



## Okehampton Hamlets Parish Council

**Minutes, number 318 of the Ordinary council meeting held on Tuesday 3 June 2025, at 7.30 pm at Meldon village hall, Meldon, Okehampton**

### **Councillors Present -**

M Cooper - Chair

M Littlejohns

P Heard

J Heard

S Norris

B Wood

A Ewen

J Goffey

Also present Cllr George Dexter and Emily Young Parish Clerk

**Cllr Cooper opened the meeting at 7.30pm**

### **1. Chairmans welcome**

**2. Members of the Public** – None were present

**3. Declarations of Interest** – Cllr Cooper declared an interest in item 17

**4. Apologies** –

**5. Approval of Minutes** of previous meeting held on 6<sup>th</sup> May 2025

**The minutes were approved as being an accurate record and were signed by Cllr Cooper. Proposed by Cllr Wood, seconded by Cllr Norris, agreed by all.**

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

**6.1.1 Ref – 0284/25/FUL – Farmer Luxtons, Stockley** – Extension to car park (retrospective)

<https://westdevon.planning-register.co.uk/Planning/Display/0284/25/FUL?cuuid=2551417C-E500-4B2A-83EE-13A62138F5CC> – Proposed by Cllr Wood to support, seconded by Cllr Ewen agreed by all.

**6.1.2 Ref – 1100/25/FUL – Unit 5, Cranmere Road, Exeter Road industrial estate** – Replacement of existing tank with new larger tank

<https://westdevon.planning-register.co.uk/Planning/Display/1100/25/FUL?cuuid=E2AC3421-3772-4EEA-A225-FD48D50104CF> Proposed by Cllr Wood to support, seconded by Cllr Norris agreed by all.

### **6.2 Planning decisions – To note:**

**6.2.1 Land at Parcel 4b, East of Crediton Road,**

**Okehampton – approval**

<https://westdevon.planning-register.co.uk/Planning/Display/1210/25/ARC>

#### 6.2.2 Meldon garage

<https://westdevon.planning-register.co.uk/Planning/Display/0548/25/FUL>

#### Conditional approval

### 7. DCC and WDBC – to consider the Councillors written reports/updates

#### **Cllr G Dexter**

#### **West Devon Matters Meeting**

I attended one of the police drop-in sessions on 23rd April, as well as the West Devon Matters meeting with the police on 14th May. We discussed the current 3 policing priorities of anti-social behaviour, drugs and road safety. Inspector Jones also informed us that National Highways would be extending its coverage from the M5 to A30 during the summer holiday season. This will be a great help to the police since the A30 normally takes up 80% of their resource during this period.

At the in person meeting on the 14th May we agreed to Inspector Jones' proposal of introducing a fourth priority of 'rural crime'. There is already a small police resource dedicated to combatting rural crime, but the inclusion of this as a priority hopefully will provide greater emphasis on the issue.

#### **LCWIP briefing**

Councillors received an update on the West Devon Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP). The Plan is being developed by the council with assistance from specialist consultants, following the methodology set out by the Department of Transport. There have also been consultation sessions in Okehampton and other areas at early stages of the plan's development.

The draft report identifies a number of possible projects for Okehampton. (This draft will be circulated to local members for their more detailed review and feedback).

There is about £450k of funding already in place for 'quick wins'. However significant further funding will be required, eg from S106 money, for the full West Devon plan to be delivered.

#### **Kellands Lane appeal**

As members are aware a concrete barrier was erected across Kellands Lane, which caused a great deal of concern to the residents. WDBC made the decision to serve an enforcement notice on the landowners to secure the demolition of the structure and the removal of the materials from the site. There will be a 28 day compliance period for those works to take place.

This notice was appealed on 27<sup>th</sup> May to the Secretary of State in respect of this site. The appeal will be determined by Written Representation. The procedure to be followed is set out in Part 2 of The Town and Country Planning (Appeals) (Written Representations Procedure) (England) Regulations 2009, as amended. The appeal documents are available for inspection at the relevant address above or on the Council's website.

Any comments made at the application stage will be forwarded to the Planning Inspectorate. Should you wish to make representations, or modify/withdraw your previous Representation, you can do so on the Appeals Casework Portal.

#### **Local Government Reorganisation**

The Ministry of Housing, Community & Local Government officially responded to the various proposals made by Devon's Councils on local government reorganisation.

Their aim is to provide feedback on interim plans and thereby support the development of final proposal(s). This stage is not a decision-making point, and their feedback did not seek to approve or reject any option being considered.

For the final proposal(s), each council can submit a single proposal for which there must be a clear single option and geography and as set out in the guidance. The Minister expects that this to be for the area as a whole; that is, the whole of the area to which the 5th February invitation was issued, not partial coverage.

The Minister's central message was councils should build on their initial work and ensure that the final proposal(s) address the criteria and are supported by data and evidence. The minister recommends that final proposal(s) should use the same assumptions and data sets or be clear where and why there is a difference. To achieve this there must be effective collaboration between all councils across the invitation area.

#### **Cllr T Leech**

#### **WD Active Travell report: LCWIP**

This report has just been completed and will be going to the next WD Hub meeting. Members were given appraisal of the report recently, and there are a few proposals that are within and around Okehampton. Once it is published, I would suggest that the Hamlets Parish Council reads and makes comments on what is being proposed.

### **Parcel 4b footpaths**

The reserved matters application for Parcel 4b is being addressed by the planners currently. It would be appropriate to make a comment about the steps within the footpaths on this site now.

### **Parcel 4a Footpath**

No news on what is happening to the steps down to Crediton Road yet.

### **Crediton Road footpath and Link Road**

Still on going. I assume that it is being designed / specified by DCC.

### **Kellands Lane blockage**

The Developer has put in an appeal to the Inspectorate against the action taken by WD re the concrete wall. Like most appeals, this could take some time to get a decision.

### **Exeter Road Persimmons site**

I have no idea if this is still being looked at by the WD Enforcement team.

### **Forthglade odors**

I have had a couple of complaints about the odor from this factory, but I need dates to be able to take it forward.

### **Persimmons Crediton Road site: Additional play equipment**

As ever, I have asked my monthly question to the officer at WD who is responsible for this, but still no movement here. I understand that WD could provide the piece of play equipment and charge the developer, but I guess that this is something else that takes years to do.

### **Devolution**

The Governments response to the proposals put forward has been less than helpful, but WD and others are now waiting to see what the new DCC leadership has to say on this subject before taking anything else forward.

## **Meet the Principal for Licensing... Karen Procter**

### **Principal Environmental Health and Licensing Officer**

I manage the Licensing team within Environmental Health. We act as the Licensing Authority for the Licensing Act and Gambling Act and the Local Authority for the regulation of other licensable activities.

We licence Taxi Drivers and Vehicles, alcohol and entertainment premises, gambling and lottery, charity collections, skin piercing, scrap metal dealers, street trading and pavement licences. We also administer many other licencing applications (such as animal activity and caravans sites) before handing them over to the specialists within EH for inspections to take place.

I Chair the Safety Advisory Group to provide an event organiser with a forum for discussing and advising on public safety at an event within our council areas. 'Martyn's Law' is now legislation which will help strengthen security at public events and venues to keep people protected from harm. This will now play a key part in my meetings.

I administer the Public Space Protection Orders within council areas and work closely with our Localities team and the Police.

As a Digital Champion I have been leading the EH migration project from the S:/drive to Sharepoint. Having recently been involved with a business continuity exercise on the loss of our computer systems, I can see how important this is to secure our data!

I am also responsible for keeping up to date with changes in guidance and legislation.



I am enjoying upskilling and supporting Ian with internal health and safety and emergency planning and any other areas of work that comes my way!

**Recent key work** I have recently administered a Tavistock and Okehampton wide Alcohol Public Space Protection order (PSPO). It involved working primarily with councillors and Devon and Cornwall Police. A PSPO helps to address anti-social behaviour or nuisance in public areas, aiming to ensure everyone can enjoy public spaces safely. This order does not stop drinking but gives enhanced powers to the police if there is anti-social behaviour as a result of someone drinking. We also included a dispersal order and a prevention on other types of activities. I will be working with the Police and Localities to put up new signs along with our Comms team to get the message out to the public.

This was a difficult and particularly challenging piece of work, and I am not afraid to admit that there has been a big learning experience with this.

There isn't such thing as a typical day and that's the one thing I love about working within Environmental Health and Licensing is the diversity that comes with it. There are always new things to learn, unusual cases to deal with and sometimes something comes in that needs an immediate response.

When I log in of a morning, there will always be e-mails to respond to, colleagues to catch up with and meetings to attend, along with the day-to-day support of the team and work that comes in from customers or colleagues.

Recently there have been some changes to legislation and guidance and some new legislation coming with regards to licensing. I am looking though and deciding on the impact to us as a team and what procedures I need to implement.

We are also about to review our Licensing Policy so I am creating the consultation platform for that and working with officers to see what changes we need to make before taking it to committee.

**8. Beating the bounds** the plans are progressing along.

**9. To receive reports from meetings and events attended by Parish Council representatives** – Cllr Wood met with West Devon Police Inspector Dan Jones who is very open to more informal meetings to enable closer ties with the Police which should be more beneficial to the local community.

#### **10. Finance –**

##### **10.1 Accounts for payment –**

Mrs E Young wages	£666.13
Mrs E Young – travel	£15.30
Mrs E Young – expenses	Nil
HMRC May payment	£9.00 (tax)
HMRC May payment	£38.72 (NI)
HMRC April payment	£9.00 (tax)
Meldon hall hire 250513	£25.00
ICO (Data protection fee)	£47.00
Westernweb – renewal of domain for 2 years	£66.00
Lloyds bank service charge	£4.25
Pidzsigns (Meldon woods)	£136.94

**Resolved accounts be paid, proposed by Cllr B Wood, seconded by Cllr J Heard, agreed by all.**

##### **10.2 Credits received –**

To note interest earned 09/05/25	£43.65
15/05/25 OUC (Beating the Bounds)	£300.00

##### **10.3 Request for spending**

**10.3.1** New 'no cycling' signs at £10.50 each (the sign shed)/ £11.41 Pidze (A4 on ACM) – **Clerk asked to speak to Dartmoor ranger about smaller signs.**

**10.3.2** 10 new bird boxes £10.00 per box – **Cllr Littlejohns has 10 new bird boxes. Clerk to inform Old ranger.**

**10.3.3** Meldon stone writing – **Cllr P Heard to arrange.**

#### 10.4 2024/25 year end

**10.4.1 – Internal auditor report** – circulated – questions asked about tenders.com and reserves.

**10.4.2 – AGAR 2024/25– Annual Governance Statement (Section 1)** – Cllr Cooper read out the accounting statements (1-9) in Section 1 of the Annual Governance Statement 2024/5.

Cllrs agreed “yes” to all statements. Proposed by Cllr Wood, seconded by Cllr Norris and agreed by all. Section 1 was then signed and dated by the Chair and the Clerk.

**10.4.3 - Annual Accounting Statements (Section 2) for the year ended 31.03.2025** - It was proposed by Cllr Wood to approve section 2, seconded by Cllr Ewen, agreed by all. Section 2 was signed and dated by the Chair and the RFO.

#### 10.5 Finance general

**10.5.1 S.106 meeting** – Cllrs Cooper, Ewen and Goffey attended. Various local sporting groups have received S.106 money. They are looking into a new football pitch which may be up by the showground. The all weather pitch needs replacing in the next 1-2 years which is estimated to cost around £250,000.00!

#### 10.6 Grants

**10.6.1 Transition Town Okehampton £250.00** – Proposed by Cllr Wood to not support. Seconded by Cllr Littlejohns, agreed by 7 with 1 abstention by Cllr Ewen.

#### 10.7 RFO report/Bank reconciliation

##### Period ending 28 May 2025

Prepared by Emily Young, Parish Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer

Date 28/May/2025

To be approved by - Cllr Martin Littlejohns .....

At the Parish Council meeting on 3 June 2025

##### Balance per bank statements as at 28 May 2025

	£	£	
Current account (Treasurers)		631.05	<b>Current Account (36901368)</b>
Deposit account (BB Inst online)		75,486.94	<b>Savings Account (38166660)</b>
		<b>76,117.99</b>	

Less: any unrepresented cheques	0	0.00
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Add: any unbanked money	0	0
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Net bank balances as at 28 May 2025		<b>76,117.99</b>
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The net balances reconcile to the Cash Book (receipts and payments account) for the year, as follows:

##### Cashbook

Opening Balance	<b>78676.07</b>	
Add: Receipts in the Year	343.65	(up to 15/05/25)
Less: Payments in the Year	2901.73	(Include VAT - up to 22/05/2025)
	<b>76,117.99</b>	

Closing balance per cash book (receipts and payments book) as at 29 April 2025 (must equal net bank balances above)	<b>76,117.99</b>	0.00	Difference
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It was proposed by Cllr Norris to approve the bank reconciliation, seconded by Cllr Wood, agreed by all. Cllr Littlejohns signed and dated the document.

#### 11. Environmental issues

**11.1 Odours East of Okehampton** – to receive an update – **no new reports**

## **12. Open Spaces**

**12.1 To receive update from working group** – Clerk asked to send an invoice to James Baulch for ash wood. Cllr Cooper to check gate at OTP (for possible damage). Clerk confirmed there are 8 Pied Flycatcher nests in Meldon woods, all now with young and two broods have been ringed.

**12.2 Meldon woods – woodland management plan** – Clerk to follow up with White Wood management.

## **13. Highways**

**13.1 Damaged fence by A30. Reported to Highways England (again 08.05.25)** – Clerk to provide HE with 2 Cllr contact details.

**13.2 St James crossing** – faulty wig wag – Clerk to contact James Grainger (DCC)

**13.3 Kellands Lane** – ongoing

**13.4 20's plenty for Devon** – no update

## **14. Economic Development Projects**

**14.1 Okehampton BID** – no update.

**14.2 Regeneration project** – next meeting September and then January 2026. Cllrs Cooper and Goffey to attend.

**15. Community governance meeting** – Clerk circulated comms plans. Next meeting 18 June.

**16. Okehampton castle** – Confirmed that the castle will be open every 3<sup>rd</sup> weekend until October. A local person remains the keyholder, Cllr Norris said EH are keen to do more community events, but they will need volunteers to help. Clerk trying to obtain further details which will be put on the website. <https://www.english-heritage.org.uk/visit/places/okehampton-castle/#Okehampton-book>

**17. Okehampton Army Cadet force permission for use of land** – Cllr Wood proposed a suggestion to meet on-site and show the army cadet the area they could use, seconded by Cllr Goffey, agreed by all.

**18. To confirm August meeting date and September new meeting date** – 5<sup>th</sup> August and 9<sup>th</sup> September agreed meeting dates; proposed by Cllr Goffey, seconded by Cllr Ewen, agreed by all.

**19. Litter bins new estates** – Cllr Goffey to walk around to check what exists.

**20. Gate on cycle route** – Granite Way underpass gate (top end closest to viaduct end) has been removed and thrown on to train track. Clerk to report to Sustrans, along with a suggestion for better vision under the underpass.

**21. Landline to broadband switch** – Clerk to add to website.

**22. To confirm date of next meeting** – Tuesday 1 July 2025 at 7.30pm Meldon village hall.

## **PART TWO – Proposed by Cllr Goffey, seconded by Cllr Norris, agreed by all.**

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.'

**23. To note current WDBC Enforcement case list and information** – noted. Clerk asked to raise an enforcement on what3words: puffed.windpipe.painting. Proposed by Cllr Littlejohns, seconded by Cllr P Heard, agreed by all.

**The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 8.55 pm**

Signed ..... Date .....

Minutes 318/6