

**Okehampton Town Council
Policy & Resources Committee 16th September 2024
Meeting Report**

Date:	6 th September 2024
Name:	Emma James

10. Civic Regalia – To consider future use of the Mayoral Chain and that of the Mayoress, including security arrangements and make recommendations to Full Council.

The following is an extract of OTCs Civic Protocol and Role of the Mayor:

Civic Insignia

The Mayor's robes, chains and badge of office are the outward signs of the Civic office held, i.e. its insignia.

It is important to maintain the dignity of the office and that any use of the robes is not overdone. Therefore, robes will only be worn on Civic or named occasions within this document.

When representing the Town Council, the Mayor and consort will normally wear the official chains of office. The chains of office will normally be worn at all Civic functions within the town, whilst the day-chain will be worn at the non-Civic functions. Chains can be worn at functions outside the town when invited in an official capacity although there are some exceptions to this which are usually specified in the official invitation.

The chains of office are held in the Town Hall for collection by the Mayor when attending functions, to be returned as soon as possible. If held at home, the Mayor's home insurance company must be advised that this may occur during the year.

The Mayor should not wear the Civic insignia in another area without express permission from the Council of that area.

There are matters that now need addressing:

- a) **Security** – OTCs insurer has increased their requirements, and it may be that the chains cannot be kept at a Mayor's home or any other location overnight unless the Council considers the risk to be acceptable. This must be agreed annually with the Mayor and OTCs insurer.

Members of staff are not available at weeks and evenings in order to resecure the chains within the Town Hall if the Mayor has attended a function.

- b) **Fragility and use of the Mayoral Chain** – The Civic Chain of Office dates to 1885. A report dated 28 November 2002 by a Jeweller and Valuer clearly expressed concerns about its use, stating '*I would recommend in the future the full regalia is only worn on ceremonial occasions and with some care. I would also advise no more extra's should be added, the complete chain has served a very long and hazardous life and should be considered for retirement, as a museum piece.*'

With continued use the chain is becoming damaged. Repairs are currently needed to replace the shoulder pins and clip that fastens the day-chain.

Recommendation

Consideration should be given to further limiting use of the chains to prevent additional damage and ensure it is protected for the future.

It is recommended that the Chains of Office are only worn at Okehampton Town Council Civic events held within the council boundary when the robes are worn.

These are as follows:

- Mayor Choosing
- Civic Service
- Remembrance Service and Parade
- Okehampton Carnival
- Edwardian Evening
- Commonwealth Day

For other events and those outside of the town the day-chain only should be worn. The Committee may wish to consider purchasing another chain that could be worn at civic functions outside of the council boundary or not listed above.

It is also recommended that use of the Mayoresses chain is addressed within this document. Use being restricted as follows:

- A Mayoress/Consort cannot represent the council on behalf the Mayor, this being the role of the Deputy Mayor. As such the chain should only be worn in the presence of the Mayor when the robes and full mayoral chain is worn.
- The medallion/day-chain attached to the chain should not be removed and worn separately to the full chain for any reason

2025/26 Budget - To consider feedback arising from a budget workshop held on 27th August to review the Committee’s budget responsibilities for the current year, initial requirements for 2025/26, and those listed on the report

Subscriptions – It was recommended that consideration be given to not renewing the Devon Communities Together subscription, a saving of £50 p/annum.

The Budget Workshop also recommends the following transfer of funds takes place within this current financial year:

From	To	Amount	Comments
5451 2024/25 Budget Community Governance Boundary Review (£5,000)	EMR - Community Governance Boundary Review	£1,500	Move to EMR for future use
5451 2024/25 Budget Community Governance Boundary Review (£5,000)	EMR - Staffing Review	£3,500	Move to EMR. Review previously agreed by Council
EMR 346 Rail Resilience (£1,207)	EMR New Burial Ground Purchase	£1,207	Use no longer required – reallocate funds
EMR 373 Climate Emergency £916.69	EMR New Burial Ground Purchase	£416.69	Redirect use of some of these funds leaving a sum of £500 in the Climate EMR

Okehampton Town Council Budget 2025/26

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ADMINISTRATION

		Actual	Budget	Actual	Projected	Budget
Expenditure		2023/24	2023/24		2023/24	2024/25
Notes						
1	Salaries & Pensions (Office staff x 3)	98429	103378			
2	Staff Training/Conference	5736	3000			3000
3	Staff Travel	101	100			150
4	Telephone	1769	1850			1800
5	Printing, Post & Stationery	1312	1100			700
6	Subscriptions	2374	2600			2600
7	Insurance (all areas)	27956	21000			21000
8	Photocopier	1071	1230			1230
9	Advertising/Recruitment	666	600			500
10	Marketing	1105	2000			2000
11	Bank Charges & A/c maintenance	377	450			400
12	Legal & Professional Fees	2747	2000			2000
13	Audit Fees (Internal and External)	2155	2145			2150
14	IT: maintenance, software & licenses	5189	5850			6500
15	Clothing/PPE	57	100			75
16	Miscellaneous	0	0	0	0	0
17	CCTV	11001	6000			6000
18	Bid Feasibility	5174	3212	3212	3212	0
19	Youth Council	0	500			150
20	Community Governance Boundary Review	0	5000	0	0	0
21	Ear Marked Reserves (see attached)	500	4500	4500	4500	4500
	total	167719	166615	7712	7712	54755
	Capital					
22	IT equipment	298	500			500
	total	298	500	0	0	500
	Total expenditure	168017	167115	7712	7712	55255
	Income					
23	Miscellaneous Income	1500	0			0
24	Precept	421893	444996		444996	
25	Grants Received	0	0			0
26	Insurance Refund	0	0			0
27	Interest received - bank/Bldg Soc	24981	7500			12000
28	Investment Income	250	250			250
	total income	448624	452746	0	444996	12250
	Tax charge / net income	(a+b)-c	-280607	-285631	7712	-437284

Notes	
1	Clerk, Assistant Clerk and Admin Officer
2	Includes Clerk's Community Governance training course, partly reimbursed by the Clerk as agreed which accounts for the overspend. Shown as income.
3	
4	
5	
6	
7	2023/24 included purchase of a safe
8	
9	
10	
11	
12	
13	
14	
15	Remaining funds from 2024/25 to be Rolled Over
16	
17	
18	Overspend in 2024/25 due to Ballot Postage costs, reimbursed by WDBC.
19	Remaining funds from 2024/25 to be Rolled Over
20	£1,500 to be Transferred to Community Governance EMR, £3,500 to Staffing Review EMR within 24/25 financial year
21	

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Earmarked Reserves (EMR) 2025/26

PROPERTY			2023/24			2025/26	
Notes	a/c	Detail	EMR 2024/25	Budget remaining at	Projected Year End Remaining £	Add	EMR TOTAL
1	321	Town Hall Boiler	6000			1000	7000
2	322	Charter Hall Foyer (carpet)	3000			500	3500
3	344	Charter Hall Foyer (Toilets)	5000			0	5000
4	348	Sinking Fund - Property Repairs TH, CH, MH	10000			0	10000
5	352	Roof Repair/Replacement CH	468000			0	
6	353	Electrical Installation - Insp, Maint	9000			3000	
7	354	Office Refurbishment	3500			0	3500
8	359	Devolved Responsibilities Contingency (e.g. public toilets)	12000			0	12000
9	365	Charter Hall Internal Decoration	25000			0	
10	366	Council Chamber Ceiling	3000			0	3000
11	368	Charter Hall Public Address System & Projector Screen	4179			0	4179
12	370	Asset Investment	0			0	0
13	375	Town Hall Window Replacement	22000			20000	42000
			570679	0	0	24500	90179

Notes	
1	Increase annually for future repairs and replacement
2	carpet will need to be replaced in time
3	Decoration will be needed over time. Ladies may need reconfiguration and male urinal replacement
4	Property sinking fund
5	Charter Hall Roofing Work - retention
6	Inspections required 3 or 5 yearly - work required in 2022 following inspections
7	No planned work at this time but offices will need decoration/replacement flooring in future - reception security arrangements to be considered
8	Both sets of toilets require maintenance, particularly market street with replacement locks and woodwork repairs
9	Redecoration and other work on completion of roofing work
10	Repairs to ceiling and redecoration needed
11	Projector and screen replaced. Address system will need reviewing
12	Funds diverted to Charter Hall Roofing work project in 2023/24
13	Windows are beginning to deteriorate. Building is Grade II listed and in a conservation area meaning widows will have to be specially made
	Highlighted figure added to budget requirement
	2024/25 figure will equal year end figure, plus any addition where indicated

13. Events

13.2 Mayor Choosing/Annual Council Meeting and Mayoral Awards – To consider feedback and recommendations arising from a review of the 2024 event

A meeting has been held to review the Mayor Choosing/Annual Council meeting held in May 2024 and the giving of Annual Mayoral Awards. Recommendations arising for consideration are as follows:

Mayoral Awards

- a) The number of awards is limited to a maximum of three p/annum as follows:
 - i. 1 nominated by the Okehampton Town Youth Council
 - ii. 2 nominated by the Town Council

- b) Criteria:
 - i. An individual or group/organisation who lives, works, volunteers or operates within the town boundary
 - ii. Must have demonstrated service to the Okehampton community

Mayor Choosing/Annual Council Meeting

The event/meeting is held in the Charter Hall instead of the Council Chamber so that the number in attendance can be increased and a number of places can be set aside for town residents to attend.

Guests seated at round tables cabaret style in order to facilitate refreshments following the formal events.

Council will be seated in front of the stage, rather than on it, and the projector behind used to show the Council Crest and/or relevant photographs.