injuries that had been sustained by members of the public. Cllr Grainger would ask if some could be repaired even though they did not meet the criteria.

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

84.1 On the proposition of Cllr Richards, seconded by Cllr Fisher it was **RESOLVED** to adopt the minutes of the **Policy & Resource Committee** meeting held on 13th April 2026. Cllr Marsh had a question about the allocation of grants which she would raise at the next meeting of the committee.

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

85. Full Council Meeting Minutes

On the proposition of Cllr Colman, seconded by Cllr Tolley it was **RESOLVED** to receive, sign and approve the minutes of the Town Council meeting held on 1st June 2026.

86. Projects and Consultations

86.1 Local Government Reorganisation

Cllr Colman and the Assistant Clerk had attended a meeting at County Hall when no new information had been provided.

It was noted that there was nobody present from WDBC or South Hams District Council. It was reported that they had met previously and that the meeting was for town and parish councils. District/boroughs councils within Devon were dealing with assets differently and it was commented they should all be treated in the same way. Cllr Marsh noted her disappointment that other districts were giving assets away, although WDBC had advised they could not do this because of a legal requirement.

86.2 Community Governance Boundary Change

The Clerk reported that WDBC were in the process of drafting the Order and further information should be available later in the week.

86.3 Neighbourhood Plan

WDBC had confirmed receipt of information from Okehampton Hamlets Parish Council and advised the request now needed to be resubmitted.

86.4 Allotments

Allotment Policy, including management of waiting lists had been reviewed by the Working Group and would be considered by the Policy & Resources Committee on 6th July. A draft lease had been received for review.

87. Finance and Governance

87.1 Payments

Cllr Bird declared a pecuniary interest having submitted an expense claim and left the room for this item.

On the proposition of Cllr Tolley, seconded by Cllr Fisher (1 abstention) it was **RESOLVED** to approve the schedule of payments, the BACS payments including grants awarded totalling £30,642.20 exclusive of VAT.

Cllr Bird returned.

87.2 Internal Auditor Appointment for 2026/27

On the proposition of Cllr Richards, seconded by Cllr Ricketts, it was **RESOLVED** to ratify the appointment of IAC Audit and Consultancy for the second of a three-year agreement (2025/26, 2026/27 and 2027/28) noting the independence and competence of the auditor.

88. Wider Okehampton Cluster Group

A training/networking day open to all Councillors and Officers from the group membership was being held on 22nd July in the Charter Hall. The training was being provided free of charge by DALC who had also awarded a grant of £50 towards refreshments.

89. Annual Meeting and Mayor Choosing Review

On the proposition of Cllr Marsh, seconded by Cllr Leech it was **RESOLVED** that feedback from the 13th May 2026 and arrangements for future annual meetings be reviewed by a Working Group consisting of Cllrs Marsh, Ireland, Leech, Richards and Colman.

90 Mayoral Awards

A process for the receipt and selection of nominations for future Mayoral Awards to be reviewed by the Annual Meeting and Mayor Choosing Working Group.

91. Mayor's Diary Report

Cllr Colman had hosted a Mayors Coffee morning which raised £234.50 to be split between Rock2Recovery and the local 4x4 Group, and had attended the LGR Meeting at Council Hall.

The meeting was closed at 8.03.pm.

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Councillor Colman, Mayor

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