Okehampton Town Council

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Minutes of an Okehampton Town Council Parks Committee Meeting held on Monday 23rd November 2026 at 7pm in the Council Chamber, Town Hall, Okehampton

Present:
Councillor B Tolley (Chair)
Councillor C Marsh (Vice-Chair)
Councillor M Ireland
Councillor M Ricketts
Councillor T Leech (Chair, Planning)

In Attendance:
Mrs A Horn (Assistant Clerk)
Mr J McGahey (Park Keeper)

Absent:
Cllr S Weekes

378. Apologies for Absence
On the proposition of Cllr Ireland and seconded by Cllr Ricketts it was **RESOLVED** to accept the apologies of Cllr Bird (Work), Cllr Yelland (Illness), Cllr Holt (Illness), Cllr Colman (Personal) and Cllr McNeill (Personal)

379. Declarations of Interest
None

380. Public Participation
None

381. Park-Keeper
Mr McGahey reported that the play tractor was being repainted and grass cutting had only recently finished. Yellow rattle seeds, provided free of charge, had been sown in Platts Meadow. Boulders had been delivered and positioned at the Skate Park to deter parking on the grass. A replacement fence had been purchased for the Scattering Lawn following the collapse of the existing fence and would be installed soon. Winter work would include re-gravelling the area outside Chalet Treloar and revamping the Rose Garden. The team was removing ivy from the park's flower beds, and hedges in all outlying areas had been cut and the areas tidied.

382. Members' Questions
Cllr Marsh asked if the Park Keeper wanted any more Yellow Rattle seeds. She also asked if Jim the Walker came under the Property or Parks committee as his inspection had been reported to Property but in the newsletter, he was listed under Parks.
Cllr Ricketts reported that people had been in contact with him regarding people cycling at speed through the park by the pedestrian gates. The provision of road markings reminding people not to cycle in the park to be investigated.

The livestream ended at 7:12pm when the internet connection was lost.

383. Minutes
On the proposition of Cllr Leech and seconded by Cllr Ireland it was **REOLVED** to confirm, approve and sign the minutes of the Parks Committee meeting held on 28th September 2026

384. Simmons Park

384.1 Bookings

The bookings for the park were noted.

384.2 Bandstand Finial (adjacent to Chalet)

On the proposition of Cllr Marsh and seconded by Cllr Ricketts it was **RESOLVED** to apply for planning permission and finish the project as there was money left in the budget for this purpose.

384.3 Bowls Club

On the proposition of Cllr Marsh and seconded by Cllr Ireland it was **RESOLVED** to not allow the erection of an electric fence due to it being open to the public and could cause issues with the insurance. If the Club wished to discuss any other options to fence off the green, they would need to come back to the committee.

384.4 Typhoon

Mr McGahey reported that two-yearly maintenance had begun and some parts needed replacing. The manufacturer no longer supported the equipment or supplied spare parts. No other suppliers held replacement parts, as only HAGS had been licensed to manufacture them. GB Sport could produce bespoke parts but would need the existing components to create templates and provide quotations. No similar replacement equipment was available.
Cllr Marsh suggested sending the parts to GB Sport for a quotation. Cllr Ricketts suggested ordering twice the quantity to reduce costs. It was asked if the parks team could potentially deliver the parts if postage due to weight was more expensive than the fuel costs. On the proposition of Cllr Tolley and seconded by Cllr Ireland it was **RESOLVED** to get the parts to GB Sport for a quotation and order 2 lots of parts as they would be needed for future maintenance.

384.5 Putting Green Signage

Proposed by Cllr Marsh and seconded by Cllr Tolley, it was **RESOLVED** that the Assistant Clerk obtain a quotation for a metal sign similar to the allotment signs. The Park Keeper would draft wording for the next Parks Committee meeting. Purchasing a temporary sign before the putting green upgrade was considered poor value for money. Cllr Leech noted that the existing “No ball games” sign in the boundary hedge was difficult to see and inappropriate for its location beside the putting green.

385. Cemetery

385.1 Burials

An update was noted.

385.2 New Cemetery

The Assistant Clerk gave an update from the project manager and reported that planning permission was due to be submitted in December.

385.3 Fees

On the proposition of Cllr Marsh and seconded by Cllr Leech it was **RESOLVED** to accept the recommended cemetery fees for 2027/28.

385.4 Policies

On the proposition of Cllr Ireland and seconded by Cllr Tolley it was **RESOLVED** to recommend the Cemetery Brochure and Memorial Management Policy to the Policy & Resources Committee with the marked changes.
On the proposition of Cllr Tolley and seconded by Cllr Ricketts it was **RESOLVED** to recommend the Memorial Mason Registration Scheme to P&R with the marked changes

386. Allotments

386.1 Annual Allotment Holders Meeting

Questions arising from the meeting were considered.

On the proposition of Cllr Marsh and seconded Cllr Ricketts it was **RESOLVED** that only one IBC be permitted per plot whether it was a half or a full plot and that they should be located by the shed to fill up with roof water. It was suggested that the Associations ask their West Devon Councillors for money from their localities funds as well as the Devon County Councillor to help fund replacement pumps.

On the proposition of Cllr Marsh and seconded by Cllr Ireland it was **RESOLVED** to ask the contractor to only strim the bank at North Street once a month to help wildlife but not let seeds spread onto nearby plots.

386.2 Skip
On the proposition of Cllr Marsh and seconded by Cllr Leech it was **RESOLVED** not to hire skips for the allotment sites as the rubbish was there prior to the council taking it on and suggested that the associations ask local groups if they could help with the removal of the rubbish or the OUC for a grant for a skip.

387. Dartmoor National Park Dynamic Landscapes Project
Cllr Marsh reported that the project had gone out to tender for an events company to run the 2027 event in Okehampton and the last event in Princetown as the company that ran the event in Ivybridge had resigned.

388. Finance
388.1 Payment Schedule
On the proposition of Cllr March, seconded by Cllr Tolley it was **RESOLVED** to approve the schedule of payments, BACS payments totalling £798.81, exclusive of VAT, and the payments made on 9th November made under delegated authority totalling £4,084, exclusive of VAT, were noted.

388.2 2027/28 Budget
On the proposition of Cllr Marsh and seconded by Cllr Ireland it was **RESOLVED** to defer considering the budget until after the quotes had been considered in Part 2 as they may have an impact on the requirement.

389. Reports of Council Working/Task and Finish Groups
389.1 Cemetery Management
No report

389.2 Projects
No report

390. Members' Reports and Requests for Agenda Items
390.1 Business Improvement District
Cllr Tolley reported that the BID held its AGM on 6th November, marking the start of its third year of operation. Christmas advertising funding was secured through a grant from GWR, which enabled the production of a train-themed video that received a significant number of views. The UKPAC and SIDL training partnership remained active. The Interchange signage had been installed, and a master map developed. Work to improve the industrial estate had included the removal of more than 20 abandoned vehicles and action to address fly-tipping. Tourist information flags are planned for installation outside the Museum.
A project was being developed to provide coach parking. Further lighting was being installed for the Edwardian Evening display which was not yet complete.

390.2 DCC Regeneration Board
Cllr Tolley reported that there had been no meeting and they were currently having discussions with West Devon Borough Council and the BID.

390.3 Okehampton Community Recreation Association (OCRA)
Cllr Tolley reported that they had held a Trustee Meeting on 14th October and that the Managers' Report was positive, with several successful events and activities taking place over the summer. The Neon Run in September attracted approximately 200 people. They had hosted the Dartmoor Beast and a Help for Heroes event which the Pavillion did the catering for. The Pavillion now hosted a range of activities, including Drumming for Health, Breakfast Boogie and a baby group. The holiday club had over 300 attendances throughout the summer. The free tennis sessions offered over the summer were well attended. The uniform shop had not been as successful as hoped. Financially, the building continued to operate at a deficit. Since the Football Club stopped using the upstairs of the Pavillion the team had been advertising events and efforts were being made to attract additional hirers to increase income. The café was operating at a small deficit. The next Trustee meeting was on 20th January.

390.4 Dartmoor National Park
Cllr Marsh reported that she had attended the last forum meeting and had asked for an agenda item for the Full Council to support a plan in principle.

390.5 Okehampton Carnival Committee
Cllr Ricketts reported that he had not been able to attend the last meeting, but the carnival was successful and he was awaiting to hear how much had been raised.

390.6 Parklands Leisure Centre User Group/Meet the Manager
Cllr Marsh reported that they had been invited with a days' notice and so were not able to attend.

PART TWO – CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS
391. On the proposition of Cllr Ireland, seconded 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.'

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

On the proposition of Cllr Leech and seconded by Cllr Marsh it was **RESOLVED** that the Assistant Clerk go back to the company and get a quote for getting to the stage that the tender was able to be advertised.

393. Football Club
On the proposition of Cllr Marsh and seconded by Cllr Leech it was **RESOLVED** to set the rent at £402.50 plus VAT from March 2027 and to request the Football Club attend a private meeting before Full Council in December to discuss the lease requirements that have not been fulfilled.

394. Mower
On the proposition of Cllr Ricketts and seconded by Cllr Tolley it was **RESOLVED** to purchase a Trimax Procut S5 mower with an extended 5-year warrantee at a cost of £9,750 + VAT and to consider adding this amount to the budget as there was not funding for a replacement mower.

395. Allotments
On the proposition of Cllr Marsh and seconded by Cllr Ricketts (1 abstention) it was **RESOLVED** that the Assistant Clerk write to the Plot Holder telling them to remove items as per the signed agreement and as the site was no longer under OUC management the individual arrangements that were agreed by them, the Town Council were not obliged to stand by and would be running the site as per the agreements.

On the proposition of Cllr Ricketts and seconded by Cllr Marsh it was **RESOVLED** that the Assistant Clerk write to the plot holder and tell them that management decisions made by the OUC were not

binding to the Town Council and that the item that could cause health and safety issues need to be removed or they could give up their plot.

The Assistant Clerk reported on an unpaid rent invoice that had exceeded the 40 days allowance in the Agreement. On the proposition of Cllr Leech and seconded by Cllr Marsh it was **RESOLVED** that the Assistant Clerk issue a Notice to Quit.

396. Putting

On the proposition of Cllr Marsh and seconded by Cllr Tolley (1 abstention) it was **RESOLVED** to budget for both parts of the project in the 2027-28 budget and recommend acceptance of a quotation to Full Council as it exceeded the committee's limit.

397. Bookings

On the proposition of Cllr Marsh and seconded by Cllr Ireland it was **RESOLVED** to remove the permission in principle for the Beer and Boots event as requested paperwork had not been received and the committee had concerns.

398. Urgent item

The Clerk was requested to take action and enforcement as necessary to prevent people living on council land.

On the proposition of Cllr Ireland, seconded Cllr Leech, it was **RESOLVED** to exit Part 2, ratify decisions made therein and readmit members of the public.

399. 2027/28 Budget

On the proposition of Cllr Leech and seconded by Cllr Tolley it was **RESOLVED** to add £9,000 to the budget for the replacement mower.

On the proposition of Cllr Marsh and seconded by Cllr Ricketts (1 abstention) it was **RESOLVED** to add an extra £23,000 to the budget for the Putting Green project.

The meeting closed at 9:33pm

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Cllr Tolley, Committee Chair

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