



Okehampton Hamlets Parish Council

Minutes of a Meeting held on Tuesday 16th May 2023, at 7.30 pm at Meldon Village Hall, Meldon, Okehampton

Councillors Present –

M. Cooper

A. Ewen

J. Heard

P. Heard

M. Littlejohns

S. Norris

B. Wood

Also present – Marion Pratt, Locum Clerk, Cllr L Samuels (DCC), Cllr K Ball (WDBC)

Members of the Public –

There were 10 members of the public present.

Declarations of Acceptance of Office were signed by all Councillors prior to the start of the meeting. (These Declarations to be kept by Clerk Jane Gillard)

Cllr Goffey has signed her acceptance prior to this meeting.

Declarations of Interest - Locum Clerk reminded Councillors that– all Councillors must complete a new set of Declaration of Interest forms and submit to WDBC along with their Election Expense returns by the dead line of 1st of June.

1a - Election of Officers:

Chair – Cllr B Wood was proposed by Cllr M Littlejohn, seconded by Cllr M. Cooper. Cllr Wood was elected unanimously. He then signed his Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

Vice Chair – Cllr M Littlejohn was proposed by Cllr A Ewen, seconded by Cllr M Cooper. Cllr Littlejohn was elected unanimously. He then signed his Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

Committee representatives -

Meldon Village Hall – Cllr M Cooper was proposed by Cllr Littlejohn, seconded by Cllr Ewen – and elected unanimously.

North West Devon Matters – Cllr B Wood & Cllr M Littlejohn – proposed by Cllr M Cooper, seconded by Cllr A Ewen and elected unanimously.

Okehampton Neighbourhood Planning Group - Cllrs Wood, Cooper & Ewen – proposed by Cllr P Heard, seconded by Cllr J Heard. Elected unanimously.

Okehampton Sports and Open Spaces Recreation Group -Cllr A Ewen, Cllr J Heard – Proposed Cllr M Littlejohn, seconded Cllr M Cooper – elected unanimously.

Beacon Path Committee - Cllr Wood – Proposed Cllr M Cooper, seconded Cllr P Heard, elected unanimously.

OkeRail - Cllr Wood – proposed Cllr M Littlejohn, seconded Cllr P Heard, elected unanimously.

Northern Links - Cllrs Cooper & Ewen – proposed Cllr B Wood, seconded Cllr M Littlejohn, elected unanimously.

1b - Election of Planning Committee - appointment of members (4) to include Chairman - **Cllrs Wood, Littlejohn, Ewen & Cooper** -proposed Cllr J Heard, seconded Cllr S Norris, elected unanimously (Chair to be decided at first meeting of this committee)

1c - Election of Open Spaces Working Group Members – appointment of 4 Councillors to include Chairman and community members. Cllrs Wood, Littlejohn, Norris, P Heard & Ewen expressed an interest to stand on this Working Group. This would mean an increase from 4 to 5 members. It was agreed to defer until next meeting when Clerk can advise if this would mean changes to the Terms of Reference for this group.

1d - Election of Community Governance Review Working Group Members – appointment of 3 Councillors – **Cllrs Wood, Littlejohn & Cooper** – proposed by Cllr Ewen, seconded Cllr P Heard. Elected unanimously.

2. Members of the Public – there were no items raised by members of the public at this time. (See Planning Items)

3. Declarations of Interest – pertaining to the following Agenda items. Cllr P Heard declared an interest in Item 6.1; and Cllr J Heard declared an interest in Item 6.4.

4. Apologies – apologies were received and accepted from Cllr Jan Goffey; apologies were also received from Cllr A Leech (WDBC)

5. Approval of Minutes of previous meeting held on 7th April 2023 and Annual Parish Meeting held on 17th April 2023 – both sets of Minutes were approved and signed by the Chair.

6. Planning – to consider and agree response to applications listed below together with any others received up to date of this meeting.

6.1 DNP 0153/23 Retrospective application for building orientation for approved application 0136/20 and siting of shipping storage container, land at St Annes Chapel, Meldon. Cllr P Heard left the meeting for this discussion. Cllr Wood proposed that the council **SUPPORT** this application. Seconded Cllr A Ewen – carried unanimously. Cllr P Heard returned to the meeting room.

6.2 WDBC 0952/23/FUL Construction of enlarged workshop and associated work, land at SX598591 Fatherford Road, Okehampton. Mr Philip Bush (Men In Sheds) explained background and reason for this application. There are several objections on the WDBC website regarding noise and parking issues. Cllr Ewen proposed that this application should alleviate these issues and proposed that the council **SUPPORT** the application. Seconded by Cllr Norris. Proposal carried by 6 votes with Cllr Wood abstaining.

6.3 WDBC 1308/23/FUL Consultation as neighbouring parish – erection of replacement dwelling, garage and outbuilding for ancillary use, including demolition of existing buildings (resubmission of 1972/22/FUL) Nethercott Farm, Southcott. Cllr P Heard proposed that the council **SUPPORT** this application, seconded Cllr J Heard. Carried unanimously.

6.4 WDBC 1183/23/HHO Householder application for two storey side extension, 2 Fowley Barns, Tavistock Road, Okehampton – submission of response may be deferred to June meeting. Cllr Littlejohn proposed that the council **SUPPORT** this application, seconded Cllr Wood. Proposal carried by 6 votes with Cllr J Heard abstaining.

7. DCC and WDBC – Cllrs L Samuel and Cllr K Ball were present at the meeting but had nothing significant to report at the present time.

8. Neighbourhood Planning

8.1 to receive an update on joint Okehampton Plan and to consider information received from WDBC and agree actions to be taken. Alison Duckers, (Steering group leader) gave a resume of the current situation regarding the Neighbourhood Plan. Cllr B Wood thanked Alison and proposed that the council proceed to Regulation 16 of the Neighbourhood Planning Process. Seconded Cllr Ewen. Agreed unanimously.

9. To receive reports from meetings attended by Parish Council representatives including –

DCC Regeneration Project – the meeting for this was on election day, so councillors were unable to attend. However, the Minutes of this meeting have been circulated.

Cllr Wood had attended a Police Commissioner meeting entitled “Say No to Drugs” at which he was encouraged that the figures regarding dealers and users in the North Devon/Okehampton area had decreased, and said that he will circulate a written report.

10. Correspondence

10.1 DNPA – Nomination of Parish Members to DNPA Authority – to agree which candidate that OHPC should vote for. To date the Nomination pack had not been received. The meeting agreed to defer the decision to the Chair and Clerk if the nominations had to be made before the next full council meeting.

10.2 Tor Support Services – to consider grant application of £500 to assist funding counselling sessions. Proposal to approve grant Cllr Wood, Seconded Cllr Ewen. Approved unanimously.

10.3 Okehampton Friendship Group – to consider grant application of £300 to fund costs of 2 short distance trips. Proposal to approve grant Cllr Littlejohn, seconded Cllr Cooper. Approved unanimously.

10.4 Wren Music – to consider grant application of £500 towards 40th Anniversary Celebrations. Cllr Cooper proposed an amended grant of £400, seconded Cllr Littlejohn. Approved unanimously.

11. Finance – 11.1 Accounts for payment – the following payments were approved and would be authorised via online bank.

- Mrs J Gillard wages £560.27, travel £27.45 , Exp £160.84 £ 748.56
- Western Web £ 66.00
- Okement Centre £ 30.48
- Mole Avon £ 68.76
- Ellis Bakery £ 77.53

11.2 Internal Audit – to note audit now completed and to agree dates for Exercise of Public Rights, suggested dates 5 June – 14 July 2023. Cllr Wood proposed that these dates be accepted, seconded Cllr P Heard. Agreed unanimously.

11.3 Insurance – to agree renewal terms and authorise payment of renewal fee in the sum of £571.39. There has been subsequent correspondence from Insurers requesting an increased fee due to minor changes made to the policy. The meeting agreed that Clerk Jane Gillard should contact the Insurers to clarify the matter.

12. Environmental issues

12.1 Mud on highways, Crediton Road and Exeter Road Industrial Estate, to note any new issues – with change in weather the situation is no better or worse. It was agreed to keep on the Agenda for next meeting to monitor the situation.

12.2 To discuss drainage issues at Alfordon Lodge, item raised by Cllr Ewen. Cllrs Wood and Ewen had made a site visit to assess the situation. DCC have cleared two gulleys, and part of the road has been resurfaced and gritted. The situation seems to have improved. But it was agreed to monitor the situation.

13. Open Spaces.

13.1 To receive update from Working Group and agree terms of commencement of work to create Woodland Management Plans for Meldon Woods and Old Town Park by White Wood Management.

- The Blue Bell signs need to be located and erected.
- Cllr P Heard informed the meeting that there was a tree down under Meldon Bridge that may need attention.
- As reported on social media, rotten planks on the bridge in Old Town Park could be a health and safety risk. It was decided to contact DCC Footpaths Dept to see how best to rectify the problem.
- The council are still awaiting the new Woodland Management Plan.

14. Updates on Flood Plan and Snow Plan and actions required. – Cllr Wood will attend Devon Communities Resilience Forum at Bridestowe 17th May. (Locum Clerk will forward SCPC Resilience and Snow Plans as possible reference template). DCC has placed new salt bin on Upcott Hill. Placement of further salt bins to be decided at a future meeting.

15. King Charles III Coronation –

- Street Party was good – with lovely dancing and singing by the children
- Cream Tea at Meldon Hall was very well attended. The hall had been decorated and looked lovely and the event was enjoyed by all ages.
- Cllrs Wood & Ewen (along with some local children) also planted a tree at Romans Field and Meldon Fields.
- There is still money remaining in the Coronation Budget which could be used for more tree planting in the Autumn.

16. Okehampton Celebrates – to receive an update and agree actions to be taken including agreement of contribution towards costs to Everything Okehampton and Okehampton Town Council. (Grant application received for £1,400 = 22% of total predicted expenditure or 33% of Expense – predicted income)The meeting approved to authorise the Clerk to make an up-front payment of £1,000 and review any further grant at the next meeting.

17. To confirm dates and venues of meetings for coming Council year.

It was agreed to continue to hold council meetings on the first Tuesday of each month and to alternate the venue between Meldon Village Hall and the Ockment Centre.

18. Community Governance re proposed Parish boundary changes – to receive an update from the Working Group.

Cllr Wood explained that the current position of Okehampton Hamlets Council was to oppose the Boundary Change Proposal put forward by Okehampton Town Council and to seek a full review of council boundaries by WDBC. Cllr Ewen asked if Okehampton Hamlets should put forward an alternative Boundary proposal, rather than oppose outright. Cllr Heard proposed that Cllr Wood's explanation/proposal stand, seconded Cllr Cooper. Approved unanimously.

PART TWO

Items which may be taken in the absence of the press and public. The Council is recommended to pass the following resolution: - ‘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, seconded by Cllr Ewen.

19. To note current WDBC Enforcement cases list and information. None.

20. To confirm Date and venue of next meeting Tuesday 6th June 2023 at Links Room, Okement Centre, Okehampton – Confirmed.

The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 9.30 pm

Signed Date