Oakham Town Council

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An ORDINARY MEETING of the TOWN COUNCIL was held on Wednesday 8th July 2026 at 6.30pm at the Council Offices and was attended by the following:

Chairman:	Cllr M. Brookes
Town Councillors:	Cllr D. Romney, Cllr SA Wadsworth, Cllr B. Callaghan, Cllr P. Ainsley, Cllr J. Harris, Cllr C. Clark
In Attendance:	7 members of the public
Locum Clerk	Samantha Haywood
Minutes:	Melanie Palmer (Acting Deputy Clerk)

ITEM	MINUTE	VOTE / ACTION
26078.	**APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**	
	Cllr Padmore - Business IT WAS RESOLVED that Council accept the apology. Absent - Cllr Nix.	Proposed: CC Seconded: DR All in Favour
26079.	**DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS AND DISPENSATIONS**	
	Cllr Clark - item 29. Cllr Ainsley - item 29 & 30	
26080.	**DEPUTATIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC - OPEN MEETING**	
i.	**Councillor Resignation**	
	Jonathan Nichols read out his Councillor resignation speech. The Chairman thanked Mr Nichols for the contribution he had made to the Council.	
ii.	**Bank Account**	
	A resident questioned Cllr Ainsley on the information on social media sites regarding his activity with the HSBC bank account. Cllr Ainsley replied with a formal statement that has been published on the Council website.	
26081.	**POLICE REPORT**	
	Inspector Rowan Patterson-Bell reported: • He is based in Rutland.	

	• Thanked the Council for allowing him the opportunity to have a presence at these meetings. • Asked people to inform him of what information they would like reported at Council meetings. • Gave a very detailed update on the activities of the police force. • Operations ongoing – Operation Flux the annual drink drive focus, Operation Retail which expedites shoplifting offenders. • He is very focussed on maintaining operational support even with the challenges of resources that he faces and is very proactive in this area to ensure the safety of residents. • The threat rate to the UK is now severe which means that an attack on our shores is likely within the next six months, however there are no specific threats to Rutland at this time, and the message is to be alert at all times but not be alarmed. • His team are working very hard in all areas of policing with some good news that reports of violence are down by 18 compared to this time last year. • He appealed to the residents of Oakham to report any intelligence to the local police to aid them reduce crime across the parish.	
26082.	**RUTLAND COUNTY COUNCILLOR REPORT**	
	No report received.	
26083.	**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**	
	IT WAS RESOLVED that the minutes of the Extraordinary Council meeting held on 28.05.26 are a true and accurate record of the meeting and as such were signed by the Chairman.	Proposed: BC Seconded: MB 6 for, 1 abstention Clerk
	IT WAS RESOLVED that the minutes of the Extraordinary Council meeting held on 15.06.26 are a true and accurate record of the meeting and as such were signed by the Chairman.	Proposed: BC Seconded: MB 6 for, 1 abstention Clerk
	IT WAS RESOLVED that the minutes of the Ordinary Council meeting held on 17.6.26 approved with an amendment required of minute ref 26058 – Disbursement was resolved and two councillors and the chair of the Victoria Hall Trustees were in attendance.	Proposed: BC Seconded: MB All in favour Clerk
26084.	**COUNCILLOR'S REPORTS AND QUESTIONS**	
i.	**Events**	
	Cllr Wadsworth gave an update on events - The Houndogs on 21.06.26 and the Armed Forces Day on 28.06.26 were very well attended. Comments had been made by residents regarding the public conveniences and how clean they were. Cllr Wadsworth appealed for more support from fellow Councillors during these events.	All
ii.	**Councillor Questions**	
	Cllr Romney asked the Clerk to confirm whether the Chairman of the Staffing Committee, or any other Chairman, has delegated powers. Clerk's response – Please refer to the Council's Committee Terms of Reference (available on the website) which state the delegated powers for each committee/chairman.	
26085.	**CHAIRMAN'S REPORT**	
	The Chairman read an addition to his written report which is available on the Council website.	

26086.	**CLERK'S REPORT**	
	The Clerk's report, as published on the website, was noted.	
26087.	**COMMITTEE / WORKING GROUP REPORTS**	
	No reports received.	
26088.	**CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED**	
	The list of correspondence was noted.	
26089.	**ASSERTION 10 / I.T. & DATA MANAGEMENT POLICY / DATA MAPPING REGISTER / GDPR**	
i.	**Assertion 10 Rules and Regulations**	
	IT WAS RESOLVED that Council note the new Assertion 10 rules and regulations.	Proposed: MB Seconded: BC All in Favour
ii.	**I.T. & Data Management Policy**	
	IT WAS RESOLVED that Council adopt the proposed I.T. & Data Management Policy.	Proposed: BC Seconded: MB All in favour Clerk
iii.	**Data Mapping Register**	
	IT WAS RESOLVED that Council adopt the proposed Data Mapping Register.	Proposed: BC Seconded: CC All in Favour Clerk
iv.	**Website Accessibility**	
	IT WAS RESOLVED that Council note that more work is needed on the website to ensure it is accessible to a high standard (WCAG 2.2 AA).	Proposed: PA Seconded: BC All in favour Clerk
v.	**GDPR Training**	
	IT WAS RESOLVED that council approve online GDPR training for all Officers and Members who require it with the training being provided by High-Speed training at a cost of £26 + VAT per person.	Proposed: PA Seconded: BC All in favour Clerk
26090.	**FINANCE COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE**	
	IT WAS RESOLVED that Council adopt the proposed Finance Committee Terms of Reference.	Proposed: PA Seconded: CC All in favour Clerk
26091.	**COUNCIL RISK ASSESSMENT**	
	IT WAS RESOLVED that Council approve the reviewed Council Risk Assessment.	Proposed: SAW Seconded: MB All in favour Clerk
26092.	**INVOICES FOR PAYMENT**	
	IT WAS RESOLVED that Council approve the invoices for payment. IT WAS RESOLVED that Council approve the payments made outside of meeting.	Proposed: MB Seconded: SAW All in favour Clerk Proposed: CC Seconded: MB All in favour

26093.	**COMMITTEE & WORKING GROUP MEMBERSHIP**	
	Due to the co-option of two Members, a review of the committees and working groups was considered.	
i.	**Staffing Committee**	
	IT WAS RESOLVED that Council approve Cllr Brookes, Cllr Wadsworth, Cllr Callaghan and Cllr Romney as members of the Staffing Committee. Cllr Padmore to confirm if he wishes to remain on the committee.	Proposed: MB Seconded: CC All in favour Clerk
ii.	**Finance Committee**	
	IT WAS RESOLVED that Council approve Cllr Callaghan, Cllr Romney, Cllr Padmore, Cllr Wadsworth, Cllr Brookes and Cllr Harris as members of the Finance Committee.	Proposed: MB Seconded: CC All in favour Clerk
iii.	**UK Town of Culture Working Group**	
	IT WAS RESOLVED that Council approve Cllr Ainsley, Cllr Harris and Cllr Clark as members of the UK Town of Culture Working Group, and Jonathan Nichols be a lay person.	Proposed: MB Seconded: BC All in favour Clerk
iv.	**Communications Working Group**	
	IT WAS RESOLVED that Council approve Cllr Harris and Cllr Wadsworth as members of the Communications Working Group.	Proposed: MB Seconded: CC All in favour Clerk
v.	**Policies & Procedures Working Group**	
	IT WAS RESOLVED to disband the Policies & Procedures Working Group.	Proposed: BC Seconded: SAW Against: DR Abstain: JH For: PA, MB, SAW, BC, CC.
vi.	**Victoria Hall Working Group**	
	A proposal was made by Cllr Brookes to disband the Victoria hall Working group IT WAS RESOLVED that Council do not disband the Victoria Hall Working Group. IT WAS RESOLVED that Council approve Cllr Ainsley, Cllr Wadsworth and Cllr Harris as members of the Victoria Hall Working Group.	Proposed: MB Seconded: BC 3 for, 4 against Proposed: MB Seconded: CC All in favour Clerk
26094.	**DATE OF NEXT MEETING**	
	Council noted the date of the next meeting as 12.08.26 at 6.30pm.	All
26095.	**EXTENSION OF MEETING**	
	IT WAS RESOLVED that Council suspend Standing Order 3x. and extend the meeting duration to 21:00 hrs.	Proposed: MB Seconded: BC 6 for, 1 against
26096.	**PLANNING COMMITTEE**	
	IT WAS RESOLVED that Council agree to reinstate Planning Committee meetings and that Cllr Wadsworth, Cllr Romney, Cllr Callaghan and Cllr Brookes be members of the committee.	Proposed: SAW Seconded: MB 4 for, 3 abstentions
26097.	**TOWN COUNCIL OFFICE**	
	Due to no seconder for the motion, the item was not considered and confirmed that Council do not wish to move the Council offices to the King Centre.	Proposed: PA Seconded: None

26098.	**BENCH – PRINCESS AVENUE**	
	A resident had been given permission for a memorial bench to be installed at Princess Avenue. The resident has purchased the bench. A discussion took place. IT WAS RESOLVED that Council approve a memorial bench to be sited at Princess Avenue on the left in the middle by the stream, the bench to be installed on a concrete base, subject to the following being confirmed: • Restrictive Covenants: The title deeds of the land must be checked for restrictive covenants that prohibit the erection of permanent structures or restrict public access. • Planning Permission: Benches generally benefit from Permitted Development Rights under Part 12, Class A of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 for local authorities. However, planning permission may be required if the land is in a conservation area, a designated Local Green Space, or a National Park. • Highways and Licences: If the bench borders or sits on a public highway or pavement, the local Highways Authority, Rutland County Council, to confirm that no street furniture licence or permission is required. • Equality Act 2010: All street furniture must be inclusive and accessible. Seating height, armrests, and proximity to footpaths to be considered. • Clearance Requirements: Outdoor seating should allow an unobstructed pedestrian clearance width (typically a minimum of 1.2 metres, but 1.5 to 2.0 metres is highly recommended in high-traffic areas) to ensure safe passage for wheelchair users and those with pushchairs. • Hardstanding: Benches should ideally be set back from primary paths (at least 600mm minimum) and positioned on a solid, accessible hardstanding base with adjacent space for a wheelchair or mobility scooter. • Risk Assessments / health & safety: Site risk assessment to prevent anti-social behaviour (Crime and Disorder Act 1998) and avoid public nuisance complaints to be drafted. • Insurance and Liability: Bench to be added to the Council's asset register and public liability insurance. • Maintenance: To be checked that Council have a Benches Policy governing the bench's lifespan, who is responsible for upkeep, and what happens if the bench is vandalised.	Proposed: PA Seconded: MB 7 for, 1 abstention Clerk
26099.	**SPORTS FACILITIES FEASIBILITY & DEVELOPMENT STUDY**	
i.	**Exempt status of the feasibility study**	
	IT WAS RESOLVED that Council approve removing the exempt status of the Sports Facilities Feasibility and Redevelopment Strategy.	Proposed: BC Seconded: MB 6 for, 1 against Clerk
ii.	**Study publication**	
	IT WAS RESOLVED that Council approve authorising the Clerk to publish the finalised strategy document on the Council website for public access, with all necessary redactions and privacy checks completed prior to the upload.	Proposed: BC Seconded: MB 5 for, 1 against, 1 abstention Clerk
26100.	**EXTENSION OF MEETING**	
	IT WAS RESOLVED that Council continue to suspend Standing Order 3x. and extend the meeting duration to 21:30 hrs.	Proposed: DR Seconded: BC All in favour
26101.	**WASTE BINS – CUTTS CLOSE**	
	Council noted an update report from the Acting Deputy Clerk on the overflowing bins at Cutts Close which included:	

	• A meeting was held between the contractor and Melanie Palmer • There is an ongoing discussion being held between the two parties regarding contractual items • Melanie Palmer will further update council at August 12th Meeting • Melanie Palmer has sent the contractor a list of Summer Events in Cutts Close to enable them to vary the emptying of the bins.	
26102.	**OAKHAM TENNIS CLUB BUILDING WORKS**	
	IT WAS RESOLVED that an amendment to the motion be accepted giving the Clerk delegated powers to approve all standard repairs requested by the Tennis Club. IT WAS RESOLVED that Council approve granting permission, as landlord, to Oakham Tennis Club for them to carry out remedial repairs, in consultation with the Clerk, for oversight on their building work proposals and the Clerk to have delegated power to consider and approve all standard repairs requested by the Tennis Club.	Proposed: MB Seconded: BC All in favour Proposed: MB Seconded: BC All in favour Clerk
26103.	**VICTORIA HALL**	
	The following motions were presented to Council for consideration: 1. To approve submission of the Charity Commission applications in substantially the form attached. 2. To establish the Victoria Hall Committee, appoint members, and adopt its Terms of Reference. 3. To delegate minor amendments and related submissions to the Victoria Hall Committee. 4. To authorise the Committee to approve expenditure for correspondence to RCC within the Disbursement Budget approved on 17 June. 5. To note the solicitor's advice regarding RCC engagement and confirm the preferred route for correspondence. Cllr Brookes proposed an amendment that Council did not commit any further funding to the Victoria Hall project and responsibility was handed back to Victoria Hall Trustees and the Charity Commission. The reasons being that there was no business case, he did not believe that Oakham Town Council had enough money to facilitate this project. Cllr Ainsley explained that all monies for the current works being carried out had previously been agreed by Council. He felt that withdrawing now was premature due to work already carried out by the architect and solicitors and that their work should be completed before a final decision is made. Cllr Callaghan stated that he felt Council was gambling with residents' money on a white elephant project, and that sunk money was no justification for spending further money. He also stated that there were many more projects that this money could be spent on and that it was reckless to continue on. Cllr Wadsworth clarified that the solicitors had asked Oakham Town Council to check with RCC whether they still had an interest in having four trustees from Rutland County Council on the board. Cllr Romney felt that the funding of the building had not been taken into consideration, he also stated that the costs would escalate between quote and work to a level Oakham Town Council would not be able to accommodate. IT WAS RESOLVED that Council do not continue any further with the Victoria Hall proposal. *Cllr Ainsley left the meeting at 21:30 hrs*	Proposed: MB Seconded: BC For: MB, DR, BC Against: SAW, CC, PA Abstention: JH Chairman's casting vote in favour

26104.	**EXTENSION OF MEETING**	
	IT WAS RESOLVED that Council continue to suspend Standing Order 3x. and extend the meeting to 10:00 hrs.	Proposed: MB Seconded: BC All in favour
26105.	**BANK SIGNATORIES**	
	IT WAS RESOLVED that Council approve all members of the Finance Committee, with the exception of the Chairman, to be bank signatories on all the bank accounts, including the current signatories.	Proposed: MB Seconded: CC All in favour Clerk
26106.	**ASSET REGISTER MINIMUM VALUE**	
	IT WAS RESOLVED that Council approve a £100 minimum value for all assets that appear on the asset register.	Proposed: DR Seconded: BC All in favour Clerk
26107.	**CALL FOR SITES**	
	The Clerk strongly recommended that Members review the information provided to them in regard to the Call for Sites due to the potential impact of development on Oakham. IT WAS RESOLVED that Councillors email their response to the Call for Sites to the Clerk for collation and submission to RCC. *The Acting Deputy Clerk left the meeting and the Clerk minuted the remainder of the meeting.*	Proposed: BC Seconded: MB All in favour All / Clerk
26108.	**EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**	
	IT WAS RESOLVED that, under Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following two agenda items on the grounds that publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature and commercial sensitivity of the business to be transacted, as per Standing Order 3d, and that all recording devices are turned off. Cllr Clark asked for a recorded vote.	Proposed: MB Seconded: BC 5 for – MB, SAW, BC, DR, JH 1 against - CC
26109.	**STAFFING**	
i.	**Staffing Issues**	
	IT WAS RESOLVED that Council note the update report from the Clerk on staffing issues. *Separate confidential minute.* IT WAS RESOLVED that Council approve the Clerk contracting an independent company for a grievance investigation panel up to a maximum cost of £1,000 + VAT.	Proposed: MB Seconded: SAW All in favour Proposed: DR Seconded: BC All in favour Clerk
ii.	**Confidential Staffing Questions Received from Members**	
	Confidential staffing questions received from a Member were withdrawn.	
26110.	**BANKING**	
	IT WAS RESOLVED that Council approve concern over a banking issue to be reported to the Monitoring Officer from Council as a whole.	Proposed: MB Seconded: BC 5 for, 1 against Clerk

The meeting closed at 9.52 pm.

Chairman ……………………………………………….……………….   Date: ………………………………