



Okehampton Hamlets Parish Council

Minutes of a Virtual Meeting held at 7.30 pm on Tuesday 5th May 2020.

Councillors Present -

R Maile

M Cooper

M Littlejohns

J Heard

P Heard

B Wood

WDBC – Cllrs A Leach , Cllr J Yelland, DCC & WDBC – Cllr K Ball

Also Present - Mrs J Gillard, Parish Clerk

1. Members of the Public – there were no members of the public present.

2. Declarations of Interest – Cllr Wood declared a personal interest in item 10.3 as he is an Allotment Holder and Cllr Cooper declared a personal interest in item 10.3 as a Trustee of Okehampton United Charity. Both abstained from voting on this item.

3. Apologies – were received and the reasons approved from Cllr D Webber and Cllr A Ewen, apologies were also received from WDBC Cllr M Davies.

4. Approval of Minutes of previous meeting held on 3rd March 2020 these were agreed as a true record. Proposed by Cllr Webber and seconded by Cllr Cooper . Signing of the minutes by the Chairman to be completed at a later date.

5. DCC and WDBC – to receive any written reports/updates.

Cllr Leech advised WD are currently dealing with 800 calls per day but are being quick in responding. It is anticipated all Local Authorities will have a shortfall in their budget by year end, WD has received £600k so far from Central Government. Other key points summarised below in written update issued by Cllr Yelland. Cllr Yelland advised WDBC has established a hotline for those unable to access the internet who need help and support during the outbreak. It is for COVID related issues such as needing food delivered, prescriptions collected or some social contact. The number is 01822 813683. It will be answered by someone from the Community Coordination Team between the hours of 9am and 5pm Mon to Friday. There is an answerphone outside those hours. There is an e.mail address for those who do not have family, friends or neighbours to help. It is communitycoordination.covid19@swdevon.gov.uk.

WDBC has received a small amount of funding which they are using to provide a local Action Support Fund that will provide a grant of up to £250 for funding essential community led schemes such as delivering food, prescriptions, support for accessing online information and services, setting up virtual support groups and transport related initiatives that support safe community response.

WDBC has been divided into 6 Cluster groups. Each Cluster has been assigned officers who will work closely with Ward members. WDBC is administering the business grants scheme and has paid out over £9million to local businesses. Those who qualify will have received a letter to their normal registered place of business and the letter will tell them how to apply. While 1.6billion funding has been announced from central government, this money is predominantly for the first tier councils with regard to their social/adult care responsibilities which in our case is DCC. The leader of WDBC has written to both the MPs asking for their ongoing support in terms of financial provision WDBC held its first remote full council meeting last Tuesday. A new Chief Executive was appointed – Andy Bates. He is still working out his notice from his previous job and Steve Mullineaux is acting up in the interim. The amount of formal meetings has been reduced due to the amount of work and input that is required by officers. There will be no annual meeting so all members will remain in their positions for the next year.

The Minister for Housing, Communities & Local Government (MHCLG) has said that planning decisions should not be delayed and applications need to continue to be determined. This means that WDBC will start

sending applications out to parish councils for consultation. If a member of staff or elected member submits an application, it can be dealt with under delegated powers as long as there are not objections. The decision will be signed off by the Chairman of Development Management & Licensing and the Monitoring Officer. Previously, any application made by a member of staff or elected member had to go to Committee, irrespective of the nature of the application. If a Ward member calls an application into committee, then we will hold a remote meeting with that Ward member to see if the material planning reasons can be addressed through, for example, the addition of a condition. If the Ward member still wants to call it in, then the officers will contact the applicant and request an extension of time. Currently, it is not anticipated that WDBC will hold planning committee meetings remotely unless we can resolve the logistics of how the public can be involved. Cllr Ball advised all DCC meetings have been postponed except Cabinet meetings although they are looking at holding a Scrutiny meeting in June, the Annual meeting has been postponed.

6. COVID 19

6.1 To consider the Councils' Standing Orders and Financial Regulations - to ensure appropriate with sufficient authority delegated to the Clerk during any period of restricted activity declared by the Government in respect of the Covid-19 virus. Such delegation to enable the Council to fulfil its responsibilities to its residents. Agreed that wording of existing documents enable the operation of the Council without any amendments.

6.2 Annual Parish Meeting (requirement to hold meeting removed) **and Annual Council Meeting** – to note revised requirements for these events and agree actions to be taken including appointment of Chairman, Vice chairman, committee members and representatives to outside bodies. Arrangements for Annual Parish Meeting noted. Resolved not to hold Annual Parish Meeting and that Members remain in existing roles until May 2021 Annual Parish Meeting, proposed by Cllr Littlejohns, seconded by Cllr Wood.

6.3 Future Council meetings – to note ability to hold remote meetings and agree frequency and dates of future meetings including Planning Committee meetings. Noted that the Clerk had taken out a 12 month subscription to Zoom enabling the Council to hold virtual meetings. Agreed to continue with virtual monthly meetings on first Tuesday of each month for the coming 3 months with a review at the end of that period. Agreed to hold virtual Planning Committee meeting Tuesday 12th May, time to be agreed.

6.4 Okehampton Coronavirus Support Group – to note funds held by Council on behalf of Group. Noted that funds are being held on behalf of the Group. The group was set up 11 March, they now have 9 main organisers, they have raised approx £2000, they are supplying meals and arranging for prescriptions to be collected and delivered for the vulnerable. They also have a 'hot line' for residents. Child Activity Packs are to be supplied shortly from funding from Okehampton United Charity. They are signposting residents to sources of help,, they have supported over 300 so far and have nearly 200 volunteers helping. Councillors congratulated the Group on the work they were doing.

6.5 Funding for local organisations/support mechanisms – to agree if Council should support by way of grants, any organisation to assist residents through current situation. Agreed that any Group needing funding throughout the crisis should apply for funds from the Council through the normal Grant procedures.

7. Open Spaces. – to review closure of road to Meldon Quarry and to agree if it should now be reopened or not. Resolved to keep car parks closed and to remain in line with Dartmoor National Park arrangements for their car parks. Proposed by Cllr Maile and seconded by Cllr Littlejohns. Access to public rights of way will remain open.

8. Beating the Bounds – to consider arrangements and /or postponement of event. Arrangements for this jointly run event with the Commoners Association to be reviewed in light of ongoing situation at next meeting.

9. VE Day Celebrations – to note postponement of event and to consider new arrangements for presentation of mugs. Event cancellation noted, arrangements for presentation of mugs to Primary School children to agreed when current situation allows.

10. Correspondence

10.1 Okehampton & District Carnival – to receive update on grant request of £500 towards costs of replacement generators and Royalty float. Further information has been requested from the Carnival committee, response not yet received.

10.2 Wren Music – to receive update from Clerk on grant authorised at previous meeting. The Clerk reported this grant has not been made as the event it was supporting was unable to be held. Request to be resubmitted when new arrangements in place for rescheduled event.

10.3 Okehampton United Charity – to consider request for funding of £980.00 towards costs incurred for maintenance of allotments. Resolved to pay £980 for funding of allotments, proposed by Cllr P Heard, seconded by Cllr R Maile.

10.4 Oke Park Run – to receive update from Clerk re Grant discussed at last meeting. Clarification now received that the applicants for this were a separate group from OCRA and agreed consideration be deferred until situation allows event to be set up.

11. Insurance – to review renewal documentation and agree renewal with existing insurers. After review of information resolved to renew policy and pay premium of £494.29, proposed by Cllr Wood, seconded by Cllr Littlejohns.

12. Finance –

12.1 Accounts for payment –

Mrs J Gillard (wages £306.82, Expenses £284.64 Printer ink Zoom subscription,)	£ 591.46
GX Accountancy	£ 3.75
Devon Communities Together	£ 50.00
Western Web	£ 90.00
WDBC	£ 65.58

12.2 Bank Reconciliation and Statement of Budget – details noted. Due to current restrictions Cllr Cooper has been unable to undertake independent check.

12.3 2019/20 Year End and Audit Requirements – to note amended regulations for financial year end and internal audit procedures. Accounts and Audit (Coronavirus) (Amendment) Regulations 2020 had been amended permitting an extension of time for the return of the Annual Governance and Accountable Return and associated regulations. The Internal Audit is due to take place remotely on 21st May. Accounts and Governance Statements to be reviewed at June meeting.

12.3 Pay Scales and Allowances – To receive an update and if received, to resolve to approve the pay scales and allowances for 2020/21 as agreed by the National Joint Council for Local Government Services, and as applicable to staff scale points to be backdated to 1st April 2020. Clerk advised pay scales not yet agreed therefore item carried forward to next meeting.

12.4 To review allowance payable to Clerk for Use of home as office inc telephone calls etc. The Clerk advised these rates have been increased but further clarification was being sought, carried forward to next meeting.

PART TWO

Items which may be taken in the absence of the press and public.

‘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 as they involve the likely disclosure of sensitive and confidential information.’ Proposed by Cllr Cooper and seconded by Cllr Maile.

13. To review Clerk’s working hours (currently 10 per week) in light of Coronavirus and to agree ongoing requirements and to agree a review date. Agreed current arrangement of 10 hours per week to remain in place at present and to be reviewed again at July meeting.

14. Date and venue of next virtual meeting confirmed as Tuesday 2nd June, 7.30pm .
The meeting was declared closed at 9.00 p

Signed Date