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 26th October 2026 at 7pm in the Council Chamber, Town Hall, Okehampton

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

Members Present:

Cllr R Colman (Mayor)
Cllr T Cummings
Cllr A Fisher
Cllr M Ireland
Cllr C Marsh
Cllr M Ricketts
Cllr L Bird (Chairman, Property)
Cllr T Leech (Chairman, Planning)
Cllr B Tolley (Chairman, Parks)
Cllr J Yelland (Chairman, Policy & Resources)

In Attendance:
Mrs E James (Clerk)

Absent:
Cllr S Weekes

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

319. Apologies for Absence

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

Cllr Goffey (WDBC) had tendered apologies.

320. Declarations of Interest

None.

321. Public Participation

None.

322. Members' Questions

None.

323. West Devon Borough Council

Cllr Leech commented on various matters detailed in his report, including parcel 2 convenience shop, parcel 4a road crossing and visibility issues. The inspector had turned down the developer's appeal relating to the Kellands Lane concrete wall and the enforcement therefore stood. The Crediton Road footpath, Local Government Review which was on hold awaiting government review, Okehampton Castle, the Interchange Station, rail delays and increasing use, Oaklands Park management and residents' association.

324. Devon County Council

None.

325. Questions Arising from Member reports
None.

326. Adoption of Minutes of Committees and to Receive Questions from Members Thereon
326.1 On the proposition of Cllr Yelland, seconded by Cllr Fisher it was **RESOLVED** to adopt the minutes of the **Policy & Resource Committee** meeting held on 7th September 2026.

326.2 On the proposition of Cllr Tolley, seconded by Cllr Ireland it was **RESOLVED** to adopt the minutes of the **Parks Committee** meeting held on 20th July 2026.

326.3 On the proposition of Cllr Bird, seconded by Cllr Fisher it was **RESOLVED** to adopt the minutes of the **Property Committee** meetings held on 13th July 2026.

327. Full Council Meeting Minutes
On the proposition of Cllr Colman, seconded by Cllr Ricketts it was **RESOLVED** to receive and approve the minutes of the Town Council meetings held on 21st September and 12th October 2026 for signing by the Mayor.

328. Councillor Vacancy
It was noted that the vacancy had been advertised and any applications for co-option would be considered at the meeting of the council on 30th November.

329. Projects and Consultations
329.1 Local Government Reorganisation and Devolution
No update.

330. Rail Connectivity
The future of rail connectivity was raised by Cllr Leech who commented that the rail forums were beneficial and would result in increased rail use. It was more likely that the Tavistock to Plymouth link would be progressed before the link into Cornwall. The Okehampton to Tavistock link should continue to be pushed over others.

A response from GWR in relation to overcrowding was considered and Cllr Ireland reported that, when possible, 3 car units were being provided. The lack of facilities at the Interchange Station was raised along with a leaflet relating to Kernow connect.

331. Policies and Documents
Feedback from the Allotment Associations was awaited, deferred.

332. Finance and Governance
332.1 Payments
An error on the payment schedule was noted, the Net value of the Environmental Services invoice should have read £392.50, the VAT and total value of £471 were correct. On the proposition of Cllr March, seconded by Cllr Fisher it was **RESOLVED** to approve the schedule of payments, BACS payments totalling £5,979.40, exclusive of VAT.

332.2 Internal Audit
The auditor's observations and actions taken and those in progress were noted. On the proposition of Cllr Colman, seconded by Cllr Leech, it was **RESOLVED** not to action the

recommendation to create a medium-term financial strategy as it was not a statutory requirement. The decision to be reviewed in twelve months.

333. WDBC/Mayor and Clerk Meetings

The council noted that the Mayors and Clerks of the West Devon towns had been invited to take part in a regular meeting with the WDBC Leader and Strategic Director of Place, Governance & Regulatory Services. The initial meeting was on 3rd November.

334. Wider Okehampton Cluster Group

Cllr Colman reported on the meeting of 23rd September when a number of matters had been discussed including LGR, the boundary change, the need for a banking hub, road signage cleaning and councillor training following elections. The next get together was a Christmas social in December. Cllr Colman and the Okehampton Hamlets Parish Council Chair had attended a meeting of South Zeal Parish Council to provide information about the Group.

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

On the proposition of Cllr Marsh, seconded by Cllr Bird (2 abstentions) it was **RESOLVED** to approve the recommendations as follows:

Mayor's Awards

- Maximum of 2 awards to be made each year
- A request for nominations from members of the public will not be published, however any put forward will be considered

Annual Council Meeting and Mayor Choosing

- The time of the meeting to be 12noon to accommodate representatives from the local schools.
- The meeting to take place in the Council Chamber
- Refreshments/buffet be provided for invited guests in the Charter Hall
- Invitations are focused on local businesses, including those on the industrial estates, rather than dignitaries. However, WDBC and Okehampton Hamlets Parish Council to continue to be invited.

On the proposition of Cllr Marsh, seconded by Cllr Ireland it was **RESOLVED** to approve a budget of £2,000 for the event.

336. Council Tie

On the proposition of Cllr Fisher, seconded by Cllr Leech it was **RESOLVED** to agree in principle a proposal from Cllr Colman for a refreshed Council Tie in accordance with the design within the report. A quotation to be considered in Part 2 later in the meeting.

Design and quotation for a similar scarf to be provided for consideration at a future meeting.

337. Council Terminology

Consideration was given to a request by Cllr Bird that that terminology used by the council, including Chairman, is gradually changed throughout council documentation to be gender neutral. Comments included inclusivity and that the current terminology relates to the role and not the person who holds it. On the proposition of Cllr Fisher, seconded by Cllr Ireland (6 in favour, 1 against, 2 abstentions) it was **RESOLVED** to commence change future use of Chairman, to Chair.

338. Mayor's Diary Report

Cllr Colman had attended and taken part in the Carnival along with a Mace Bearer. The Mayor had attended a meeting of South Zeal Parish Council and hosted a Coffee morning when in excess of £180 had been raised for his charities. The Deputy Mayor had attended Goosy Fair.

339. Christmas and New Year Office Opening Hours

The Council Office would be closed from 4pm Wednesday 23rd December 2026 until Monday 4th January 2027.

PART 2 CONFIDENTIAL

340. On the proposition of Cllr Ireland, seconded by Cllr Leech 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.

341. Simmons Park Charity

341.1 A meeting of the Sole Trustee had been held on 26th October 2026 when renewal of the Management Agreement was approved and signed.

341.2 On the proposition of Cllr Leech, seconded by Cllr Fisher it was **RESOLVED** to resolve to approve and sign the Management Agreement and its execution by seal in accordance with Standing Orders.

342. Council Tie

A quotation was considered. Quotation for a larger quantity to be sourced and would be considered at a future meeting along with that for scarves.

On the proposition of Cllr Ireland, seconded by Cllr Tolley it was **RESOLVED** to exit Part 2 and ratify decisions made therein. The meeting was closed at 8.17pm

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Councillor Colman, Mayor

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