



Yeovil Town Council

Town House
19 Union Street
Yeovil
Somerset
BA20 1PQ

Yeovil Town Council

Yeovil Town Council

Tuesday 1st September 2026

7:30pm

**Face-to-face at Town House, 19 Union Street, Yeovil
BA20 1PQ; and virtual using Zoom meeting software**

For further information on the items to be discussed, please contact
town.clerk@yeovil.gov.uk.

Amanda Card, Chief Executive / Town Clerk
25th August 2026

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/82244458541?pwd=GPYXHQumcOGIqDbiDvOJ4UM6b.1>

This information is also available on our website: www.yeovil.gov.uk

Members of Yeovil Town Council are summoned to attend:

Tony Lock – Mayor of Yeovil Town

Wes Read – Deputy Mayor of Yeovil Town

Barry Boyton

Karina Parsons

Jade Cabell

Evie Potts-Jones

Tareth Casey

Ashley Richards

Karl Gill

Jeny Snell

Emma-Jayne Hopkins

Andy Soughton

Kaysar Hussain

Roy Spinner

Justice Jimba

Rob Stickland

Andy Kendall

Helen Stonier

Jamie Lock

Ruth White

Jane Lowery

Adrian Wilkes

Graham Oakes

Dave Woan

Public Comments at meetings

Members of the public may attend the meeting either physically or via Zoom.

If you wish to join the meeting via Zoom following this link:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/82244458541?pwd=GPYXHQumcOGDnbQtlqDbiDvOJ4UM6b.1>

Equality Act 2010

The general public sector equality duty places an obligation on a wide range of public bodies (including town and parish councils) in the exercise of their functions to have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not

The protected characteristics are:

Age	Race
Disability	Religion or Belief
Gender Reassignment	Sex
Marriage and Civil Partnership	Sexual Orientation
Pregnancy and Maternity	

Recording of Council Meetings

The Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 allows both the public and press to take photographs, film and audio record the proceedings and report on all public meetings (including on social media).

Any member of the public wishing to record or film proceedings must let the Chairman of the meeting know prior to, or at the start of, the meeting and the recording must be overt (i.e. clearly visible to anyone at the meeting), but non-disruptive. Please refer to our Policy on audio/visual recording and photography at Council meetings at www.yeovil.gov.uk. This permission does not extend to private meetings or parts of meetings which are not open to the public.

Members of the public exercising their right to speak during the time allocated for Public Comment who do not wish to be recorded or filmed, need to inform the Chairman who will instruct those taking a recording or filming to cease doing so while they speak.

Prior to the start of the meeting, Members are invited to join the Mayor's Chaplain in the Council Chamber for "Reflections".

A G E N D A

Public Comment (15 Minutes)

11/371 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND TO CONSIDER THE REASONS GIVEN

Council to receive apologies for absence and consider the reasons given. LGA 1972 s85(1)

11/372 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members to declare any interests, including Disclosable Pecuniary Interests (DPI) they may have in agenda items that accord with the requirements of the Town Council's Code of Conduct and to consider any requests from members for Dispensations that accord with Localism Act 2011 s33(b-e). (NB this does not preclude any later declarations).

11/373 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS TOWN COUNCIL MEETING

To confirm as a correct record the Minutes of the previous Town Council Meeting held on 30th June 2026.

11/374 MAYOR AND DEPUTY MAYOR'S RECENT AND FORTHCOMING ENGAGEMENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

To note the Mayor and Deputy Mayor's recent and forthcoming engagements as attached at pages 6 to 9.

11/375 CORRESPONDENCE

Members to consider any correspondence received.

11/376 REPORTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FROM COMMITTEES AND OTHER MEETINGS

To note the meetings of each Committee, any resolutions and recommendations contained therein to be ratified.

Culture Committee – 3rd August 2026 (Extraordinary Meeting)
Presented by Cllr D Woan

Property & Community Committee – 3rd August 2026 (Extraordinary Meeting)
Presented by Cllr R Stickland

11/377 REPORTS FROM REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES

Members who represent the Town Council on outside bodies should take this opportunity to report on any matters of interest.

The next section of the agenda will consider planning applications and planning matters affecting Yeovil Town.

Please note that the Town Council is a Statutory Consultee for Planning Applications and as such does not make the final decision on any Application. The decisions and comments this Committee makes will be fed into the planning process. Somerset Council is the Planning Authority and will issue the final decision notice (Planning Determination) once their investigations into the application have been completed.

11/378 PLANS LIST – FOR CONSIDERATION

To consider planning applications as attached at pages 10 to 14.

11/379 TREE PRESERVATION ORDER APPLICATIONS

To note the tree preservation order applications as attached at pages 14 to 15.

11/380 PLANNING DECISIONS

To note the planning decisions as attached at pages 16 to 17.

11/381 PROGRAMME OF MEETINGS 2026/27

To note the changes in dates for the Annual Town Meeting and Annual Meeting of the Town Council and the Reconvened Annual Meeting of the Town Council (highlighted in yellow) as attached at page 18.

11/382 UPDATE ON ACTIONS AGREED BY COUNCIL – HYPER ACUTE STROKE UNIT

To consider the report of the Chief Executive / Town Clerk as attached at pages 19 to 21.

List of Engagements that will be attended by the Mayor Elect of Yeovil, Councillor Tony Lock and Deputy Mayor Elect of Yeovil, Councillor Wes Read from 30 June 2026 to 3 November 2026

<u>July Engagements</u>	
02/07/26	The Mayor of Yeovil, Councillor Tony Lock attended Reverend David and Rebekah Keen's Farewell Celebrations at St Peters Church
04/07/26	The Mayor of Yeovil, Councillor Tony Lock Yeovil Town Council Super Saturday event in the town centre
04/07/26	The Mayor of Yeovil, Councillor Tony Lock attended the Phoenix Voices concert at Holy Trinity Church and community centre
04/07/26	The Mayor of Yeovil, Councillor Tony Lock attended the signing of the Armed Forces Covenant
05/07/26	The Mayor of Yeovil, Councillor Tony Lock attended Yeovil Together at Westlands Entertainment Venue
09/07/26	The Mayor of Yeovil, Councillor Tony Lock attended Yeovil In Bloom event at Yeovil Country Park
10/07/26	The Mayor of Yeovil, Councillor Tony Lock attended Picnic and Prosecco afternoon with Potter House care home
17/07/26	The Mayor of Yeovil, Councillor Tony Lock attended Sidney Gardens photo op as they received their Green Flag award
21/07/26	The Mayor of Yeovil, Councillor Tony Lock attended the swap shop at Birchfield Community Centre
23/07/26	The Mayor of Yeovil, Councillor Tony Lock, attended Milford Hall to meet with the Director of Property and Community and the Chair of the Community and Property Committee. The visit included a meeting and photo opportunity with Forest Electrical following the successful installation of new solar panels at the site

24/07/26	The Mayor of Yeovil, Councillor Tony Lock attended Potter House care home for a tea party
26/07/26	The Mayor of Yeovil, Councillor Tony Lock attended Wareham Town Council Civic Service
29/07/26	The Mayor of Yeovil, Councillor Tony Lock, met with the Director of Leisure and Environment and the Chair of the Leisure and Environment Committee at Yeovil Recreation Ground to view the newly installed lighting.
<u>August Engagements</u>	
06/08/26	The Mayor of Yeovil, Councillor Tony Lock attended a beach party at Compton View
07/08/26	The Mayor of Yeovil, Councillor Tony Lock attended Yeovil Town Councils Yew Tree Skate Jam and Playday
07/08/26	The Mayor of Yeovil, Councillor Tony Lock attended a BBQ at Cooksons Court
09/08/26	The Mayor of Yeovil, Councillor Tony Lock attended Chard Mayor Making
11/08/26	The Mayor of Yeovil, Councillor Tony Lock attended the Speed Record Reunion at The Old Barn Club
12/08/26	The Mayor of Yeovil, Councillor Tony Lock attended Yeovil Town Councils Playday at Yeovil Country Park
12/08/26	The Mayor of Yeovil, Councillor Tony Lock attended the Annual Westlands Retirement Association annual show
16/08/26	The Mayor of Yeovil, Councillor Tony Lock attended the Annual Allotment Association Show
17/08/26	The Mayor of Yeovil, Councillor Tony Lock attended Haynes Motor Museum for a tour with the CEO

20/08/26	The Mayor of Yeovil, Councillor Tony Lock attended the cheese and wine evening at Potter House care home
21/08/26	The Mayor of Yeovil, Councillor Tony Lock attended Yeovil Town Council Circus Playday at Milford Park
24/08/26	The Mayor of Yeovil, Councillor Tony Lock attended Yeovil Town Council Petting Farm at Birchfield Park
27/08/26	The Mayor of Yeovil, Councillor Tony Lock will attend Things I've Never Said production at Westlands Entertainment Venue
<u>September Engagements</u>	
14/09/26	The Mayor of Yeovil, Councillor Tony Lock will meet with residents at Chestnut Lodge
19/09/26	The Mayor of Yeovil, Councillor Tony Lock will Yeovil Town Council Super Saturday event
26/08/26	The Mayor of Yeovil, Councillor Tony Lock will attend The Sanctuary Community Project
26/08/26	The Deputy Mayor of Yeovil, Councillor Wes Read will attend Axminster Blackberry Carnival
24/09/26	The Mayor of Yeovil, Councillor Tony Lock will be attending an event at Fiveways School
28/09/26	The Mayor of Yeovil, Councillor Tony Lock will attend The HM Lord Lieutenant Awards for Somerset
<u>October Engagements</u>	
10/10/26	The Mayor of Yeovil, Councillor Tony Lock will attend National Cadet Week celebration at Ferndown
10/10/26	The Deputy Mayor of Yeovil, Councillor Wes Read will attend Chard Carnival

29/10/26	The Mayor of Yeovil, Councillor Tony Lock will attend the Memory Café at Yeovil Town Football Club
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11/378 PLANS LIST – FOR CONSIDERATION

	APPLICATION NO. Parish Ward	Applicant	Site Address	Proposal	Notes
1	26/01862/FUL <i>Yeovil College</i>	Mr Steven Shapland	17 & 17A Eastland Road Yeovil BA21 4EU	Retrospective change of use of one shop and dwelling to two dwellings	
	https://ssdc.somerset.gov.uk/planningdocuments?ref_no=26/01862/FUL				
2	26/01753/FUL <i>Yeovil Lyde</i>	Mr Max Rowswell	16 Oxford Road Pen Mill Trading Estate Yeovil BA21 5HR	Change of Use from B to Use Class E (leisure) to revert the use class of this building back to leisure, in the form of a local Padel Court	
	https://ssdc.somerset.gov.uk/planningdocuments?ref_no=26/01753/FUL				
3	26/01740/COU <i>Westlands</i>	Mr Mikael Brown	Iceland 8 Ivel Square Yeovil BA20 1EY	Change of use of premises from retail shop (Use Class E) to indoor amusement and leisure facility (Sui Generis)	
	https://ssdc.somerset.gov.uk/planningdocuments?ref_no=26/01740/COU				
4	26/01534/FUL <i>Yeovil Lyde</i>	Mr Paul Foot	94a Lyde Road Yeovil BA21 5DP	Change of use from A2 use class (betting office) to A5 use class (hot food takeaway) and install extraction ducting	
	https://ssdc.somerset.gov.uk/planningdocuments?ref_no=26/01534/FUL				
5	26/01814/LBC <i>Westlands</i>	Hickson	The Glove Factory Old Station Way Yeovil BA20 1EL	Installation of extract vents and boiler flues, together with SVP vent tiles to the pitched roof on the rear elevation of The Glove Factory	
	https://ssdc.somerset.gov.uk/planningdocuments?ref_no=26/01814/LBC				

	APPLICATION NO. Parish Ward	Applicant	Site Address	Proposal	Notes
6	26/01900/HOU <i>Lyde Ward</i>	Mark Hayhurst	29 Lyde Road Yeovil BA21 5AT	Creation of a front gable matching that of the existing street scene to the West	
	https://ssdc.somerset.gov.uk/planningdocuments?ref_no=26/01900/HOU				
7	26/01889/FUL <i>Summerlands</i>	Parochial Church Council of Preston Plucknett	Land Adjacent Co-Operative Store, Stiby Road, Yeovil BA21 3EG	Change of use of land to car park and installation of gate	
	https://ssdc.somerset.gov.uk/planningdocuments?ref_no=26/01889/FUL				
8	26/01832/S73A <i>Summerlands</i>	T Shearlock	46 Cedar Grove Yeovil BA21 3JS	S73A Application to vary condition 02 (approved plans) and Condition 04 (paring) to permit some of the driveway to be gravel relating to 24/02051/HOU; Erection of a single storey extension	
	https://ssdc.somerset.gov.uk/planningdocuments?ref_no=26/01832/S73A				
9	26/01456/HOU <i>Grove Avenue</i>	Mr Alexander Dunn	19 The Park Yeovil BA20 1DN	Replacement aluminium double glazed windows to the front elevation	
	https://ssdc.somerset.gov.uk/planningdocuments?ref_no=26/01456/HOU				
10	26/01714/HOU <i>Westlands</i>	Mr and Mrs Rackliff	106 Seaton Road Yeovil BA20 2AR	Erection of a single storey rear extension	
	https://ssdc.somerset.gov.uk/planningdocuments?ref_no=26/01714/HOU				

	APPLICATION NO. Parish Ward	Applicant	Site Address	Proposal	Notes
11	26/01750/HOU <i>Grove Avenue</i>	Mr and Mrs A Harrison	24 Grove Avenue Yeovil BA20 2BB	Proposed Rear Dormer Loft Extension to Dwelling	
	https://ssdc.somerset.gov.uk/planningdocuments?ref_no=26/01750/HOU				
12	26/01693/S73A <i>Westlands</i>	Rachel Wright	Avon And Somerset Constabulary Yeovil Police Station Horse Lane Yeovil Somerset BA20 1SN	S73A Application to vary Condition 02 (approved plans) to allow for change to materials, colour code update for both the window frames and perforated cladding panels relating to planning consent 25/02146/FUL; External changes to building including erection of external fire escape stair, replacement of windows and installation of solar panels on roof	
	https://ssdc.somerset.gov.uk/planningdocuments?ref_no=26/01693/S73A				
13	26/01694/S73A <i>Westlands</i>	Rachael Wright	Avon And Somerset Constabulary Yeovil Police Station Horse Lane Yeovil Somerset BA20 1SN	S73A Application to vary Condition 02 (approved plans) to allow for minor changes (dimensions of roller door and relocation of fire door) relating to planning consent 25/00324/FUL; Erection of vehicle workshop, changes to parking layout and erection of replacement security fence	
	https://ssdc.somerset.gov.uk/planningdocuments?ref_no=26/01694/S73A				

	APPLICATION NO. Parish Ward	Applicant	Site Address	Proposal	Notes
14	26/01769/FUL <i>Lyde Ward</i>	Mr Mark Hayhurst	23 Alexandra Road Yeovil Somerset BA21 5AL	Change of use from dwellinghouse (Use Class C3) to an 8- bedroom, 8- bedspace large house in multiple occupation (sui generis), including the erection of single-storey and dormer window extensions (benefitting from a lawful development certificate) and the provision of refuse/recycling and bicycle storage to the rear (revised proposal of 26/00973/FUL)	
https://ssdc.somerset.gov.uk/planningdocuments?ref_no=26/01769/FUL					
15	26/00968/FUL <i>Lyde Ward</i>	Mr Alex Emery	Land Adjoining 20 Camborne Grove Yeovil Somerset BA21 5DG	To construct a new dwelling within the existing curtilage of 20 Camborne Road Yeovil Amendment: Submission of Tree Survey and Arboricultural Impact Assessment and resulting amended plans. The finished floor level of the proposed dwelling has risen by 300mm to accommodate the piling and ground beam foundations, also the whole building has been moved approx. 1m North away from the canopy of the tree. The ground around the edge of the Ground beam has been built up by approx. 150mm to cover the exposed concrete	
https://ssdc.somerset.gov.uk/planningdocuments?ref_no=26/00968/FUL					

16	26/01505/FUL <i>Westlands</i>	Mr M Sen	9 Silver Street Yeovil Somerset BA20 1HW	Retrospective permission to remove chimney and replace roof covering	
	https://ssdc.somerset.gov.uk/planningdocuments?ref_no=26/01505/FUL				
17	26/01506/LBC <i>Westlands</i>	Mr M Sen	9 Silver Street Yeovil Somerset BA20 1HW	Retrospective permission to remove chimney and replace roof covering	
	https://ssdc.somerset.gov.uk/planningdocuments?ref_no=26/01506/LBC				
18	26/01928/HOU <i>Yeovil College</i>	Mrs Joy Smith	89 Glenthorne Avenue Yeovil Somerset BA21 4PW	Single storey flat roof side extension	
	https://ssdc.somerset.gov.uk/planningdocuments?ref_no=26/01928/HOU				

11/379 TREE PRESERVATION ORDER APPLICATIONS - FOR INFORMATION

	APPLICATION NO. Parish Ward	Applicant	Site Address	Proposal	Notes
1	26/01603/TPO	Ryland	Inglewood Flat 4 91 Hendford Hill Yeovil BA20 2RE	Application to carry out tree reduction to replicate the establish pruning regime by removing approx. 3.5 metres of incremental growth back to approx. 2017 pruning point to No 1 tree (T1 Quercus Ilex (Holmoak) as shown by South Somerset District Council (YEOV 4) 1991 Tree Preservation Order	
2	26/01685/TPO	Gosbee	Yeovil College Mudford Road Yeovil	Application to carry out Tree Surgery Works to No1 1 Group of Trees as shown within the South Somerset District Council (YEOV 2)	

	APPLICATION NO. Parish Ward	Applicant	Site Address	Proposal	Notes
			BA21 4DR	1997 Tree Preservation Order. G1 Mixed Species group of Beech and Ash, Crown lift all trees in Group to 5.2M to Facilitate future highways use and access. Reduce remaining canopies back to eastern Boundary of temporary footpath that runs Along the western side of the site.	
3	26/01822/TPO	Mike Sturgess	12 Abbots Meade Yeovil BA21 3PJ	Application to pollard No 1 Sycamore Tree (T1) back to historic pruning points, as shown within the South Somerset District Council (YEOV 5) 1999 Tree Preservation Order	
4	26/01859/TPO	Charlotte Smith	5 Oakridge Park Yeovil BA21 3JY	Application to carry out Tree Surgery works to No1 Tree as shown within the South Som District Council (YEOV 1) 1991 Tree Preservation Order. T1 x Beech to be Reduced by 20% to reduce overhang and Excessive shading to property.	
5	26/01858/TPO	Mr Tom Cockings	4 Oakridge Park Yeovil BA21 3JY	Application to carry out Tree Surgery Works to No 2 Trees as shown with the South Somerset District Council (YEOV 1) 1991 Tree Preservation Order T1 x Copper Beech – back Right of the garden, prune back from Outbuilding and overall reduction of 20% to Manage Tree for the space. T2 x Oak reduce by 20% to manage the tree for the space also crown raise to 2.5 – 3 M to allow vehicle access underneath all pruning to secondary points.	

11/380 **PLANNING DECISIONS**

Application No	Address	Proposal	Decision
26/01533/HOU	16 Beaconfield Road Yeovil Somerset BA20 2JN	Single storey rear extension, replacement of existing artificial roof slates, 2 new rooflights and a new dormer window to the rear	Approved
26/01521/HOU	191 Monks Dale Yeovil Somerset BA21 3JQ	Erection of single storey rear extension	Approved
26/01507/FUL	Preston School A Business And Enterprise Academy Monks Dale Yeovil Somerset BA21 3JD	Construction of a new purpose-built Assembly Hall and a new WC block at Preston School, together with associated external works	Approved
26/01514/HOU	3A Preston Grove Yeovil Somerset BA20 2BG	Existing garage with bedroom over to be removed, new annex to be built over existing footprint.	Approved
26/01406/FUL	Morley House 26 West Hendford Yeovil Somerset BA20 1XE	Conversion of top floor of the building into an independent self contained flat.	Approved
26/01388/COU	Kingdom Hall Eastland Road Yeovil Somerset BA21 4EY	Change of use of redundant Methodist Chapel Use Class F1(f) place of worship to Use Class E(d) indoor sport and recreation and/or Sui Generis Use (specified as dance studio, meeting hall etc).	Approved
26/01264/HOU	3 Wraxhill Road Yeovil Somerset BA20 2JZ	Removal of existing garage and the erection of a new garage/workshop/shed.	Approved
26/01229/COU	Tyndale Nursing Home 36 Preston Road Yeovil Somerset BA21 3AQ	Change of use from HMO (sui generis) back to Class C2 (residential care home)	Approved
26/01194/FUL	Preston School A Business And Enterprise Academy Monks Dale Yeovil Somerset BA21 3JD	Demolition of two buildings and construction of one education building	Approved
26/01170/FUL	65 Crofton Park Yeovil Somerset BA21 4ED	Change of use of existing dwellinghouse from Use Class C3 to Class C4 (HMO) with associated works	Approved

26/00973/FUL	23 Alexandra Road Yeovil Somerset BA21 5AL	Change of use from dwellinghouse (Use Class C3) to an 8-bedroom, 13-bedspace large house in multiple occupation (sui generis), including the erection of single-storey and dormer window extensions (benefitting from a lawful development certificate) and the provision of refuse/recycling and bicycle storage to the rear.	Refused
26/00947/HOU	Pent House Penn Hill Park Yeovil Somerset BA20 1SE	Demolish two existing garages and erect replacement garage	Approved
26/00801/FUL	35 Preston Road Yeovil Somerset BA21 3AE	Change of use, conversion and extension and alterations of existing detached house to create an HMO	Approved
26/00358/FUL	Building To The Rear Of 100 Middle Street Yeovil Somerset BA20 1NE	Build over existing store to provide No. 2 Flats to First and Second Floors.	Approved

Note:

Planning decisions are highlighted where a decision of the Planning Authority (Somerset Council) has differed from the recommendation of Yeovil Town Council.

Yeovil Town Council



Programme of Meetings of Council and Committees – 2026/27

Meeting	Day	Time	2026								2027				
			May	Jun	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May
Council	Tues	7.30pm	5 ^{*1} 12 ^{*2}	30 ³	-	-	1	(6)	3	1	26 ⁴	-	(2)	6	18 ^{*1} 25 ^{*2}
Leisure and Environment Committee (L&E)	Mon	7.00pm		8	(6)		7		9		11		8		
Culture Committee (Cult)	Tues	7.00pm		16	(14)		15		17		12		16		
Property & Community Committee (P&C)	Tues	7.00pm		9	(7)		8		10		5		9		
Executive (Exec)	Tues	7.00pm		23	(28)		29	(27)	24		19	(23)	30	(27)	

- () Meetings are reserve dates and will only be held if necessary
- *1 Annual Town Meeting followed by Annual Meeting of the Town Council
- *2 Annual Meeting of the Town Council (reconvened)
- *3 To approve the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR)
- *4 To approve the budget precept for the following year

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11/382 UPDATE ON ACTIONS AGREED BY COUNCIL – HYPER-ACUTE STROKE UNIT

Report Author: Amanda Card – Chief Executive / Town Clerk

E-mail: amanda.card@yeovil.gov.uk

Meeting: Town Council

Date: 1st September 2026

Council is **RECOMMENDED:**

- (1) To note the report;
- (2) To note the advice received from Birketts LLP regarding the DHSC Freedom of Information response;
- (3) To endorse the submission of an internal review request to the Department of Health and Social Care based on the draft by Birketts LLP; and
- (4) To note that officers continue to pursue a substantive response from NHS Somerset Integrated Care Board and will provide a further update to Members when additional information is received.

Background

At its meeting held on 3rd March 2026, the Town Council resolved to obtain specialist legal advice regarding the closure of the Hyper-Acute Stroke Unit (HASU) at Yeovil District Hospital, explore opportunities for joint action with other organisations and stakeholders, and receive a report on the legal and strategic options available to the Council. Subsequently, Council considered a further report and resolved to pursue the Freedom of Information (FOI) route in order to obtain additional information regarding the decision-making process surrounding the closure of the HASU.

Progress Update

Following Council's resolution, Freedom of Information requests were submitted to both the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) and NHS Somerset Integrated Care Board (ICB). The requests sought information relating to the decision-making process, supporting evidence, internal assessments, clinical modelling and documentation relating to the closure of the Yeovil Hyper-Acute Stroke Unit.

Department of Health and Social Care

A response was subsequently received from the Department of Health and Social Care. The Department confirmed that information falling within the scope of the Council's request is held but refused disclosure under Section 36 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 on the grounds that disclosure would, or would be likely to, prejudice the effective conduct of public affairs. The Department relied upon exemptions relating to the free and frank provision of advice and exchange of views during ministerial decision-making processes.

The Council sought further advice from Birketts LLP regarding the DHSC response. Birketts LLP advised that there are reasonable grounds to request an internal review of the refusal. The advice notes that:

- DHSC accepted that information is held within the scope of the request.
- The exemption appears to have been applied broadly across all requested information without detailing whether partial disclosure, redacted disclosure or release of factual material was considered.
- The relevant decision-making processes concluded in December 2024 and November 2025, reducing the weight that might ordinarily be attached to arguments regarding a “chilling effect” (disclosure of internal advice may inhibit the free and frank exchange of views between officials and Ministers in future decision-making processes).
- There is a significant public interest in understanding how the statutory call-in criteria were assessed in relation to a substantial NHS service reconfiguration affecting residents across Somerset and South Somerset.

Birketts LLP therefore recommended that the Council request an internal review of the DHSC decision in order to preserve its position and maintain the option of a subsequent referral to the Information Commissioner's Office should that become necessary.

Birketts LLP has provided draft wording for an internal review request to the Department of Health and Social Care. The proposed request seeks reconsideration of the application of Section 36 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and asks the Department to consider partial disclosure, disclosure of factual material, the passage of time since the relevant decisions were taken, the public interest in transparency, and whether individual categories of information can be disclosed in whole or in part.

The draft request raises concerns regarding:

- Partial disclosure and whether factual material can be separated from advice or deliberative material.
- The disclosure of factual background information, summaries, analyses and assessments relating to the statutory call-in criteria.
- The passage of time since the relevant decisions were made and the reduced likelihood of a chilling effect on future decision-making.
- The public interest in transparency regarding a significant NHS service reconfiguration affecting stroke services across Somerset.
- Whether individual categories of information have been considered separately and whether any information could be disclosed in whole, in part or in redacted form.

The draft review specifically requests reconsideration of the disclosure of:

- factual material underpinning the decisions;
- assessments of the statutory call-in criteria;
- final briefing documents;
- records of decisions taken; and
- any material capable of disclosure in redacted form

NHS Somerset ICB

In relation to the Freedom of Information request submitted to NHS Somerset ICB, no substantive response has yet been received. The request was submitted on 2nd June 2026 and acknowledged under reference 1704, with an original response date of 30th June 2026.

Following the expiry of the statutory deadline, officers submitted a number of follow-up requests seeking confirmation of the status of the response. NHS Somerset ICB advised that the request remains under active management but cited organisational restructuring, workload pressures and the volume of information requested as reasons for the delay. Despite assurances that a response would be provided, the Council has not yet received the requested information.

Most recently, on 21st August 2026, NHS Somerset ICB again confirmed that the request remains under active management but did not provide a substantive response or firm completion date. Officers have advised NHS Somerset ICB that, should a substantive response or clear timetable not be provided, the Council will consider pursuing the matter through the ICB's internal review process and, if necessary, referring the delay to the Information Commissioner's Office.

Current Position

In accordance with the resolutions previously agreed by Council, the Council has now:

- Obtained specialist legal advice regarding potential legal challenge options.
- Submitted Freedom of Information requests to both DHSC and NHS Somerset ICB.
- Received a refusal from DHSC and obtained legal advice regarding that refusal.
- Received draft wording from Birketts LLP for an internal review request to DHSC
- Continued to pursue the outstanding NHS Somerset ICB response.

At this stage, officers consider that the actions agreed by Council have been progressed as far as reasonably possible. Further progress is dependent upon the outcome of any internal review undertaken by the Department of Health and Social Care and receipt of the outstanding Freedom of Information response from NHS Somerset Integrated Care Board.