

**Minutes of a Meeting of Okehampton Town Council held on Monday 9 May 2016 in the Council Chamber, Town Hall, Okehampton at 7.00 pm**

**Members Present:** Councillor P Vachon (Town Mayor)  
Councillor Mrs J Goffey (Deputy Mayor)  
Councillor Mrs J Carpenter  
Councillor T Cummings  
Councillor Mrs V Cushing  
Councillor Miss C Holt  
Councillor Dr M Ireland  
Councillor A Leech  
Councillor R Rush  
Councillor B Stephens  
Councillor B Tolley  
Councillor Mrs J Yelland

**Attending:** Councillor K Ball (Ward Member DCC, WDBC)  
Councillor Rev'd M Davies (Ward Member, WDBC)

**In Attendance:** P R Snell (Town Clerk)

Before business, prayers were offered by Cllr Rev'd M Davies.

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| <b>564. <u>Apologies for Absence</u> - Apologies for absence were presented on behalf of Councillors Marsh and Weekes.</b>  |               |
| <b>565. <u>Deferment of Business</u> -</b>  |               |
| <b>565.1</b> The General Manager of Dartmoor Railway CIC, Tiffany Arthurs, had presented apologies late in the day that she had been unexpectedly unable to attend this evening's meeting.  |               |
| <b>565.2</b> Lynn Lane raised a number of questions in connection with the future of services at Okehampton Hospital and asked for the Town Council's involvement. The Mayor responded that a fact-finding meeting would be arranged at the earliest opportunity.   |               |
| <b>566. <u>Members' Questions</u> - Councillor Leech had submitted a formal enquiry concerning the Standing Committee Chairs giving reports at the Annual Town Assembly. The Mayor responded that it had been agreed to put back the date of next year's Assembly in order for a more meaningful report of the Council's activities to be compiled. It was agreed that the matter could be debated further in the new Council year if required.</b> |               |
| <b>567. <u>West Devon Borough Council</u> - The West Devon Ward Members individually commented on:</b>  |               |

- efforts to reduce waiting time on the phone
- the system's susceptibility to power surges
- frustration with the service, the servers and the new IT system
- meeting with the Locality Officer (West Devon Borough Council) and the Locality Lead Officer (Devon County Council) with reference to illegal parking
- introduction of a voucher scheme in connection with the connecting Devon and Somerset broadband project
- the benefits procedures pending resolution which were leading to hardship.

**568. Devon County Council** - Councillor Ball had prepared a written report which included:

- comments on rumours about the Community Hospital
- Libraries Unlimited - the new name for the Mutual responsible for libraries formerly controlled by DCC
- Visit Devon - the process of relaunching the Visit Devon brand
- Okehampton Primary School and second Primary School - approved extension and negotiation continuing on land purchase
- Okehampton Business Park
- OkeRail Forum
- responses to a number of questions put by Councillor Cushing which had been addressed in the report.

Councillor Rush had some further questions which Councillor Ball agreed to address by emailed response.

**569. Adoption of Minutes of Committees and Members' Questions arising thereon -**

**569.1 Parks Committee** meeting held on 1 February 2016 - adoption proposed by Councillor Leech, seconded Councillor Goffey and agreed.

**569.2 Property Committee** meeting held on 8 February 2016 - adoption proposed by Councillor Yelland, seconded Councillor Holt and agreed.

**569.3 Policy & Resources Committee** meetings held on 22 February and 14 March 2016 - adoption proposed by Councillor Cummings, seconded Councillor Tolley and agreed.

**569.4 Planning Committee** meetings held on 25 January, 22 February and 7 March 2016 - adoption proposed by Councillor Stephens, seconded Councillor Cummings and agreed.

**570. Full Council Meeting Minutes** - The minutes of the Town Council meetings held on 8 and 29 February 2016 were received, signed and approved on the proposition of Councillor Ireland, seconded Councillor Yelland.

	Action
<p><b>571. <u>Matters Arising</u> -</b></p> <p>i) <b>Litter at Supermarket Car Parks</b> - The Mayor reported that he had written to the management of all three town-centre supermarkets and had received a positive response from Waitrose. The Clerk forwarded Councillor Marsh's comments that the Okement Rivers Improvement Group had had a positive response from the Co-operative Supermarket.</p> <p>ii) <b>Okehampton Remembers</b> - Councillor Marsh had reported, via the Clerk, that the consultation on the proposal for a new sculpture at Fairplace was progressing.</p> <p>iii) <b>Okehampton &amp; District Community Transport Group</b> - The Clerk reported that he had met recently with the Transport Co-ordinator and as a result a request for grant funding had been received.</p> <p>iv) <b>Developer's Forum/Planning Parcels 3 &amp; 4 - Okehampton East</b> - After a discussion about the value of responding to the response from the Leader of West Devon Borough Council concerning the Developer's Forum of September 2015, it was agreed to ask Thomas French what the current situation was with regard to the Hannard application for parcels 3 &amp; 4.</p>	Clerk
<p><b>572. <u>Civic Diary Report</u></b> - The Mayor reported on a full suite of engagements during March, April and early May.</p>	
<p><b>573. <u>Reports from Working Groups</u> -</b></p>	
<p><b>573.1 <u>Destination Okehampton</u></b> - Councillor Ireland reported on the following points arising out of the last meeting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mel Stride's response on the implementation of the Rail Strategy</li> <li>• marketing Okehampton - the need for a co-ordinated approach and the need for employment of a Town Manager</li> <li>• the commencement of the Sunday Rover service starting on 15 May</li> <li>• the setting up of a community interest group to support the work of the OkeRail forum</li> <li>• confirmation that the Peninsula Rail Task Force strategy report is due to be published in June.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>573.2 <u>Neighbourhood Plan</u></b> - Councillor Goffey reported on progress of evaluating the questionnaires submitted to date. It was estimated that some 700 residents' questionnaire forms will have been returned together with approximately 100 business questionnaires. Councillor Leech reported the next step would be setting up of the smaller focus groups to test and evaluate some of the early conclusions drawn from the questionnaire evaluation.</p>	
<p><b>574. <u>Report from OkeRail Forum</u></b> - Councillor Ireland reported that the rail forum - now known as OkeRail Forum - meeting of 28 April had:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• elected Cllr Rev'd Mike Davies as its Chair and Cllr Dr Michael Ireland as Vice Chair</li> </ul>	

- discussed a brief visit by representatives from South West Trains and the Devon & Cornwall Rail Partnership on 20 May. It was agreed to host the visiting party at the Town Hall and to give a presentation.
575. **New Policy - Honorary Freeman** - Councillor Goffey summarised the purpose of the new policy, a copy of which had been circulated in advance of the meeting. The Council agreed the policy without amendment on the proposition of Councillor Yelland, seconded Councillor Cummings.
576. **Primary School Visits** - The Mayor reported on the visits that he and the Clerk had made to the Primary School and on three class visits that had been hosted in the Council Chamber during February and March. The purpose was to explain the work of the Town Council and was followed by mini debates on themes raised by the pupils. The Clerk's briefing note summarised the themes raised. It was agreed that this was a valuable opportunity to communicate directly with pupils and staff of an important local organisation and that a regular (annual) session would be worthwhile as would a similar opportunity with the College. It was agreed to forward the themes raised to the appropriate Committees for further consideration.
577. **Simmons Homes Charity Correspondence** - The Clerk to the Simmons Homes Charity had written to notify trustee vacancies. After consideration it was agreed to nominate:
- i) Councillor Rev'd M Davies as the Non-Conformist minister residing and officiating within Okehampton with effect from 9 May 2016 on the proposition of Councillor Leech, seconded Councillor Stephens.
  - ii) Councillor Mrs C Marsh for a further term of 4 years commencing 12 May 2016 on the proposition of Councillor Ireland, seconded Councillor Yelland.
  - iii) Councillor K Ball as a trustee for a term of 4 years commencing 9 May 2016 on the proposition of Councillor Stephens, seconded Councillor Vachon.
578. **Q90 Planning** - Councillor Goffey reported on funding received and further contributions to the Picnic in the Park on 12 June 2016. Risk assessment was in progress, the TEN licence was to be applied for and the Christians Together in Okehampton event and service would follow on after the picnic.
579. **Members' Reports** -
- (i) Dartmoor National Park Forum - No meeting.
  - (ii) Northern Parishes Link Committee - Councillor Cummings reported that minutes and associated documents would be circulated. The grants budget had been marginally overspent during the year and West Devon Borough Council had agreed to make up the £50 shortfall.

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- (iii) Okehampton Matters - Previously reported and notes of the meeting circulated.
- (iv) Okehampton Older People's Community Services Network - Councillor Yelland reported that the group was now operating again under the new title of Older People's Network. Terms of reference were being revised. Someone to fill the role of co-ordinator was currently being sought.
- (v) Okehampton Vision Steering Group - Councillor Vachon reported no meeting held.
- (vi) West Devon/Okehampton Liaison Group - Councillor Vachon reported that Mr Phil Norrey, Chief Executive of Devon County Council, had attended the recent meeting of the group and referred to community engagement a summary of devolution issues from the DCC perspective and what was needed for Okehampton. There would be further discussion on where the interests between the Liaison Group and the Vision Group overlapped at the next meeting.

The meeting was closed at 8.49 pm.

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**Councillor J Goffey**  
**Mayor**