Further information about the Town Council, its responsibilities and its activities is available on the Town Council’s website: www.yeoviltown.com

The website includes agendas and minutes of meetings of the Town Council, its Committees and the Yeovil Crematorium and Cemetery Joint Committee, and useful contact details.
YEVOIL TOWN COUNCIL – 2014/15

Mike Lock – Mayor of Yeovil
Darren Shutler – Deputy Mayor of Yeovil

Martin Bailey
Kris Castle
J Vincent Chainey
Philip Chandler
John Clark (from 4 September 2014)
Tristan Cobb
Leah Cross (until 3 June 2014)
Clive Davis (until 30 May 2014)
Bridget Dollard
David Dollard
Tony Fife
Jon Gleeson
Dave Greene
Peter Gubbins
John Hann
Kaysar Hussain
Andy Kendall
Tony Lock
Sarah Lowery (from 17 July 2014)
Sophie Phillips (from 18 September 2014)
Wes Read
David Recardo
Manny Roper
Alan Smith
# Financial Accounts for Year Ending 31 March 2015

(Figures are exclusive of VAT)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INCOME</th>
<th>EXPENDITURE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Balance in hand as at 1 April 2014</strong></td>
<td>£ 598,297.93</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Precept 2014/15</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Government Support Grant</strong></td>
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<td>Milford Hall Expenditure</td>
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<td><strong>Capital Receipts/Expenditure</strong></td>
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<td><strong>VAT Accounts</strong></td>
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<td><strong>TOTALS</strong></td>
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<td>Less Expenditure</td>
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<td><strong>Closing Balance as at 31 March 2015</strong></td>
<td>£ 749,271.93</td>
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NB These figures represent the unadjusted income and expenditure for 2014/15 and do not include expenditure for which creditor provision has been made for services provided in 2014/15. Also excluded are the planned carry forward of items of expenditure for services due to be delivered in 2015/16. The adjusted figures will be included in the Council's Annual Accounts for 2014/15.
Yeovil Town Council – Achievements 2014/15

- The Council met on twelve occasions during the year.

- In May, we held our Annual Town Council meeting and appointed members to serve on the various Committees of the Town Council and the outside bodies on which the Council is represented. We also elected the Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen of these Committees.

- In June, we received a presentation from David Mills – Chairman of the Yeovil Town Team who gave a presentation about the partnership over the past year, and its plans for the future. David set out the work undertaken by each of the action groups that had been formed to help identify ways of securing improvements in three key areas – promotions and marketing, safety and security, and street scene - was circulated at the meeting. He also explained that as a result of the changed arrangements introduced two years ago, local businesses were now contributing a greater proportion of the funding towards the partnership. David also drew attention to the various events that the Town Team had organised over the past twelve months, and the initiatives that the partnership had identified to help develop a more vibrant and successful town centre.

- Paul Mears – Chief Executive of Yeovil District Hospital NHS Foundation Trust gave a presentation at our July meeting on the Trust’s achievements over the past year and its plans for the future. He drew attention to the successful launch of the Frail Older Person’s Assessment Service (FOPAS) which had helped to improve the effectiveness of hospital admissions, and to the development of an estates masterplan - which it was anticipated would improve car parking at and access to the Hospital and provide an opportunity for accommodating more clinical services. Paul also referred to the Trust’s six priorities for 2014/15 and the ongoing work of the Symphony Project across the local health community, which had resulted in the provision and delivery of more integrated and better co-ordinated health and care services.

- At the same meeting, we received a presentation from Inspector Tim Coombe of Avon and Somerset Police who outlined plans to reorganise the operation of the Police service in the Yeovil area. Tim explained that the new policing structure, which was planned to come into effect in later that month, would deliver improvements by introducing a single team approach to serve the public - and would help to achieve agreed savings. He added that the model would be rolled out across the Force area during 2015 and that as well as bringing existing teams together under a single manager, the Yeovil area would benefit from an increase in the overall number of Police Constables and Police Community Support Officers.

- Tim also referred to the cost of upgrading the existing custody suite at Yeovil Police Station, and indicated that alternative options - including the closure of the building and the provision of new custody facilities at another location outside the Town - were under consideration, which it was anticipated would result in the more efficient and speedier processing of prisoners. We expressed concern at the possibility of this approach having an adverse impact on Police operations in the town centre – particularly during busy periods. However, Tim indicated that the improved design of modern custody
facilities would result in officers spending less time processing prisoners and that additional resources could be deployed from other areas as necessary. Reference was also made to the limited consultation that had taken place with relevant stakeholders to date on this matter and the need for improved consultation to be undertaken when more information emerged about future options. Tim explained that he was unaware of how future consultation would be carried out but undertook to keep the Town Council informed.

- In September, John Evans – Principal of Yeovil College gave a presentation on the College’s achievements over the past year and its plans for the future. John drew attention to the level of students attending the College, and the diverse range of courses that were offered. Details of the way in which the College received its funding and its links with local employers and the local community were also set out. He also outlined the mission and values of the College and explained its strategic aims and referred to the main challenges facing the College, which included finance, its estate and enhancing its reputation.

- Later in September we held a special meeting to recognise the outstanding achievements of Yeovil-born Marlie Packer, who had represented her country at international level for a number of years and had played a key role in England’s victory in the previous month’s final of the 2014 Women’s Rugby World Cup Tournament held in Paris. The Council unanimously agreed to make Marlie an Honorary Freewoman of the Town of Yeovil as a person of distinction and in recognition of her outstanding achievements in the field of rugby union. She was presented with her award by the Mayor at a civic reception organised by the Town Council.

- Sam Best – Chief Executive Officer of the South Somerset Association for Voluntary and Community Action (SSVCA) gave a presentation to our October meeting on the Organisation’s achievements over the past year and its plans for the future. She outlined the aims and background of the Organisation and its current structure, and explained that the Association delivered three key services – Community Transport; Voluntary Sector Support and FurniCare. Plans to develop each of these services were outlined at the meeting along with details of their funding.

- Sam also drew attention to the help and ongoing support that had been given by the SSVCA to the establishment of the Somerset Emergency Volunteers (SEV) who had played a key role in responding to the effects of last winter’s flooding on the Somerset Levels. This had included training in the use of equipment, health and safety advice and adequate insurance arrangements being put in place. She also outlined the future plans for SEV, which would enable a speedy and effective response to be made during the emergency and non-emergency phases of a similar future event.

- In November, Sue Ripley – Chairperson of the Yeovil, Sherborne and District Branch of Somerset Area Cruse Bereavement Care gave a presentation on the Branch’s achievements over the past year and its plans for the future. She explained the aims and objectives of the Organisation and the area that the Branch served. Details of the local and national support structure that had been put in place by Cruse were also outlined along with a summary of the income and expenditure in Somerset. Reference was made to the
Organisation's future plans, which included the development of the existing service for children and young people. It was pointed out that the services offered by Cruse were free of charge and that trained bereavement officers usually supported clients in their own home.

- At our December meeting, we considered and provisionally adopted the recommendations of the Policy, Resources and Finance Committee on the setting of the 2015/16 precept, and agreed to defer final approval and adoption of the estimates to our February 2015 meeting - by which time we hoped that the nature and extent of any budget cuts, which were under discussion by the District and the County Councils that affected Yeovil Town could be reported and considered as part of the Town Council’s 2015/16 budget-setting process. This delay would also enable the impact of any further changes arising from the Government’s introduction of the Localising Support for Council Tax Scheme to be fully assessed.

- At our February meeting, we received a presentation from Amanda Johnson – Prince’s Trust Team Leader who talked about the work of the Trust in the Yeovil Town area over the past twelve months and its plans for the coming year. Amanda circulated details of the twelve-week programme, which she explained offered work experience, qualifications, practical skills, community projects and a residential week. She added that during this period students took part in a variety of activities that were designed to help them develop and improve their personal skills. The Council was informed that the Trust worked closely with local Job Centres to help identify potential applicants and that there was no charge levied on those who undertook the programme. Amanda indicated that the Holy Trinity Scout Hall in Lysander Road was used as a base for delivering the Yeovil programmes, and that she was keen to encourage local young people to join a programme that was planned for May 2015.

- At our February meeting, we gave further consideration to the setting of the 2015/16 budget, and we learned of the ongoing significant impact of the Government’s decision to include town and parish councils in the Council Tax base calculations that needed to be made as part of the Government’s decision to introduce Localising Support for Council Tax from April 2013. Having regard to the need to adopt a sustainable solution to a substantial change by the Government in the Town Council’s funding arrangements, we supported the recommendations of the Policy, Resources and Finance Committee set out elsewhere in this report, which resulted in no increase in the Town Council’s share of the household precept.

- At our March meeting, we received a presentation from Sue Norreys – Development Co-ordinator of Somerset Care gave a presentation on the provision of community care in the Yeovil area and the organisation’s approach to community engagement. She also referred to the Care Act 2014 and the anticipated impact that this new legislation would have on the delivery of services by care providers. Sue explained that Somerset Care was a not-for-profit healthcare provider, which operated a number of care homes providing residential and nursing care. She added that the organisation also delivered training and development services throughout the South West. She also drew attention to the role of the Care Quality Commission and outlined various ways by which individuals paid for care. She also explained the
planned changes to the funding cap that would be introduced by the Care Act 2014.

- In April, we considered proposed alterations to the Hospital Roundabout, which had been drawn up by Somerset County Council as part of the Yeovil Eastern Corridor package of works. This included a plan showing the suggested road layout and associated works. During the ensuing discussion, attention was drawn to the absence of a segregated left turn lane off Clarence Street onto Queensway (A30). It was felt that this would make it more difficult for traffic leaving the Town Centre to proceed west - particularly when the planned new exit road from the Tesco Store Car Park onto Clarence Street was installed. It was further suggested that the proposed destination road markings be reviewed to help visiting motorists select the correct lane. Reference was also made to the delays in the District Council installing the planned enhancement of CCTV next to the pedestrian underpasses at the northern end of Princes Street, which it was understood were related to the necessary completion of works associated with the Eastern Corridor initiative.

- Attention was also drawn to delays arising from the configuration of the traffic signals at the bottom of Reckleford, and the prioritisation of the existing junction with Market Street – which had already been agreed by the County Council and was awaiting the delivery of new signage - which it was felt exacerbated the queuing of traffic along this section of the A30 in both directions. Members also commented on the proposed removal of the bus lane on the northern arm of the Hospital Roundabout and the adverse impact that this would have on public transport wishing to access the Town Centre.

- In April, we welcomed Nancy Cheeseman and Terry Mathews of the Yeovil Visually Impaired Bowls Club who had represented England at the International Bowls for the Disabled World Championships, which had recently taken place in New Zealand. Nancy and Terry had each won a silver medal in their respective Singles competitions, and another member of the Club - Ron Homer, who was unable to be present at the meeting, had won gold in the Men’s Singles. The Council congratulated all of them on their success, and those present received Certificates of Recognition to mark their outstanding achievements.

- The Town Council also took the opportunity to thank all of those Members who were not seeking re-election, for their past help, advice, guidance and support, and a number of presentations were made in recognition of the significant contribution that each of the following Members of the Town Council had made during their periods of office:

  - **Tony Fife**: Councillor and former Mayor - 33 years’ service
  - **Bridget Dollard**: Councillor and former Mayor – 28 years’ service
  - **David Dollard**: Councillor and former Deputy Mayor - 28 years’ service
  - **J Vincent Chainey**: Councillor – 20 years’ service
  - **Dave Greene**: Councillor – 18 years’ service
  - **John Hann**: Councillor – 16 years’ service

  *Mike Lock, Chairman of Yeovil Town Council*

  *19 May 2015*
The Committee met on seven occasions during the year.

All in all we considered 14 grant applications and made awards totalling £9,239 to 11 local organisations. All of these organisations are based in Yeovil and/or benefit the inhabitants of the Town. These awards included £1,000 to St Michael’s Scout and Guide Headquarters to help meet the cost of a new boiler, £400 towards the operating costs of the Yeovil Child Contact Centre, £75 towards exercise equipment for the Multiple Sclerosis Therapy Centre (Wessex) and £500 to the Yeovil Visually Impaired Bowls Club - to help support the costs of those Members of the Club who had been selected to represent England at this year’s International Bowls for the Disabled (IBD) World Championships in New Zealand.

A number of other applications for ongoing financial assistance are under consideration pending the outcome of discussions that are taking place to draw up a Service Level Agreement (SLA) with the organisations involved.

To help the Committee make more informed decisions about grant applications, we agreed last year that additional information needed to be provided by all future applicants and we introduced a requirement for organisations seeking ongoing support towards the same project/purpose to enter into an SLA with the Town Council. This new approach improves transparency and accountability by giving the Council more influence on how any further grant would be used and a greater say in the way the organisation delivers its services with the Town Council’s help.

In line with this new approach, we also allocated £2,000 to the South Somerset Citizens Advice Bureau towards its running costs after drawing up a SLA with the Organisation. Under this agreement, no reduction will be made in the present level of drop in and appointment sessions in Yeovil Town without prior consultation with the Town Council and, in the interests of sustainability and sharing the costs of delivering services, the Organisation has agreed to provide further information about the steps it has taken to encourage more town and parish councils to contribute towards its operation – including those in whose areas drop in sessions are currently delivered.

Similarly, we allocated £1,000 to Somerset Area Cruse Bereavement Care towards its running costs after drawing up a SLA with that Organisation. In line with this agreement, the Organisation provided details of the proportion of their running costs that is spent delivering services in Yeovil Town and ways by which the Organisation promotes awareness of their services in the Town and their plans for raising awareness in the future.

A grant of £900 was awarded to the Yeovil Olympiads Athletics Club towards its Annual Yeovil Games after drawing up a SLA which, given the area of benefit, required the Organisation to also apply in future to other local authorities and funding organisations in and around the Yeovil Town area for grant assistance towards this annual event. Also included in the agreement was the need for reference to be to the Town Council’s contribution in this year’s programme for the event.
£1,000 was also awarded to the Octagon Theatre towards the running costs of its Annual Theatre Summer School after drawing up a SLA which required the applicant to continue actively encouraging young people in Yeovil to participate in the initiative.

In September, we learned that the Internal Auditor had issued the Town Council with a signed Annual Return for the financial year 2013/14, which confirmed that all of the control objectives had been achieved throughout the year to a standard adequate to meet the needs of the Town Council.

We also learned at our September meeting of the successful completion of the 2013/14 External Audit of our Annual Return. The report confirmed that the information contained in the annual return was in accordance with the Audit Commission’s requirements, and that no matters had come to their attention giving cause for concern that relevant legislation and regulatory requirements had not been met.

In November we began the process of considering the Council's 2014/15 Revenue Budget. To help co-ordinate matters, we once again set up a Finance Working Group, which was given the task of establishing a fair and effective approach to the budget-setting process. The Working Group came up with a number of recommendations that we adopted and this helped to ensure that the budget-setting process was carried out in an effective and sustainable manner.

This included a proposal to recharge allotment tenants the actual cost of water mains provision on a site-by-site basis. The Working Group noted that the total cost of water mains provision in 2013/14 was just under £7,000, which was 66% above the allocated budget. The Group felt that the current arrangements whereby these charges were paid direct by the Town Council were inequitable and unsustainable, and instead proposed a new approach under which the annual water bills for each site would be divided by the number of plotholders with those having smaller plots paying 50% of the charge to tenants of larger plots. It was noted that taking this new approach would help to keep this year's increase in allotment rents to 1p per square metre – which equates to an extra £1.43 per year (or 3p per week) for the average plot.

This view was shared by the Grounds and General Maintenance Committee and the Policy, Resources and Finance Committee both of whom agreed to support the proposals, which achieved a more equitable balance between the cost of allotments to individual tenants and to local Council Tax payers by reducing the level of subsidy from 50% to 40%. Following its adoption by the Town Council, all tenants have been made aware of the new arrangements and the reasons for their introduction, and given practical advice on how they can harvest and recycle rainwater and reduce the use of mains water on allotment sites.

In November, we also considered various options for delivering youth services across the Town over the remainder of 2014/15 and the next three years using a combination of the transitional grant received from Somerset
County Council and proposed contributions from each of the three partner authorities’ precepts. This followed on from the successful pilot projects that had been running in Yeovil since October 2013. Mindful of this success and the ongoing demand for these services – which now include weekly sessions delivered from four venues in the Yeovil area – we agreed to support the recommendations of the Joint Steering Group and have allocated funding to enable this key service to continue. We were pleased that the other two funding partners – Brympton Parish Council and Yeovil Without Parish Council – have also agreed to their proposed contributions over the remainder of 2014/15 and the following three years.

- During the budget-setting process, we received representations from both the District Council and the County Council regarding the possibility of reductions being made in the future provision of various services by those Authorities in Yeovil Town. This followed the announcement by Central Government of the revenue support grant settlements for all principal authorities. Mindful of the need to clarify matters, we recommended that the precept be provisionally adopted and fixed at the February meeting of the Town Council.

- At our November meeting, we considered various bids for funding from the New Initiatives budget having regard to the changes in procedure that were adopted last year. We agreed to support a bid for up to £3,000 to provide a large interactive screen for use by the public in our Reception area, and to carry forward the previously earmarked allocation of £10,000 towards the cost of creating an outdoor gym at Milford Park, which is under investigation.

- At our January meeting, we further considered the budget, having been advised that this could again be set at the February meeting of the Town Council. By this time, written confirmation had been received of the Government’s ongoing intention to include town and parish councils in the Council Tax base calculations that needed to be undertaken by all district councils (as billing authorities) as part of the Government’s decision to introduce Localising Support for Council Tax from April 2013.

- We learned that the consequence of these new arrangements, over which we have no control, was that the Town Council’s share of the council tax precept had effectively decreased by £122,324. Although South Somerset District Council had agreed to allocate £94,180 of government support grant to the Town Council for 2015/16, the net result of this change – which amounted to a £25,235 (21.1%) reduction in the previous year’s grant of £119,415 - was an overall reduction of £28,144 in the net income of the Town Council.

- After giving much consideration to the options available and to make sure that we put in place a sustainable balanced budget, we agreed to no increase in the Town Council’s share of the Council Tax for 2015/16. By keeping the existing annual Band D charge at £95.57 this equated to no change in the current charge of £1.84 per week for the average household.

- We also agreed at our January meeting to adopt a policy on recording council meetings following a change in legislation. The approach that we agreed strikes a balance between the need for openness and transparency and the need to recognise and protect the rights of individuals to come along and
participate in our meetings, which we have allowed and encouraged for many years.

- In January, we also agreed to apply for free Foundation level accreditation under the new Local Council Award Scheme. As a Quality Town Council, we have always supported this national initiative and will be considering the approach that we wish to take under the new Scheme when further details are submitted.

- At our March meeting, we considered a further bid for funding from the New Initiatives budget having regard to the changes in procedure that were adopted last year. We agreed not to support a bid for funding towards a Town Centre buggy given the practical problems that it was felt would be encountered in safely operating the proposed vehicle in the Town Centre, and the significant costs of providing a long-term service.

- In March we adopted a risk management strategy for the forthcoming year, which pulls together into one document many of the contingency plans, procedures and arrangements that the Town Council has adopted and demonstrates that the Council has adequate corporate governance arrangements in place. This document is reviewed on an annual basis, and helps to satisfy the External Auditor that the Town Council is a responsible, accountable and well-managed local authority.

- Throughout the year, the Committee has monitored the Council's revenue expenditure - to ensure compliance with the Council's adopted financial control policy, Standing Orders and Financial Regulations. The Committee has also monitored and reviewed the Capital Fund following regular reports about the progress of anticipated capital receipts and ongoing capital schemes. These include the planned disposal of the redundant former Goldcroft Allotment Site, the proceeds from which will be used for the benefit of the people of Yeovil.

- Fourteen years ago the Government extended Best Value to larger Town and Parish Councils and we responded by drawing up a list of performance indicators against which we measure our achievements each year. Details of these indicators - together with our adopted vision and values - are set out in an annual newsletter, which we circulate to all households in the Town.

- This year, we have achieved the vast majority of the targets we had set ourselves and the full results will be set out in our next newsletter, which will be distributed later this year. These included answering telephone calls in an average of ten seconds and ensuring that all public areas in our buildings are accessible to people with a disability. This clearly demonstrates the effectiveness and efficiency of our staff - who are a credit to the Council - and our approach to equality. Further targets will be set for the forthcoming year and these will ensure that the way we work and deliver our services are in line with the Government’s objective of continuous improvement.

Tony Lock, Chairman of the Policy, Resources and Finance Committee

19 May 2015
The Town Council's Grounds and General Maintenance Committee:

- Manages all of Yeovil's allotment sites
- Manages a wide range of open spaces and amenity areas across the town
- Manages other important recreational and leisure facilities, including play areas
- Makes arrangements for the Best Kept Allotments Competition

**Play Areas**

- The Committee manages 16 play areas across Yeovil and receives regular reports about the inspection and maintenance of the play areas managed by the Town Council.

- The improvement of the Summerhouse View Play Area was started in February and is nearing completion. The works included the replacement if the retaining wall and the peripheral fence which will help to increase the area of play available. Several members of Yeovil Youth Council repainted all of the existing equipment last summer to smarten the apparatus and prolong its life.

- At the meeting on 9 March the Committee was informed that a proposed contribution of £10,000 from the Town Council had been identified which will go towards the next project on the rolling programme of play area upgrades. The next project identified is the improvement and upgrade of the Kingston View Play Area. Confirmation has been received that South Somerset District Council will make a matching contribution towards the project, and a Steering Group will be formed in the new Financial Year where a project plan will be discussed.

**Youth Facilities**

- The free Open Access Holiday Activities Programme for young people had been highly successful – this was made possible by funding from Yeovil Town Council, South Somerset District Council and the Yarlington Housing Group. The overriding aim has been to provide stimulating things to do and places to go for young people during the school holiday periods. This year the Activities included healthy cooking, circus skills, street soccer, WW1 Awareness Activities, den building and campfire cooking, day trips to Weymouth, and a roller skating disco. The numbers of young people attending the activities has continued to rise, and the feedback has been very positive. The addition of the service in the Yew Tree Park Area of Yeovil has meant that the activities are accessible to, and enjoyed by even more young people.

**Allotments**

- The Council's pro-active and flexible approach to allotment management has helped achieve a thriving allotment community, and has exceeded the Best Value target for allotment lettings across the Town's 11 allotment sites.
To assist the Committee in assuring that these high standards are maintained, each allotment site has a Tenants’ Representative. These representatives meet regularly throughout the year to discuss allotment issues which have been raised by their fellow tenants and forwarded to the Committee for their consideration.

It is pleasing that the letting rate of individual available allotment plots has been 94% which is well above the set target of 80%.

The rolling programme of refurbishment of the water supply to allotments continued with the pooling of budget allocation over two years to enable an extensive water refurbishment scheme to take place at Larkhill allotment site.

The Committee has continued to fund skips for use at individual allotment sites under the Non-Corporate Allotment Maintenance Budget.

Chickens continue to be kept on one of the allotment sites through the most clement months.

The judging for the Best Kept Allotments’ Competition took place in both summer and winter. The judges have all agreed that the general standard of the allotment sites continues to improve and prizes were awarded at the annual Flower and Gardeners’ Market in September.

The introduction of a mains water charge was supported by the Committee to re-charge the cost of mains water used by tenants on a site by site basis. This will mean that tenants will be paying for the water they have actually used, whilst encouraging more environmentally friendly ways of collecting and recycling rainwater thereby reducing the dependency on mains water. This approach is in line with the Council’s values of raising awareness of environmental issues, improving the quality of the environment and encouraging an environmentally friendly ethos.

The income raised from allotment rents helps to meet the costs of maintaining and improving the Town’s 11 allotment sites. In 2014, the Committee agreed to support a rent increase of 1p per square metre from the beginning of December 2015, which will result in an effective increase of £1.43 per annum or 3p per week in the rent of an average plot. Along with the new system of recharging mains water usage, this budgeted income now equates to 40% of the overall costs of maintaining and improving allotments across the Town and represents a fairer and more sustainable approach to their future provision.

**Greenspace Areas**

The Committee has continued to fund the maintenance of an extensive number of areas of amenity and open spaces in the Town – including Yeovil Country Park. This ensures that local communities have ongoing access to public areas of greenspace close to where they live. Organised monitoring and review arrangements have taken place to
identify issues affecting open spaces across the town, and the outcomes have been reported to the Committee on a regular basis.

- In November, the Committee considered a report and received a presentation by the Countryside Ranger (SSDC) in respect of Yeovil Country Park. The Park has retained its Green Flag award and as it scores so highly it now only has to be judged every other year. The New Ninesprings Café, Education and Information Centre, which the Town Council helped to fund, opened its doors in October and has proven to be an invaluable resource, both in terms of an excellent facility for communication and marketing, and a lovely meeting point for social and educational purposes.

- Plans for an outdoor gym initiative were considered by the Committee in September. The Community Health and Well-Being Project Manager (SSDC) proposed that Milford Park be identified as a pilot site to develop and install an outdoor gym together with a circular walk/running track around the Park for all members of the public to use during the day and evening. As part of the on-going health inequalities project running in Yeovil, the initiative is being implemented in stages, the first stage being the installation of a circular pathway to help improve access and provide a running route. £10,000 has been earmarked (in principle) by the Town Council from the New Initiatives budget towards the cost of Outdoor Green Gym equipment which will be installed along the route in the future.

- The Committee continued to work with Streetscene services to monitor the provision and use of dog waste bins allocated throughout Yeovil Town, responding as appropriate to suggestions from the community regarding prevention of fouling and placement of bins.

*David Dollard, Chairman of the Grounds and General Maintenance Committee
19 May 2015*
The Buildings and Civic Matters Committee’s remit includes:

- Management of Monmouth and Milford Community Halls
- Management, maintenance and repair of the Town House
- Management of Peter Street and Petters Way Public Toilets
- Provision, siting and maintenance of litter bins
- Sponsorship of theatrical, educational and artistic ventures
- Maintenance of War Memorials
- Maintenance of the Millennium Clock
- Street Naming and House Numbering
- Traffic Regulation Orders
- Community Safety

- The Committee met on six occasions during the year.

- The Committee was pleased to welcome Sgt Richard Barnett and PC Amanda Thomas. PC Thomas is the Beat Manager for the town centre working as part of the ‘One Team’, and Sgt Barnett manages the outer part of Yeovil. They have kept the Committee updated with Yeovil Policing, and discussed current issues when in attendance.

- The 30th Anniversary of the Town Twinning between Yeovil and Herblay in France took place on 13 October 2014. A tree planting ceremony to commemorate the occasion took place in December with a tree being planted in the Yeovil Country Park on Penn Hill between Brunswick Street and the Octagon.

- The Committee wished to commemorate the centenary of the start of the First World War in 2014 by restoring the Preston Plucknett War Memorial on the Preston Road. A grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund was sought and obtained, and the restoration works (including the painting of the original inscription), were carried out in July 2014. As part of the project, children from the local Preston Primary School carried out the new planting and went on a visit to the ‘Somerset Remembers’ exhibition at the Museum of Somerset in Taunton. Members of the Yeovil Youth Council also did some research into the men whose names are on the Memorial. A rededication and memorial service was held on 3 August 2014 led by the Rev Tony Perris of St James’ Church and the Rev Jim Pearce, together with contributions from Yeovil Youth Councillors. Many local people attended as well as the Mayor and community groups.

- In 2014 English Heritage carried out a strategic assessment of war memorials as part of their First World War Commemoration Project. As a result the Preston Plucknett War Memorial has been added to the list of ‘Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest’ and therefore the memorial is now listed at Grade II.

- Both the Milford Community Hall and the Monmouth Hall facilities continue to provide a variety of valuable services to those living in the local areas, including playgroups, a youth club, and the community library.
Several other regular users have also been established for both the Milford and Monmouth Halls, for example AGE UK, Weight Watchers and an art club. In November 2014 the Committee considered the charges for the hire of the Milford and Monmouth Community Halls, as well as the Council Chamber at the Town House. It was agreed that the prices should rise broadly in line with inflation with effect from 1 April 2015.

The small charge introduced in April 2014 for the use of the meeting facilities at the Town Council, which are primarily provided for local authority meetings, does not appear to have deterred a number of outside organisations using the facilities during the course of the year, and it is often booked when not in use by the Town Council. The income raised ensures that the additional costs of the facilities being used by outside organisations are met.

A sponsorship cheque for £3,000 was presented to Yeovil Town Band to help meet the Band’s running costs. In return the Band plays at various civic events throughout the year which the public are welcome to attend, including the Town Criers’ Competition, the Annual Civic Service, the September Flower and Gardeners’ Market and Remembrance Sunday. The Chair sent a letter on behalf of the Committee to the Band to congratulate them in their success in the regional finals, and wish them luck in the National Band Championship in which they are competing in September 2015.

The Transport Sub-Committee met in March 2015 to consider the siting of bus shelters in Yeovil. It was resolved to undertake further detailed investigations into the three of the proposed locations in the town, and support the carry forward of the budget to allow their installation during the current financial year.

The Committee continues to provide financial support for the development of sport and healthy lifestyles in Yeovil. This work includes sports such as swimming, athletics, hockey, tennis, gymnastics and badminton, as well as health walks and flexercise (chair based physical activity sessions), and healthy workplaces in key local organisations such as Pittards, Screwfix and AgustaWestland. In August 2014 the first Yeovil Recreation Centre family day was held and 1,500 people attended. The event was an opportunity to increase awareness of the facilities on offer at the Centre.

Both the Peter Street and Petters Way Public Toilets are now assessed by the British Toilet Association. In past years the Town Council has achieved the highest grade for the Peter Street Public Toilets following unannounced inspections, and recently it has been confirmed that a gold award has been achieved for both the Peter Street and Petters Way Public Toilets for this year. This meets the target set by the Committee.

Speed indicator device results for West Coker Road continue to be received and considered by the Committee. Following the Committee’s disappointment at the proposal not to proceed with the installation of pedestrian refuges along this road, the Highway Authority looked at other options. It has now been agreed that a puffin crossing will be installed (a push button crossing with traffic lights), together with
amendments to the kerb line; central hatching; changes to the street lighting; and, the provision of high friction surfacing. These measures should aid pedestrians and encourage drivers to slow down. The works are currently underway.

- The Committee continue to support residents in dealing with traffic-related issues that they face. For instance, residents in Glenthorne Avenue raised concerns regarding vehicles contravening parking restrictions outside the local school. The matter and how best to deal with it was discussed with the Police Officers attending the Committee meeting, and support was given in pursuing the relevant Road Traffic Order which is now in the public consultation process. Residents were also concerned about speeding vehicles along Greenhill Road and Sunningdale Road, and as a consequence a Mobile Radar Speed check was carried out, the results of which are awaited. More recently in Willow Road residents have been concerned about inconsiderate and long-stay parking in the road. The Committee has made representations to Somerset County Council in support of a Road Traffic Order in Willow Road to restrict parking.

- Several locations around the town, including the Preston Road, Lysander Road and Goldcroft, have been included in the Speed Indicator Device programme during the year. All the readings are reported to the Committee.

- Throughout the year the Committee has received monitoring reports about the use of the Town Centre CCTV System, which has helped to measure its effectiveness. The Town Council contributes £31,220 per year towards the operation of the system, and with extra finance from the Police and Crime Commissioner, improvements have been made to the CCTV recording and playback facility to enhance the quality of the footage for identification and evidence purposes. The Police now have direct access from Yeovil Police Station at all times to these recordings.

- In the light of a number of incidents in the Town’s underpasses, the Town Council has agreed to support the enhancement of the CCTV coverage to cover two of the pedestrian underpasses serving the Hospital Roundabout and the immediate surrounding areas by providing financial support towards the costs of the provision and installation of the cameras.

- During the conversion of the upper floors of the Borough Arcade, the thoroughfare from the High Street to the rear of the Borough Arcade had been boarded up preventing public access. Following discussion with the landlord of the ground floor premises, the partition has been removed, however as the public have enjoyed uninterrupted access for over twenty years the Committee has made representations to Somerset County Council to request that this private land is included on the ‘definitive map’ as an established right of way thereby securing public access on a permanent basis.

Andy Kendall, Chairman of the Buildings and Civic Matters Committee

19 May 2015
The Committee met 22 times in the last year and considered a total of 184 planning applications. Lists of planning decisions made by the Local Planning Authority have also been reported to the Committee, as well as the outcome of planning appeals.

Planning

- The Premier Inn and Beefeater Restaurant development has been under construction during the course of the year, and has recently been completed. The planning application (12/01943/FUL) was recommended for approval by the Committee in 2012, and the finished development has made a positive contribution to the regeneration area at the end of Middle Street, providing an additional 80 hotel bedrooms in the town centre.

- Another significant and recent development in the town centre is the extension and re-design of retail units at the western end of The Quedam Centre close to where it meets Silver Street. The proposal (14/02205/FUL), considered and supported by the Committee in June 2014, involves the amalgamation and extension of two existing shops to create a single large retail unit over two floors with an overtly modern design. The new contemporary design is intended to create an interesting and enticing gateway into the shopping centre. The development is under construction and the new shop is due to open in the summer of 2015.

- Various planning applications for improvements to educational facilities in the Town have been considered and supported by the Committee during the year, not least the new Construction Skills Centre at Yeovil College (14/02753/FUL). The building, which is now complete, provides about 1,000 square metre of work space to enable students to learn skills such as plumbing, electrics and bricklaying, in a spacious, modern environment. Also of note have been applications for extensions and improvements at numerous schools including Huish Primary School, Fiveways School, St Michael's Academy, Pen Mill Infant School, and Bucklers Mead Academy.

- Proposals concerned with the conversion and/or redevelopment of public houses in the Town can be controversial. However, in August 2014 the Committee welcomed proposals to convert the disused Milford Inn into flats, and the redevelopment of the adjoining skittle alley for three residential units for vulnerable people to stay independent within their own homes (14/03581/FUL & 14/05286/S73). The development has not started to date. However, an application for the demolition of the Green Dragon public house on St Michael's Avenue (15/00228/FUL) was received in February 2015. The proposals involved the redevelopment of the site for a convenience store. The Committee recommended refusal of the application reflecting the views of the residents in that the loss of the Green Dragon represented a major loss of a community asset, and the volume of traffic would conflict with pedestrians. The Local Planning Authority however took a different view and granted planning permission for the proposal in April 2015.

- Applications for advertisement consent are referred to the Committee. Of note during the year were the proposals for the signage for the new...
Beefeater restaurant and Premier Inn (14/01378/ADV), where comments regarding the impact of the signage on the character of the area, and whether they prejudice public safety were considered.

- The Committee also considers and comments upon applications within adjacent parishes which potentially have an impact on Yeovil Town. Of significance, two planning applications submitted during the year were for the two urban extensions to Yeovil which lie within Mudford Parish (14/02554/OUT) and East Coker Parish (15/01000/OUT) and were brought to the Committee for comment. In both cases concerns were raised in regard to the provision of community facilities in the Town as a whole.

- Numerous applications for works to trees protected by Tree Preservation Orders have been considered by the Committee during the year. Proposals to retain, replace and plant additional trees are supported where development plans impact on the local area. Continuing support has also been given to the protection and enhancement of the Conservation Areas and Listed Buildings in Yeovil.

- To ensure a continued professional Planning Application service is maintained we have worked closely with the District Council throughout the year. Officers of the Town and District Councils reassess the process on an ongoing basis and ensure that the procedures continue to be effective and in line with the guidelines set out by the Audit Commission. We have continued to make it clear in our agendas, and at the beginning of each Planning and Licensing Committee meeting, that the Town Council is a consultee in the planning application process and that the District Council is the Local Planning Authority which takes the final decision. Partnership working enables achievement of the designated eight-week turn around of planning applications and we continue to liaise regularly with the District Council to provide an excellent, efficient, and democratic planning and development management service.

**Licensing**

- The Town Council continues to exercise delegated authority in respect of taxi and private hire licensing, street trading, charitable collections and busking. An effective, efficient and convenient licensing service is therefore provided in Yeovil for the benefit of the public and licence holders. We also work closely with the Public Fundraising Regulatory Association (PFRA) to ensure that the agreed code of conduct for face-to-face fundraisers (street canvassers) is enforced in Yeovil Town Centre, and publicise the planned collection dates on our website. This code controls the number and location of collections that may take place each month and provides a rapid complaints procedure.

- During the last municipal year we considered 2 occasional Street Trading Consents and granted 15 buskers/street entertainer permits.

- We also:
  - renewed 13 Taxi Drivers licences
  - renewed 18 Taxi Vehicle licences
  - renewed 1 Private Hire Vehicle
processed 95 street trading consents
- granted permission to charitable collectors in the Town Centre for 53 occasions
- granted permission to charitable collectors from house to house collectors for 8 occasions

- All new Private Hire and Taxi Driver applicants are required to pass a Driving Standards Agency test demonstrating the commitment to ensure that licensed vehicles are driven safely and responsibly and that their drivers are trained to assist persons with a disability who are using their vehicles. This is in addition to the regular medical and DBS checks, and the newly introduced knowledge test, to ensure that Taxi and Private Hire Drivers are fit to drive and protect public safety.

- Ongoing checks are also made on Taxi and Private Hire Vehicles to ensure that they comply with the conditions of their licence.

- A set of minimum design standards was adopted in 2005 in consultation with street traders to maintain safety and integration into the street scene, complementing the existing environment and ensuring consistency. These measures – which are enforced by the Town Council - have added to the overall effect of the Yeovil Vision initiative, particularly in light of the environmental improvements in Middle Street and Princes Street.

- Town Council Officers carry out periodic checks on Street Trading units - to ensure compliance with the general conditions relating to their use. The District Council’s Environmental Health Officer also carries out regular checks to inspect traders selling food items, to ensure satisfactory standards of hygiene.

- Checks are also made on pedlars who, under current legislation, are permitted to trade in public areas provided that they hold a certificate granted by the Police.

- Checks are regularly made on new charities that apply for a charitable collector’s permit, to ensure that these charities are legitimate and meet the adopted eligibility criteria, and enforcement action taken against any charity which attempts to collect without a permit.

- The Committee waived the fees – in consideration of a donation to the Mayor’s Charity – for the attendance of street traders during the evening of the annual Christmas Shopping launch and switch on of the Christmas lights in November.

- Once again, it is pleasing to note that our Best Value performance targets had been exceeded during the year: with 100% of all hackney carriage/private hire vehicle applications being processed in good time and/or before expiry, and 100% of planning applications being considered by Committee within 5 working days of receipt.

**Darren Shutler, Chairman of the Planning and Licensing Committee**

19 May 2015
The Promotions and Activities Committee oversees events and activities in the Town, many in partnership with other authorities and stakeholders including Yeovil in Bloom and Yeovil Town Team. The Committee met six times over the past year and considered and initiated a number of matters.

**Yeovil in Bloom**

- We are very proud this year to have achieved a Gold award in the RHS South West in Bloom competition. This is the sixth time Yeovil has been awarded gold since 2005. In addition, Neighbourhood Awards were made to eleven groups of residents and local community projects for the efforts that they made to brighten up their areas. These awards are part of the Government’s ‘Cleaner, Safer, Greener Communities’ Campaign. This continued success is due to the hard working team as well as the excellent efforts of the community. Credit is due to all the entrants who provided spectacular displays to impress the judges and enhance the town, and congratulations are extended to Yeovil Country Park, St Marks Community Allotments and Milford Allotments who received Silver Gilt, Gold and Gold respectively in the new “Parks and Open Spaces” category.

- An important part of the ‘In Bloom’ project, the Yeovil Gardening competition, along with the Yeovil Flower and Gardeners’ Market forms part of the portfolio of work assessed in the South West in Bloom Competition each year. The South West in Bloom judges take into account all aspects of the Town including private property, community initiatives, campaigns for awareness of the environment, businesses and recycling. Our thanks to all those who have contributed to the successes over the last few years, thank you to all those who contributed again to the Yeovil Flower and Gardeners’ Market and congratulations to the winners of the competitions.

- Throughout the year we received various reports and updates from the Yeovil in Bloom Flower and Gardeners’ Market Steering Group, which continues to work hard to promote the Town and brighten up the area with beautiful flowerbed displays, sponsored roundabouts, topiary features, hanging baskets and tubs, as well as arranging the Yeovil Flower and Gardeners’ Market which is now a highlight of the calendar.

- A very successful ‘Bulb Giveaway’ took place in St. Johns Churchyard and donations of bulbs were made to schools and community groups. This is now becoming an annual event with the next bulbs being prepared for recycling to members of the public on 2 June. The second “Yarn Bombing” event will also take place in St Johns Churchyard that day which will help to generate community involvement and raise awareness of the Yeovil in Bloom initiative. For more details visit Yeovil in Bloom’s Facebook page.

- Following completion of a survey on the Yeovil in Bloom displays, we once again exceeded our Best Value target of 80% and achieved a highly commendable satisfaction rate of 97%.
Various sites throughout the Town were given a splash of colour using an annual meadow flower seed mix which included a poppy mix as a mark of respect to those who gave their lives in the First World War. This was very well received by the public and the annual seed mix is planned to be repeated in the forthcoming growing season.

Events

- The 14th annual Town Criers’ Competition was staged in April 2014, with entries from all over the country testing their vocal chords on the Citizens of Yeovil. Shoppers were entertained by a parade through the Town with Cries taking place throughout the day at The Entertainments Area. The 15th competition has just taken place. Each entrant was given a commemorative souvenir trolley coin depicting the Yeovil Town Council crest.

- With support and funding from The Gardens Group, the eighth annual Yeovil Flower and Gardeners’ Market took place in September. The event was a success and arrangements are continuing for another in 2015. The market was initially introduced to enhance the presentations for the Yeovil in Bloom Gardening competition and from 2008 also incorporated the Best Kept Allotments Awards. The Mayor was pleased to have the opportunity to present prizes to the winners of both competitions, and also gave recognition to the entrants of the South West in Bloom ‘It’s Your Neighbourhood’ competition. Yeovil Town Band played in the morning to shoppers perusing the stalls and various performers taking part in “Buskfest” kept the visitors entertained in the afternoon. The monthly Farmers’ Market and Vintage Fair took place on the same day, and also this year we were pleased to include a performance by “Bugfest”. The presenters of “Bugfest” were available all day to provide opportunities to ask questions, get up close and even handle some of the creatures – provide an exciting opportunity and great learning experience.

- The Committee procured a new set of Christmas lights in 2013, which were again installed over the festive period – providing a welcome sight in the dark winter months and creating a cheery atmosphere for shoppers. Donations towards the cost of last year’s display included £2,000 from SSDC, £350 from Yeovil Without Parish Council and £500 from the Yeovil Chamber of Trade and Commerce. We achieved a customer satisfaction rate of 87%, which was above the set target of 80%.

- The annual Christmas Lights Competition was held in December and once again the judges were given the difficult task of deciding the winners out of the outstanding entries. This year Brympton Parish Council, along with Yeovil Without Parish Council agreed to join in with the competition which meant that even more residents were eligible to enter. The Committee was pleased to join in the festive spirit and thank the people of Yeovil who contribute to the festivities by providing the Town with colourful displays, and the worthy winner with a commemorate cup and a voucher for a new
set of outdoor lights (made possible by The Gardens Group). One of the
runners-up was also awarded a free meal for two and a bottle of wine
courtesy of The Arrow Public House, and both runners-up were presented
with a cheque for £25 courtesy of Yeovil Without Parish Council. We
continue to look at ways of developing and expanding the competition in
future years.

- The Town Council supports Town Centre walking tours focussed on the
  blue plaques in and around the Town Centre, which have been erected by
  the Town Council on a number of buildings of historic interest.

- Preparations are underway for a Freedom of the Town Parade to take
  place on 3 June this year in recognition of the 70th anniversary of the end of
  the Second World War. The Town Council is planning for the event in
  association with representatives of RNAS Yeovilton who kindly offered to
  mark this historic occasion by arranging for troops from the airbase to
  exercise their right to march through the Town led by the Band of the Royal
  Marines on a suitable date between the two key anniversaries - VE Day on
  8 May and VJ Day on 15 August.

New Initiatives

- We continue to play an active role in the Yeovil Town Team. The Town
  Team is a group of local businesses and other stakeholders in Yeovil -
  including the Town Council - which meets regularly to consider ways of
  promoting and jointly funding new ideas and initiatives that will benefit the
  Town.

- The new museum initiative in the reception area of the Town House
  continues to be changed periodically to provide the opportunity for artefacts
  from the Community Heritage Access Centre to be more publicly
  accessible. The current exhibition is a display of artefacts relevant to the
  First World War, including 2 medals, a badge worn by women working in
  the Munitions factory (“On War Service”) and a letter from Buckingham
  palace as the King welcomes a soldier home to the “old Country”. The
  information provides an insight into the impact on the War had on Yeovil
  and is a fitting tribute to commemorate the centenary of its welcome end.

- The Committee sponsored a new trophy for one of the categories in the
  Yeovil Children’s Carnival, which took place in August.

- The Committee investigated the cost of the installation of a water slide in
  the Town Centre for a day, similar to events which have taken place in
  many towns and cities around the world following the first installation by
  Jerram Artwork in Bristol. Unfortunately, due to developments in the
  manufacture of the slide, the initiative has become cost prohibitive. In
  February this year the RNLI launched a campaign for people to enter a
  lottery by text for a chance to slide down the RNLI’s Slipway Slide 2015,
  with events taking place in three UK cities. It was therefore agreed that
due to the extensive costs of purchasing a slide inner for a one off event,
the Committee would encourage a charity water slide event to come to the town and facilitate its organisation.

- The Committee also investigated the cost and feasibility of operating an electric buggy in the Town Centre which could carry passengers and their luggage on a set route around the Town. The route included sections of highway, so amongst other specifications, the vehicle needed to be road legal. Costings for a three-month pilot project with an appropriate buggy were presented. However, in view of the practical problems which it was felt would be encountered in safely operating the proposed buggy in the Town Centre and the significant costs of providing a long-term service, the pilot project was not pursued.

- The Town Council supported the Yeovil Visually Impaired Bowls Club in their planned trip to New Zealand to compete in the 2015 International Bowls for the Disabled World Championships. The Championships, held every four years, are the pinnacle event for people with a physical disability from around the world. They were commended on their return as the Yeovil representatives on the England team were all successful in securing medals, bringing home two silver and one gold medal. The Town Council awarded the players a Certificate of Recognition to mark their outstanding achievements.

- We have also been kept informed of work being undertaken as part of an ongoing Town Centre Audit - to make sure that existing street furniture and fixtures are being maintained in good order. We expressed our support of the work being carried out and we are considering possible ways of contributing towards future spending.

**Town Guide**

- The new Town Guide was published and launched with 10,000 copies of the Guide being printed and distributed at no cost to the Town Council. The development of the Yeovil Town app – for use on smartphones – was supported by the Town Council and created by the Town Team. The App is full of essential information about the Town and can be accessed quickly from the QR code featured in the Town Guide.

  *Jon Gleeson, Chairman of Promotions and Activities Committee*

  *19 May 2015*
Yeovil Town Council comprises 24 elected members each representing one of eleven areas of the Town. These areas are known as Wards. This arrangement makes sure that we have truly local government in Yeovil.

Your Councillors are:

**Yeovil Central Ward**

Vijayalakshmi Adampalli Venkateshappa  
Flat 1, 98 Goldcroft, Yeovil. BA21 4DE  
Tel 07503 565918

Kaysar Hussain  
6 Westminster Street, Yeovil. BA20 1AE  
Tel 07708 836635

**Yeovil East Ward**

Tony Lock  
71 St Michael's Road, Yeovil. BA21 5AH  
Tel 700061

David Recardo  
83 Lyde Road, Yeovil. BA21 5DH  
Tel 411099

Manny Roper  
36 Sunningdale Road, Yeovil. BA21 5LX  
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Rob Stickland  
33 Eastville, Yeovil. BA21 4JD  
Tel 07850 264406

**Yeovil Hollands Ward**

Wes Read  
Wellcombe House, 94 Ilchester Road, Yeovil. BA21 3BL  
Tel 07971 030005

**Yeovil Long Mead Ward**

Kris Castle  
96 St John’s Road, Yeovil. BA21 5NQ  
Tel 07958 789163

**Yeovil Milford Ward**

Peter Gubbins  
1 Holywell Hollow, Halves Lane, East Coker, Yeovil. BA22 9NG  
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Andy Kendall  
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Graham Oakes  
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**Yeovil New Town Ward**

Philip Chandler  
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**Yeovil Park Ward**

Evie Potts-Jones  
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**Yeovil Preston Ward**

Gail Freeman-Bell  
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Darren Shutler  
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**Yeovil South Ward**

Nagaraja Akkisetty  
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Joe Conway  
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Terry Ledlie  
67 Rowan Way, Yeovil. BA20 2NR  
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VACANCY

**Yeovil West Ward**

Tristan Cobb  
83 Freedom Avenue, Yeovil. BA21 3JW  
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Pauline Lock  
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Sarah Lowery  
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Tel 410990

**Yeovil White Mead Ward**

Alan Smith  
241 South Street, Crewkerne. TA18 8AE  
Tel 07901 578939

All Town Councillors are elected for a period of 4 years. The next Town Council elections will be in May 2019.

The Town Council’s team of staff is led by Alan Tawse – Town Clerk

The Assistant Town Clerk post is shared by Sally Freemantle and Helen Ferdinand

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We want to hear from you!