

**Minutes of an Okehampton Town Council Planning Committee Meeting  
held on 17<sup>th</sup> June 2024 at 6pm in the Council Chamber, Town Hall, Okehampton**

**Committee Members Present:** Councillor T Leech (Chairman)  
Councillor M Ireland (Vice-Chairman)  
Councillor R Colman (Chairman, Property)  
Councillor B Tolley (Chairman, Parks Committee)  
Councillor J Yelland (Chairman, Policy & Resources)  
Councillor T Cummings  
Councillor M Richards

**In Attendance:** Mrs E James (Town Clerk)  
Councillor L Bird  
Councillor F Hart  
Councillor C Holt  
Councillor C Marsh  
Councillor S Weekes

		<b>Action</b>
106	<b><u>Apologies for Absence</u></b> – On the proposition of Cllr Ireland, seconded Cllr Colman, it was <b>RESOLVED</b> to approve apologies tendered by Cllr Fisher (personal).	
107	<b><u>Declaration of Interests</u></b> – None	
108	<b><u>Public Participation</u></b> – None	
109	<b><u>Members Questions</u></b> – Cllr Ireland commented on two vehicles that appeared to have been abandoned in the vicinity of The Heathers.  Cllr Leech provided an update regarding previous concerns raised in relation to the housing development, parcel 3, off of Crediton Road. Planning Enforcement had investigated, tree protection was in accordance with the conditions imposed and dust prevention equipment was in place.	Cllr Leech
110	<b><u>Committee Terms of Reference</u></b> – On the proposition of Cllr Cummings, seconded Cllr Colman, it was <b>RESOLVED</b> to recommend the draft Terms of Reference to Full Council.	Clerk
111	<b><u>Chairmans Report</u></b> – The Chairman reported on the following for which further information would be available following the General Election on 4 <sup>th</sup> July 2024. Separate meetings would be arranged to consider the subjects as necessary.	
111.1	<b><u>Changes in Permitted Development</u></b> – Over the last few years, domestic properties had been allowed extensions and loft conversions without having to obtain planning consent. Shops as well as accommodation could be changed into dwellings and could move to industrial estates. There were moves to go even further, but any additional changes would not be known until after the General Elections.	
111.2	<b><u>Free Port Clarification</u></b> – The area defined would be just around Plymouth and mainly affect South Hams. West Devon would not be directly affected. Any new business interested in signing up to the scheme must fall into certain categories and prove they were expending or a new initiative, and not companies that were already trading in this area who just wanted to move to take advantage of any benefits a Free Port may provide.	

**111.3 Biodiversity Net Gain** – The scheme would only affect developers and not individual householders. Developers were required to provide information to Local Planning Authorities and professional Ecologists. WDBC and town/parish councils would not be consulted on this element of applications. The information must be produced and agreed with planners and the ecologist before work commenced on site. To start work before agreement was a criminal offence.

**111.4 New Guidance for Large Developments** – Outcome of the General Election could affect this proposal. The aim was to speed up the planning process. The principle being that developers would carry out consultations before submitting applications, so they could gauge any opposition or otherwise and make changes to their submissions. An Inspector would then put the case to the Secretary of State to have the final say.

(Cllr Holt arrived)

**111.5 Building Safety Levy** – A new levy was proposed to be imposed on developers of new residential development requiring building control approval in England. The general idea was to designate Local Authorities as the collection and administration agents for the levy. How much this would be, and how it may or may not work, had not been defined.

**111.6 Building Control Data** – Cllr Leech advised that he was now the WDBC substitute member for building control and would be requesting information about the inspection of permitted development projects.

**111.7 Joint Local Plan (JLP) and the additional Supplemental Planning Guide** – These documents were used by WDBC to determine applications. The supplementary guide included such things as agreed colours to be used on housing and a host of other issues.

## **112 Planning Applications**

[1696/24/TPO](#) T1: Oak – reduce lateral growth on southern canopy overhanging property to achieve a clearance of 2m from the roof, due to encroachment of property. **30 Quarry Fields, Okehampton EX20 1TZ**

On the proposition of Cllr Yelland, seconded Cllr Cummings (1 abstention), it was **RESOLVED** to **OBJECT** to the application on the grounds of inconsistency and clarity. The application form did not contain a reason for the works although the wording 'due to encroachment of property' had been included on the planning website.

[1629/24/COM](#) Notice of intent to install electronic communication apparatus comprising of removal of 3 no. existing antennas at 12.5m on the tower, replacing with 3 no. new at 12.9m at 3 no new at 15.5m. Install new steelwork, radio unites, GPS module and other ancillary items. Internal upgrades of existing ground-based equipment cabinets within the compound.

**Communication Station, Exeter Road, Okehampton EX20 1QS**

The Committee noted the above application which was permitted within planning legislation and did not require consent in order for the work to take place.

**113 Payment of Invoices** – On the proposition of Cllr Tolley, seconded Cllr Colman, it was **RESOLVED** to approve the payment of invoices as per the schedule.

## **114 Members' Reports and Requests for Agenda Items**

**114.1 Dartmoor Railway Association** – Cllr Ireland advised the next meeting was on 3<sup>rd</sup> July.

Clerk

**114.2 OkeRail Forum** – Cllr Ireland reported the meeting on 20<sup>th</sup> June had been cancelled due to the pre-election period, a General Election taking place on 4<sup>th</sup> July. A new face-to-face meeting date was awaited. Cllr Ireland was attending a GWR meeting later in the month and WDBC would be writing to Network Rail after the General Election.

(Cllrs Bird and Weekes arrived during this item of business)

**114.3 Ockment Centre** – Cllr Leech reported the organisation was struggling to survive and relied on grant funding from the Town Council and the letting of rooms for hire.

(Cllr Marsh arrived)

**114.4 Okehampton & Area Health & Wellbeing Alliance (CVS)** - Cllr Leech had been unable to attend the last meeting.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 7pm.

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**Chairman**