



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 21st September 2026 at 6pm in the Council Chamber, Town Hall, Okehampton**

Prayers were offered prior to commencement of the meeting by Rev Reynolds.

Members Present:

Cllr C Colman (Mayor)
Cllr T Cummings
Cllr M Ireland
Cllr C Marsh
Cllr M Ricketts

Cllr L Bird (Chairman, Property)
Cllr T Leech (Chairman, Planning)
Cllr J Yelland (Chairman, Policy & Resources)

In Attendance:

Mrs E James (Clerk)
Cllr J Goffey (WDBC)
Cllr J Grainger (DCC)

Absent:

Cllr S Weekes
Cllr Holt

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

238. Apologies for Absence

On the proposition Cllrs Ireland, seconded by Cllr Ricketts it was **RESOLVED** to approve apologies tendered by Cllr Fisher (personal), Cllr Tolley (prior commitment) and Cllr McNeill (personal).

Cllr Dexter (WDBC) had tendered apologies.

239. Declarations of Interest

Cllrs Yelland and Ireland declared a personal interest in Min Ref 249.1 being Okehampton United Charity Trustees.

240. Public Participation

None.

241. Members' Questions

It was commented that some bus stops did not have any information/bus timetables, including the High Street and to the east of the town.

242. West Devon Borough Council

Reports had previously been circulated from Cllrs Dexter and Leech.

Cllr Goffey provided a verbal update. Along with other Members she had visited the waste management site in Plymouth where nothing goes to landfill and reported on the copper

saved, the resulting ash was made into building blocks. Also reported were Meldon Wildlife Day and the Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) which had been paused by the government. Cllr Goffey addressed the meeting regarding correspondence from herself and Cllr Dexter due to be considered later in the meeting.

(Cllr Grainger arrived)

Cllr Leech referred to his report commenting on the Persimmons Site where the play equipment had eventually been provided. Crediton Road footpath completion. LGR and the understanding that DCC were writing to government requesting that the scheme be scrapped. The Castle, Interchange Station, Joint Local Plan, grants and biodiversity were also reported upon.

243. Devon County Council

Cllr Grainger commented upon the proposal from Cllr Goffey and Dexter, to be considered later in the meeting. The Interchange railway station was open, there were major roadworks in progress on Exeter Road, the Crediton Road footpath and crossing was completed. The Leeze Park footpath to Castle Road had been resurfaced and reopened. Work was ongoing to get the Mill Road footpath reopened and he was hoping DCC would address the potholes before winter.

244. Questions Arising from Member reports

Cllr Ireland asked what was going to be done to address overcrowding on the rail line.

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

245.1 On the proposition of Cllr Yelland, seconded by Cllr Bird it was **RESOLVED** to adopt the minutes of the **Policy & Resource Committee** meetings held on 8th June, 6th and 20th July 2026.

245.2 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 26th May 2026.

245.3 On the proposition of Cllr Leech, seconded by Cllr Ireland it was **RESOLVED** to adopt the minutes of the **Planning Committee** meetings held on 15th June and 13th July 2026.

246. Full Council Meeting Minutes

On the proposition of Cllr Colman, seconded by Cllr Yelland it was **RESOLVED** to receive and approve the minutes of the Town Council meeting held on 14th September 2026 for signing by the Mayor.

At the request of Cllr Yelland, the following item was brought forward.

247. Correspondence - Letter from WDBC Cllrs Dexter and Goffey

On the proposition of Cllr Yelland, seconded Cllr Ireland, it was **RESOLVED** to suspend Standing Orders to permit Cllrs Goffey and Grainger to comment on this item of business.

Questions raised were responded to by Cllr Goffey who also provided additional information. Previous surveys and proposals were commented upon as was the need for justification of the funding that would be required from DCC to provide the proposed new road. Cllr Grainger commented that the provision of advisory directional signs were being

explored by DCC that would help to prevent traffic using inappropriate roads, especially when other roads including the A30 were closed.

On the proposition of Cllr Ireland, seconded Cllr Leech, it was **RESOLVED** to reinstate Standing Orders.

(Cllr Marsh arrived)

It was commented that DCC had already stated no funding for this was available and that DCC should be aware of and involved in the process. A new full digital traffic survey would be required, including the impact of any additional dwellings that might be forthcoming in the future so that all infrastructure could be reviewed to ensure that it would cope.

On the proposition of Cllr Yelland, seconded by Cllr Cummings it was **RESOLVED** to support the proposal (5 in favour, 2 abstentions, 1 unknown vote - carried).

(Cllrs Goffey and Grainger left the meeting)

248. Projects and Consultations

248.1 South Hams and West Devon Joint Local Plan

The consultation was considered at length during which it was **RESOLVED** to suspend Standing Order 3 (bb) to permit extension of the meeting following a proposal by Cllr Yelland, seconded Cllr Leech. Consultation responses were **agreed** during consideration of each document for submission by the Clerk.

At approximately 8.50pm at the request of the Clerk and on the proposition of Cllr Ireland, seconded by Cllr Yelland it was **RESOLVED** to adjourn for a short break. The meeting recommenced at approximately 9pm.

248.2 Local Government Reorganisation

The council noted that the Government had paused the progress of the reorganisation in Devon, and other parts of the country, and confirmed that elections would go ahead in 2027 in alignment with existing boundaries. Cllr Leech advised that WDBC would be debating devolution and LGR with other local authorities.

248.3 Community Governance Boundary Change

The council noted that the West Devon Borough (Reorganisation of Community Governance) Order 2027 relating to the Okehampton Town Council and Okehampton Hamlets Parish Council boundary change was officially Made on 8th September 2026 and would take effect in 2027.

The Clerk reported that an indicative tax base was awaited from WDBC and future community engagement was considered. It was agreed that the community needed to be made aware that the Order had been Made and the boundary would change in 2027. Clerk to action.

248.4 WDBC Okehampton Conservation Area Appraisal

Comments from Cllr Marsh to be feedback.

248.5 WDBC Buildings at Risk Register

The council noted that buildings could be proposed in due course if required.

249. Correspondence

249.1 Letter from Okehampton United Charities

Cllrs Marsh, Ireland, Bird and Colman declared personal interests.

A proposal from Cllr Leech to object to the amendments was not seconded.

Following a request for further information it was agreed to ask the OUC to attend an informal meeting and to defer a decision until a meeting of full council could be held.

249.2 National People's Emergency Briefing

Some Cllrs had attended one of the recent showing of the film. No further action was agreed.

250. Policies and Documents

The Clerk clarified a question from Cllr Marsh advising that assets for disposal would be for consideration of the relevant committee and that Flexible Retirement Policy decisions were delegated to the Policy & Resources Committee through the Committee Terms of Reference. It was noted that the Allotment Policy had previously been approved by the council.

On the proposition of Cllr Leech, seconded by Cllr Cummings (1 abstention) it was **RESOLVED** to approve the following:

- a) Absence Management Policy
- b) Asset Register and Disposal Policy
- c) Discretions Policy (Pensions)
- d) Flexible Retirement Policy (Pensions)
- e) Grant Policy
- f) Personal Data Retention Policy for Scheme Holders (Peninsula Pensions)
- g) Recruitment Policy
- h) Sexual Harassment Risk Assessment and Action Log
- i) Work Experience Policy

251. Finance and Governance

251.1 Payments

A query regarding the AJ Electrics invoice was clarified and an expected invoice from Crumbs for Civic Service refreshments would be investigated.

On the proposition of Cllr Marsh, seconded by Cllr Yelland it was **RESOLVED** to approve the schedule of payments, BACS payments including September salaries totalling £29,703.38, exclusive of VAT.

251.2 2025/26 External Audit

- a) The Council noted the External Auditors Report and Certificate which did not raise any concerns or required actions
- b) On the proposition of Cllr Yelland, seconded by Cllr Leech it was **RESOLVED** that the notice of Conclusion of Audit, published on 17th August 2026, remain in situ until 25th September 2026.

251.3 2026/27 Audit Arrangements

The council noted that in accordance with Minute Reference 111 of 30th June 2025 IAC Audit and Consultancy Ltd would be undertaking the internal audits for the second of a three-year agreement.

On the proposition of Cllr Leech, seconded by Cllr Ireland it was **RESOLVED** that IAC Audit and Consultancy Ltd continued to be independent from the council and was competent to undertake the role.

The interim audit was scheduled to be undertaken on 6th October 2026.

253. Wider Okehampton Cluster Group

Cllr Colman advised that the next meeting was taking place on 23rd September.

254. Annual Meeting and Mayor Choosing Review, and Mayoral Awards Working Group

On the proposition of Cllr Marsh, seconded by Cllr Yelland it was **RESOLVED** to defer this item.

255. Mayor's Diary Report

The Mayor was thanked for using St James' Chapel for the Civic Service and feedback was noted.

Cllr Colman reported that he had attended an RAF Cadets fundraising event for Rock2Recovery that had raised in around £2,800, hosted the Civic Service but unfortunately had been unable to attend the swimming gala.

The meeting was closed at 9.36pm.

Councillor Colman, Mayor