



Yeovil Town Council

Town House
19 Union Street
Yeovil
Somerset
BA20 1PQ

Yeovil Town Council

Yeovil Town Council

Tuesday 6th October 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
30th September 2026

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/87306845459?pwd=a4A8uYPbkcYvHdpYaGqOUEqJ.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/87306845459?pwd=a4A8uYPbkcYvHH1jWXbdpyaGqOUEqJ.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)

11/383 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND TO CONSIDER THE REASONS GIVEN

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

11/384 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).

11/385 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS TOWN COUNCIL MEETING

To confirm as a correct record the Minutes of the previous Town Council Meeting held on 1st September 2026.

11/386 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 7 to 8.

11/387 CORRESPONDENCE

Members to consider any correspondence received.

11/388 REPORTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FROM COMMITTEES AND OTHER MEETINGS

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

Leisure & Environment Committee – 7th September 2026
Presented by Cllr K Gill

Culture Committee – 15th September 2026

Presented by Cllr D Woan

Property & Community Committee – 8th September 2026

Presented by Cllr R Stickland

Executive – 22nd September 2026 (Extraordinary Meeting) and 29th September 2026

Presented by Cllr A Soughton

11/389 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.

11/390 PLANS LIST – FOR CONSIDERATION

To consider planning applications as attached at pages 9 to 11.

11/391 TREE PRESERVATION ORDER APPLICATIONS

To note the tree preservation order applications as attached at pages 11.

11/392 PLANNING DECISIONS

To note the planning decisions as attached at page 12..

11/393 PARISH PREPAREDNESS SURVEY

To consider the report of the Chief Executive / Town Clerk regarding the Parish Preparedness Survey as attached at pages 13 to 16.

11/394 ANNUAL GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY RETURN (AGAR) 2025/26 - UNCERTIFIED STATUS

To consider the report of the Chief Executive / Town Clerk regarding the uncertified Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) as attached at pages 17 to 22.

11/395 COUNCILLOR – OFFICER RELATIONS PROTOCOL

To consider the report of the Chief Executive / Town Clerk regarding the Councillor - Officer Relations Protocol as recommended by the Executive, as attached at pages 23 to 34.

11/396 TRANSFER OF OPEN SPACES AND PLAY AREAS – ACQUISITION OF FREEHOLD INTEREST

To consider the report of the Chief Executive / Town Clerk regarding the transfer of open spaces and play areas from Somerset Council, as attached at pages 35 to 38.

11/397 ACQUISITION OF ADDITIONAL WORKSPACE AT PEN MILL TRADING ESTATE

To consider the report of the Director of Property & Community and the Chief Executive / Town Clerk regarding the acquisition of additional workspace at Pen Mill Trading Estate, as attached at pages 39 to 44.

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 1 September to 3 November 2026

<u>September Engagements</u>	
14/09/26	The Mayor of Yeovil, Councillor Tony Lock met with residents at Chestnut Lodge
17/09/26	The Mayor of Yeovil, Councillor Tony Lock attended Dementia and Delirium Talk at Potter House care home
19/09/26	The Mayor of Yeovil, Councillor Tony Lock attended Yeovil Town Council Super Saturday event
24/09/26	The Mayor of Yeovil, Councillor Tony Lock attended a tour around Fiveways School
24/09/26	The Mayor of Yeovil, Councillor Tony Lock attended The Harvest Festival at The Knoll, Nursing Home
25/09/26	The Mayor of Yeovil, Councillor Tony Lock attended Yeovil Neighbourhood Breakfast
25/09/26	The Mayor of Yeovil, Councillor Tony Lock attended Yeovil Reimagine Launch in the town centre
26/09/26	The Mayor of Yeovil, Councillor Tony Lock attended The Sanctuary Community Project
26/09/26	The Mayor of Yeovil, Councillor Tony Lock attended the West Abbey Dog Show
26/09/26	The Deputy Mayor of Yeovil, Councillor Wes Read attended Axminster Blackberry Carnival
27/09/26	The Mayor of Yeovil, Councillor Tony Lock attended Cecils Memorial ride for Yeovil Freewheeler Blood Bikes

28/09/26	The Mayor of Yeovil, Councillor Tony Lock attended The HM Lord Lieutenant Awards for Somerset
<u>October Engagements</u>	
01/10/26	The Mayor of Yeovil, Councillor Tony Lock will attend the official opening of the Advanced Engineering & Defence Skills Centre
05/10/26	The Mayor of Yeovil, Councillor Tony Lock will attend Somerset Army Cadet Force Opening Evening
07/10/26	The Mayor of Yeovil, Councillor Tony Lock will attend Bridport Civic Day
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
20/10/26	The Mayor of Yeovil, Councillor Tony Lock will attend the Yeovil Hospital Charity Fire Walk at Yeovil Rugby Club
23/10/26	The Mayor of Yeovil, Councillor Tony Lock will attend Yeovil Literary Festival awards
26/10/26	The Mayor of Yeovil, Councillor Tony Lock will attend Great British Bake-Off Musical
29/10/26	The Mayor of Yeovil, Councillor Tony Lock will attend the Memory Café at Yeovil Town Football Club

	APPLICATION NO. Parish Ward	Applicant	Site Address	Proposal	Notes
1	26/01909/FUL <i>Westlands</i>	Mr & Mrs T Corner	Land At 1 Hillgrove Avenue Yeovil Somerset BA20 2LP	Erection of a Self Build Single Storey Dwelling with a Detached Garage at the Rear of an Existing Dwelling and Associated Works. Demolish Existing Garage and Workshop and Replace with a Large Combined Garage and Workshop for the Existing Dwelling.	
https://ssdc.somerset.gov.uk/planningdocuments?ref_no=26/01909/FUL					
2	26/02133/S73 <i>Grove Avenue</i>	Mr M Ghuman	35 Preston Road Yeovil Somerset BA21 3AE	S73 Application to vary Condition 2 (Approved Plans) in relation to Approved Application 26/00801/FUL; Change of use, conversion and extension and alterations of existing detached house to create an HMO.	26/00801/FUL 12 May 2026 Support, design and appearance acceptable subject to the following: • a licence may be required under the Housing Act 200 • environmental health be consulted in respect of fire safety and waste management arrangements
https://ssdc.somerset.gov.uk/planningdocuments?ref_no=26/02133/S73					

	APPLICATION NO. Parish Ward	Applicant	Site Address	Proposal	Notes
3	26/02041/S73A <i>Sumnmerlands</i>	Mrs Nicola Smith	243 Preston Road Yeovil Somerset BA20 2EY	S73A application to vary condition No. 02 (approved plans), No. 03 (materials), No. 04 (landscaping), No.05 (CMP) and No. 06 (surface water drainage) to reduce the height of the approved wall, to change some proposed materials and amend landscaping proposals, in relation to planning application 25/02853/HOU	25/02853/HOU 15 December 2025 Support Improvements to the access of the building
	https://ssdc.somerset.gov.uk/planningdocuments?ref_no=26/02041/S73A				
4	26/01977/ADV <i>Yeovil College</i>	Mr Mark Thomas	Land East Of Mudford Road Yeovil Somerset BA21 4AA	Installation of 2no. non-illuminated billboards	
	https://ssdc.somerset.gov.uk/planningdocuments?ref_no=26/01977/ADV				
5	26/01921/HOU <i>Summerlands</i>	Mr & Mrs Ryan Bastable	4 St James Close Yeovil Somerset BA21 3AH	Proposed two storey rear extension and internal alterations to dwelling	
	https://ssdc.somerset.gov.uk/planningdocuments?ref_no=26/01921/HOU				
6	P/OUT/2026/04250 <i>Dorset</i>	Hallam Land Management Limited	Land North Of Compton Road Yeovil	Erection of up to 380 dwellings, including affordable housing, provision of new pedestrian and cycle routes, internal roads, parking, open space, hard and soft landscaping, play areas, surface water drainage, ancillary	

				infrastructure including new and repositioned utilities, and associated engineering works (outline application to determine access only)	
	https://planning.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/plandisp.aspx?recno=430529				

11/391 **TREE PRESERVATION ORDER APPLICATIONS - FOR INFORMATION**

	APPLICATION NO. Parish Ward	Applicant	Site Address	Proposal	Notes
1	26/02000/TPO	Ms Lavinia Mansel	68 Hendford Yeovil Somerset BA20 1UR	Application to carry out Tree Surgery Works to No. 1 Tree as shown within the South Somerset District Council (YEOV 2) 1991 Tree Preservation Order. T1 - Hornbeam - Crown thin the hornbeam tree by approximately 10% by selectively removing small, secondary branches throughout the crown. The work is intended to improve light penetration and airflow while maintaining the trees natural shape, size and structural integrity. Remove any dead, damaged, diseased, crossing or rubbing branches where appropriate. All pruning cuts shall follow current arboricultural best practice, and all resulting debris shall be removed from site.	
2	26/02221/TPO	Mr Angus Stewart	Blue Moon Mudford Road Yeovil Somerset BA21 4AE	Application to carry out Tree Surgery Works to No. 1 Tree as shown within the South Somerset District Council (YEOV 2) 2017 Tree Preservation Order. T1 common lime tree (Tilia x europaea) to pollard to 5m thereby reducing the crown.	

Application No	Address	Proposal	Decision
26/01889/FUL	Land Adjacent Co-Operative Store, Stiby Road Yeovil BA21 3EG	Change of use of land to car park and installation of a gate	Permitted
26/01814/LBC	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	Permitted
26/01753/FUL	16 Oxford Road Pen Mill Trading Estate Yeovil BA21 5HR	Change of Use from B (industrial) to Use Class E (leisure), in the form of a local Padel Court	Permitted
26/01750/HOU	24 Grove Avenue Yeovil BA20 2BB	Proposed Rear Dormer Loft Extension to Dwelling	Permitted
26/01505/FUL	9 Silver Street Yeovil BA20 1HW	Retrospective permission to remove chimney and replace roof covering	Refused
26/01506/LBC	9 Silver Street Yeovil BA20 1HW	Retrospective permission to remove chimney and replace roof covering	Refused
26/01514/HOU	3A Preston Grove Yeovil BA20 2BG	Existing garage with bedroom over to be removed, new annex to be built over existing footprint	Permitted
26/01480/HOU	32 Roping Road Yeovil BA21 4BD	Replacement of an old garden shed with a new timber gazebo, timber decking and cascade wrap-around steps at the rear boundary of the garden (Retrospective)	Permitted
26/01456/HOU	19 The Park Yeovil BA20 1DN	Replacement aluminium double glazed windows to the front elevation	Permitted

Note:

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

11/393 **SOMERSET PREPAREDNESS SURVEY**

Report Author: Amanda Card – Chief Executive / Town Clerk

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

Meeting: Town Council

Date: 6th October 2026

Council is **RECOMMENDED:**

- 1) To note the request from the Somerset Preparedness Programme to complete the Somerset Preparedness Survey; and
- 2) To authorise the Chief Executive/Town Clerk, in consultation with relevant officers, Councillors and community resilience partners where appropriate, to complete and submit the Somerset Preparedness Survey on behalf of the Council.

Purpose of Report

To advise Members of a request from the Somerset Preparedness Programme for the Council to complete the Somerset Preparedness Survey and to seek authority for its completion and submission.

Background

The Council has been invited to complete the Somerset Preparedness Survey, which is intended to help understand local plans, risks, resources and support needs across Somerset communities. The information collected will assist in strengthening county-wide resilience and emergency preparedness arrangements.

The accompanying correspondence advises that responses have so far been received from 83 of Somerset's 328 town and parish councils, with a target of achieving an 80%+ response rate by April 2027. Completed surveys should be returned to somersetprepared@somerset.gov.uk as soon as possible.

Implications for the Council

The survey provides an opportunity for the Council to review its preparedness for incidents such as severe weather, flooding, power outages and other emergencies. It also enables the Council to identify existing community resources, volunteer capacity, emergency contacts and any areas where further support may be beneficial.

There are no direct financial or legal implications arising from completion of the survey.

Any matters requiring expenditure or policy changes would be reported separately to Council for consideration.

City, Town & Parish Preparedness Survey

NAME OF CITY/TOWN/PARISH

RISK

Using a score of 0 (None) to 4 (Very Likely), please evaluate the extent to which you consider your Parish to be vulnerable to the following hazards. Where possible, please also give the date (or month and year) when this last occurred in your Parish.

	Date of Last Known Event	Score (0 – 4)
Property / Business Flooding		
Strong Winds		
Excessive Heat		
Excessive Cold, Snow and Ice		
Road Traffic Accidents		
Access limited by Accidents, Road Closures or Excessive Traffic		
Animal Disease		
Terrorism and Malicious Threats		
Pandemic		
Radiation Incident		
Industrial Incident		
Power Outage		
Fire		

For the rest of the survey, please use the same scoring system (0-4) to self-evaluate your level of preparedness as a Parish to deal with the risks you have identified.

PEOPLE

We have a very active parish, with many people volunteering in some capacity. There is a strong sense of identity and togetherness.	
When it comes to responding to an emergency, we have successfully recruited and retained a team of volunteers that cover all the required roles and requirements. Nature of team (eg; Flood Warden Group): _____	
We have an effective training programme that covers all relevant themes, technical knowledge, interpersonal skills, confidentiality and safeguarding and local knowledge.	
Co-ordinators can access training to give them the skills, knowledge and information they need to work effectively within the team and externally.	

The team works effectively together and can manage any spontaneous volunteers during an emergency. There is sufficient contingency built in such that effectiveness does not suffer if some members are missing.	
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PLANS & PROCESSES

We have a good understanding of the hazards we face and have procedures in place to monitor and resolve any factors which might elevate risks still further	
We have a comprehensive and up-to-date emergency / flood plan that informs our activity, communications and organisational structure, including current contact details for all relevant stakeholders. Date when emergency / flood plan was last reviewed: _____	
We have clearly defined trigger points and a robust monitoring system (e.g. of river levels) so that there is a timely alarm that allows our emergency plans and processes to be actioned.	
The organisational structure of our team is flexible, effective and able to respond to local needs and geography.	
Our plans and processes define clear actions for individuals to complete during specific events and there is the necessary level of insurance cover in place to allow this to happen.	
Our plans and processes and assessments of risk mean that team members will be in the right place at the right time and with the right equipment during an emergency situation.	
We have a clear process to record all actions during an emergency and to subsequently review them in order to improve future responses.	
We have a clear strategy and action plan in place to improve our resilience and adapt to new levels of risk as the world around us changes.	

EQUIPMENT & RESOURCES

We have procedures such that all equipment and protective clothing is stored, checked, maintained and replaced as needed.	
We have procedures in place that ensures that team members are trained and competent in the use of our equipment and resources.	
We have well publicised and sufficiently equipped <u>Places of Safety</u> in the right locations to be able operate effectively during an emergency. This is/these are: _____	
We have a designated and sufficiently equipped space from which the emergency response can be successfully co-ordinated.	
We allocate sufficient Parish resource to increasing our preparedness and resilience. Total % of Parish Precept spent on this in previous financial year: _____% Total of Preparedness/Resilience/Adaptation Grants spent in the same period: £ _____	

COMMUNICATIONS

Our plans and processes include a clear and effective way of alerting and sharing information with team members.	
All team members have a clear understanding of the significance of different alerts and what will be expected of them	
We have sufficient capable <u>Somerset Emergency Community Contacts (SECCs)</u> to help manage communications within the community and with external bodies (eg; with emergency services) during an emergency. Name(s) of known SECC(s): _____	
We have strong emergency response links with neighbouring parishes, keeping each other informed and supporting each other where possible	
There is good mobile phone signal in all areas of our parish	
There is good broadband available in all areas of our parish	
When dealing with an emergency, our chosen method(s) of communication are appropriate for our residents and our geographical context as well as the challenges and changes presented by an emergency situation.	

Is there anything you else you'd like to tell us about?

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Thank you for completing the survey.

As you filled out the survey and reflected on the state of readiness in your Parish, you may have identified areas where you'd like to strengthen. If you require advice, support or potentially even funding to do this, you are very welcome to contact somersetprepared@somerset.gov.uk.

11/394 ANNUAL GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY
RETURN (AGAR) 2025/26 - UNCERTIFIED STATUS

Report Author: Amanda Card – Chief Executive / Town Clerk
E-mail: amanda.card@yeovil.gov.uk
Meeting: Town Council
Date: 6th October 2026

Council is **RECOMMENDED:**

- 1) to note that the AGAR for the year ended 31st March 2026 remains uncertified by the external auditor;
- 2) to note that certification has been delayed due to correspondence received by the external auditor relating to 2025/26 and/or prior years;
- 3) to note the action taken by the Chief Executive/Town Clerk in requesting details of the correspondence and issues raised; and
- 4) to note that Council will receive a further report when additional information becomes available and/or when the external auditor issues its final certificate of completion.

Purpose of Report

To advise Members that the Council's Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) for the financial year ended 31 March 2026 remains uncertified by the external auditor pending consideration of correspondence received by the auditor.

Background

The Council approved the Annual Governance Statement and Accounting Statements for the year ended 31 March 2026 and submitted the AGAR for external audit in accordance with statutory requirements.

The external auditor has completed its limited assurance review and issued its report. Whilst the auditor has not identified any matters which affect its limited assurance opinion, the audit process has not yet been formally concluded and the AGAR remains uncertified.

Current Position

The external auditor has advised that it has been unable to complete its review work and issue its certificate because correspondence has been received in relation to the 2025/26 financial year and/or prior years, requiring further consideration before the audit can be concluded.

As a consequence, the AGAR remains uncertified at the date of this report.

The external auditor has indicated that, once the correspondence has been considered and any additional work completed, a final report and certificate of completion will be issued.

Members should note that the delay relates to correspondence received by the auditor and not to any identified issue requiring amendment to the Council's approved AGAR at this time.

Action Taken by the Chief Executive/Town Clerk

Following notification that the AGAR remains uncertified, the Chief Executive/Town Clerk has written to the Smaller Authorities' Audit Team seeking further information regarding the correspondence received by the auditor.

The purpose of the request is to enable the Council to understand the matters raised, respond appropriately where necessary, and provide any information which may assist the completion of the audit process.

At the time of writing this report, no further information has been received regarding the nature of the correspondence or the matters under consideration.

Financial Implications

There are no direct financial implications arising from the AGAR remaining uncertified at this stage.

Legal and Governance Implications

The Council is required to publish the external auditor's notice confirming that the audit has not yet been concluded. The Council has complied with this requirement. This information can be found: [Notice of Audit and Right to Inspect the AGAR 2025-26](#) and [Uncertified AGAR 2025-26](#).

The Council will continue to cooperate fully with the external auditor and provide any information requested in connection with the completion of the audit process.

Risk Implications

There is currently no indication that the correspondence received by the auditor will result in any amendment to the AGAR or any qualification of the auditor's opinion. However, until the external auditor completes its review and issues its certificate, the audit process remains ongoing.

Conclusion

The AGAR for 2025/26 remains uncertified because the external auditor is considering correspondence received in relation to the 2025/26 financial year and/or prior years. The Chief Executive/Town Clerk has requested further information to assist the Council in understanding the matters raised and, where appropriate, responding to any issues identified by the auditor. A further report will be presented to Council upon receipt of additional information and/or the external auditor's final certificate of completion.

Yeovil Town Council



NOTICE OF AUDIT AND RIGHT TO INSPECT THE ANNUAL GOVERNANCE & ACCOUNTABILITY RETURN

ANNUAL GOVERNANCE & ACCOUNTABILITY RETURN FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2026

Sections 20(2) and 25 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014

Section 16 Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2015 (SI 2015/234)

1. The audit of accounts for Yeovil Town Council for the year ended 31st March 2026 has been carried out but cannot be completed for the reasons stated in the external auditor report. The accounts have been published.
2. The Annual Governance and Accountability Return is available for inspection by any local government elector of Yeovil Town Council on application to:

Name: Amanda Card

Position: Chief Executive / Town Clerk

Address: Yeovil Town Council, Town House, 19 Union Street,
Yeovil, Somerset. BA20 1PQ

Tel No: 01935 382424

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

Days and time of availability: Monday – Friday 9:00 am to 3:00pm by appointment.

3. Copies will be provided to any person on payment for **£1.00** for each copy of the Annual Governance & Accountability Return.

Amanda Card
Chief Executive / Town Clerk / Responsible Financial Officer

25th September 2026

Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement 2025/26

We acknowledge as the members of:

YEovil TOWN COUNCIL

our responsibility for ensuring that there is a sound system of internal control, including arrangements for the preparation of the Accounting Statements. We confirm, to the best of our knowledge and belief, with respect to the Accounting Statements for the year ended 31 March 2026, that:

	Agreed		Yes means that this authority:
	Yes	No	
1. We have put in place arrangements for effective financial management during the year, and for the preparation of the accounting statements.	☒	☐	<i>prepared its accounting statements in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations.</i>
2. We maintained an adequate system of internal control including measures designed to prevent and detect fraud and corruption and reviewed its effectiveness.	☒	☐	<i>made proper arrangements and accepted responsibility for safeguarding the public money and resources in its charge.</i>
3. We have assured ourselves that there are no matters of actual or potential non-compliance with laws, regulations and Proper Practices that could have a significant financial effect on the ability of this authority to conduct its business or manage its finances.	☒	☐	<i>has only done what it has the legal power to do and has complied with Proper Practices in doing so.</i>
4. We provided proper opportunity during the year for the exercise of electors' rights in accordance with the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations.	☒	☐	<i>during the year gave all persons interested the opportunity to inspect and ask questions about this authority's accounts.</i>
5. We carried out an assessment of the risks facing this authority and took appropriate steps to manage those risks, including the introduction of internal controls and/or external insurance cover where required.	☒	☐	<i>considered and documented the financial and other risks it faces and dealt with them properly.</i>
6. We maintained throughout the year an adequate and effective system of internal audit of the accounting records and control systems.	☒	☐	<i>arranged for a competent person, independent of the financial controls and procedures, to give an objective view on whether internal controls meet the needs of this smaller authority.</i>
7. We took appropriate action on all matters raised in reports from internal and external audit.	☒	☐	<i>responded to matters brought to its attention by internal and external audit.</i>
8. We considered whether any litigation, liabilities or commitments, events or transactions, occurring either during or after the year-end, have a financial impact on this authority and, where appropriate, have included them in the accounting statements.	☒	☐	<i>disclosed everything it should have about its business activity during the year including events taking place after the year end if relevant.</i>
9. (For local councils only) Trust funds including charitable, in our capacity as the sole managing trustee we discharged our accountability responsibilities for the fund(s)/assets, including financial reporting and, if required, independent examination or audit.	☐	☐	☒ <i>has met all of its responsibilities where, as a body corporate, it is a sole managing trustee of a local trust or trusts.</i>
10. We have put in place arrangements for the effective IT and data management in accordance with proper practices during the year under review.	☐	☒	<i>has made suitable arrangements for its IT and data management and has complied with proper practices in doing so.</i>

***Please provide explanations to the external auditor on a separate sheet for each 'No' response and describe how the authority will address the weaknesses identified. These sheets must be published with the Annual Governance Statement.**

This Annual Governance Statement was approved at a meeting of the authority on:

30/06/2026

and recorded as minute reference:

11/362

Signed by the Chair and Clerk of the meeting where approval was given:

Chair

Clerk

www.yeovil.gov.uk

ENTER PUBLICLY AVAILABLE WEBSITE/WEBPAGE ADDRESS

Section 2 – Accounting Statements 2025/26 for

YEovil TOWN COUNCIL

	Year ending		Notes and guidance
	31 March 2025 £	31 March 2026 £	
1. Balances brought forward	1,732,556	2,462,331	Total balances and reserves at the beginning of the year as recorded in the financial records. Value must agree to Box 7 of previous year.
2. (+) Precept or Rates and Levies	2,537,412	3,296,939	Total amount of precept (or for IDBs rates and levies) received or receivable in the year. Exclude any grants received.
3. (+) Total other receipts	2,467,433	4,491,305	Total income or receipts as recorded in the cashbook less the precept or rates/levies received (line 2). Include any grants received.
4. (-) Staff costs	1,803,202	3,050,634	Total expenditure or payments made to and on behalf of all employees. Include gross salaries and wages, employers NI contributions, employers pension contributions, gratuities and severance payments.
5. (-) Loan interest/capital repayments	0	0	Total expenditure or payments of capital and interest made during the year on the authority's borrowings (if any).
6. (-) All other payments	2,471,868	3,980,746	Total expenditure or payments as recorded in the cashbook less staff costs (line 4) and loan interest/capital repayments (line 5).
7. (=) Balances carried forward	2,462,331	3,219,195	Total balances and reserves at the end of the year. must equal (1+2+3) - (4+5+6).
8. Total value of cash and short term investments	3,308,968	3,793,174	The sum of all current and deposit bank accounts, cash holdings and short term investments held as at 31 March – To agree with bank reconciliation.
9. Total fixed assets plus long term investments and assets	1,587,646	1,656,241	The value of all the property the authority owns – it is made up of all its fixed assets and long term investments as at 31 March.
10. Total borrowings	0	0	The outstanding capital balance as at 31 March of all loans from third parties (including PWLB).

For Local Councils Only	Yes	No	
11 Do the figures in the accounting statements above exclude any trust transactions?	☒	☐	For guidance refer to the Practitioners' Guide sections 2.31 to 2.33.

I certify that for the year ended 31 March 2026 the Accounting Statements in this Annual Governance and Accountability Return have been prepared on either a receipts and payments or income and expenditure basis following the guidance in Governance and Accountability for Smaller Authorities – a Practitioners' Guide to Proper Practices and present fairly the financial position of this authority.

Signed by Responsible Financial Officer before being presented to the authority for approval.


 Date 23/06/2026

I confirm that these Accounting Statements were approved by this authority on this date:

30/06/2026

as recorded in minute reference:

11/363

Signed by Chair of the meeting where the Accounting Statements were approved



Section 3 – External Auditor's Report and Certificate 2025/26

In respect of **Yeovil Town Council - SO0316**

1 Respective responsibilities of the auditor and the authority

Our responsibility as auditors to complete a **limited assurance review** is set out by the National Audit Office (NAO). A limited assurance review is **not a full statutory audit**, it does not constitute an audit carried out in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK & Ireland) and hence it **does not** provide the same level of assurance that such an audit would. The UK Government has determined that a lower level of assurance than that provided by a full statutory audit is appropriate for those local public bodies with the lowest levels of spending.

Under a limited assurance review, the auditor is responsible for reviewing Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return in accordance with NAO Auditor Guidance Note 02 (AGN 02) as issued by the NAO on behalf of the Comptroller and Auditor General. AGN 02 is available from the NAO website – <https://www.nao.org.uk/code-audit-practice/guidance-and-information-for-auditors/>

This authority is responsible for ensuring that its financial management is adequate and effective and that it has a sound system of internal control. The authority prepares an Annual Governance and Accountability Return in accordance with *Proper Practices* which:

- summarises the accounting records for the year ended 31 March 2026; and
- confirms and provides assurance on those matters that are relevant to our duties and responsibilities as external auditors.

2 External auditor's limited assurance opinion 2025/26

On the basis of our review of Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR), in our opinion the information in Sections 1 and 2 of the AGAR is in accordance with Proper Practices and no other matters have come to our attention giving cause for concern that relevant legislation and regulatory requirements have not been met.

Please see below

Other matters not affecting our opinion which we draw to the attention of the authority:

We are unable to complete our review work on the AGAR and supporting documentation as a result of correspondence received in relation to 2025/26 and/or prior years. Once we have finalised our review and completed any additional work arising from that correspondence, a final report will be provided with the certificate of completion detailing any qualifications and 'other' matters.

Our fee note for the limited assurance review will be issued when we certify completion.

3 External auditor certificate 2025/26

We certify that we have completed our review of Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return, and discharged our responsibilities under the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, for the year ended 31 March 2026.

We do not certify completion because:

We have not been able to complete our review work in time to enable the authority to publish the required documentation in line with statutory requirements.

External Auditor Name

PKF LITTLEJOHN LLP

External Auditor Signature

Date

18 September 2026



COUNCILLOR – OFFICER RELATIONS PROTOCOL YEOVIL TOWN COUNCIL



YEOVIL TOWN COUNCIL



COUNCILLOR – OFFICER RELATIONS PROTOCOL

1. Purpose

- 1.1 Yeovil Town Council recognises that effective governance depends upon positive, professional and respectful working relationships between Councillors and Officers.
- 1.2 The purpose of this protocol is to:
- Define the respective roles of Councillors and Officers;
 - Promote mutual trust, respect and professionalism;
 - Support good governance and effective decision-making;
 - Clarify expectations regarding conduct and behaviour;
 - Protect the impartiality and integrity of Officers;
 - Support Councillors in fulfilling their democratic role; and
 - Provide guidance where concerns arise regarding Councillor-Officer relationships.

2. Scope

- 2.1 This protocol applies to:
- All Yeovil Town Councillors;
 - The Chief Executive/Town Clerk and all Council employees;
 - Co-opted members where applicable; and
 - Any individual acting on behalf of the Council.
- 2.2 This Protocol should be read alongside:
- The Members' Code of Conduct;
 - Standing Orders;
 - Financial Regulations;
 - Social Media Policy;
 - Whistleblowing Policy;
 - Employment Policies and Procedures; and
 - Relevant legislation and guidance.

3. Principles

- 3.1 Yeovil Town Council recognises that Councillors and Officers are servants of the public and are indispensable to one another.
- 3.2 The Council expects all working relationships to be based upon:
- Mutual respect;
 - Professionalism;
 - Courtesy;
 - Trust;
 - Integrity;
 - Openness;
 - Accountability;
 - Stewardship of public funds and resources on behalf of the residents and taxpayers of Yeovil Town; and
 - Recognition of the distinct roles of Councillors and Officers.
- 3.3 In carrying out their respective roles, Councillors and Officers shall seek to ensure that Council resources are used efficiently, proportionately and in the best interests of the community the Council serves. All parties should have regard to the Council's responsibilities as a publicly funded body and the importance of maintaining public confidence in the Council's governance and decision-making.
- 3.4 Neither Councillors nor Officers should seek to take unfair advantage of their position or exert undue influence upon the other.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

4.1 Councillors

- 4.1.1 Councillors are responsible for:
- Determining Council policy;
 - Providing community leadership;
 - Representing their constituents and the wider community;
 - Monitoring and reviewing Council performance;
 - Making decisions within the Council's constitutional framework; and
 - Representing the Council externally where authorised.
- 4.2 Councillors are accountable to the electorate and are responsible for ensuring that Council services meet community needs.
- 4.3 Councillors should not become involved in the day-to-day management or operational running of the Council, which is the responsibility of Officers.

4.4 Expectations of Councillors

4.4.1 Councillors are expected to:

- Act within the Council's policies and procedures;
- Work constructively with Officers;
- Treat Officers fairly, respectfully and courteously;
- Respect Officer impartiality and professional advice;
- Maintain confidentiality where required;
- Avoid bullying, harassment, intimidation or undue pressure;
- Treat all Officers, Councillors, contractors and members of the public fairly and without unlawful discrimination;
- Declare and manage conflicts of interest appropriately;
- Comply with the Members' Code of Conduct; and
- Refrain from directing Officers other than through proper Council procedures.

4.4.2 Councillors must not:

- Instruct employees directly;
- Authorise financial transactions without delegated authority;
- Use their position to secure personal advantage;
- Request Officers to act outside Council policies or legal requirements;
- Seek to improperly influence or pressure Officers to alter professional advice or recommendation; or
- Ask Officers to undertake work of a political nature or seek to involve Officers in party-political activity.

4.5 Chairs and Vice-Chairs

4.5.1 The Chair of the Council and Chairs of Committees may have a closer working relationship with Officers due to their additional responsibilities.

4.5.2 However, they must:

- Respect Officer impartiality;
- Act within delegated authority;
- Avoid directing Officers outside agreed arrangements; and
- Ensure decisions are made through proper Council processes.

4.6 Officers

4.6.1 Officers are responsible for:

- Advising and supporting Councillors;
- Implementing Council decisions;
- Managing the day-to-day operation of Council services;
- Providing professional and impartial advice;

- Administering Council functions efficiently and lawfully; and
- Supporting the Council's democratic processes.

4.6.2 Officers are accountable to the Council as a corporate body, not to individual Councillors.

4.7 Expectations of Officers

4.7.1 Officers are expected to:

- Act professionally, impartially and objectively;
- Implement lawful Council decisions;
- Treat all Councillors equally;
- Treat all persons fairly and without unlawful discrimination;
- Provide accurate and timely advice;
- Maintain confidentiality where appropriate;
- Support Councillors in carrying out their duties;
- Avoid political bias; and
- Work within Council policies and procedures.

4.7.2 Officers must not:

- Use their position to influence Council decisions improperly;
- Show favour to individual Councillors;
- Allow personal relationships to affect professional judgement; or
- Engage in party-political activity during the course of their duties.

5. Working Relationships

5.1 General Principles

5.1.1 Effective administration depends on positive working relationships.

5.1.2 Councillors and Officers should:

- Respect each other's roles and responsibilities;
- Communicate openly and professionally;
- Avoid personal criticism;
- Seek to resolve disagreements constructively; and
- Always act in the best interests of the Council.

5.1.3 Councillors should not raise matters relating to the conduct, capability or performance of an Officer in public meetings, in the media or on social media. Concerns should be raised privately through the appropriate channels.

- 5.1.4 Where close personal relationships exist between Councillors and Officers, they should be managed appropriately to avoid actual or perceived conflicts of interest, preferential treatment or reputational risk to the Council.

5.2 Day-to-Day Management

- 5.2.1 Officers are responsible for determining the most appropriate means of implementing Council decisions, subject to any direction lawfully given by the Council.

- 5.2.2 Responsibility for managing employees rests with the Chief Executive/Town Clerk.

- 5.2.3 Councillors:

- Must not give instructions directly to employees;
- Must communicate operational matters through the Chief Executive/Town Clerk; and
- Should not become involved in personnel management issues.

- 5.2.4 Unless specifically authorised by the Chief Executive/Town Clerk, communications regarding operational matters should be directed through the Chief Executive/Town Clerk.

5.3 Bullying, Harassment and Undue Pressure

- 5.3.1 The Council will not tolerate:

- Bullying;
- Harassment;
- Intimidation;
- Victimisation; or
- Abuse of authority.

- 5.3.2 Examples of unacceptable behaviour may include persistent unreasonable demands, excessive correspondence, personal criticism, intimidation, or behaviour which has the purpose or effect of undermining an individual's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment.

- 5.3.3 Such conduct may result in action under the Members' Code of Conduct or the Council's employment procedures.

6. Councillors' Access to Information

- 6.1 Councillors are entitled to access information reasonably required to enable them to fulfil their duties as elected members. Requests for information must be reasonable, proportionate and relevant to the discharge of those duties. Councillors should make requests as specific as possible, explain the purpose for which the information is required and identify any particular urgency. In making requests,

Councillors must have regard to the Council's obligation to ensure that public resources, including officer time, are used effectively and proportionately. Requests should normally be directed to the Chief Executive/Town Clerk

6.2 The Chief Executive/Town Clerk will require any request that is broad, repeated, overlapping, unclear or likely to require disproportionate officer time or Council resources to be clarified, narrowed, prioritised or submitted in stages. In determining how a request will be handled, regard shall be had to the purpose and importance of the request, the resources required to respond, the Council's statutory and operational responsibilities, and the need to ensure the efficient use of public funds. The Council is not required to commit disproportionate resources to any individual request.

6.3 Access to information is subject to:

- Legal restrictions;
- Data protection legislation;
- Confidentiality requirements; and
- The common law "need to know" principle.

6.4 **Need to Know Principle – Examples**

6.4.1 A Councillor's right to access information is based on whether the information is reasonably necessary to enable them to carry out their duties as a Councillor. This is known as the "need to know" principle. Councillors do not have an automatic right to inspect all Council documents. Access will depend on the purpose for which the information is requested, the Councillor's role and responsibilities and any legal or confidentiality restrictions that may apply.

6.5 **Assessing a Need to Know**

6.5.1 Whether a Councillor has a need to know will depend on the purpose for which the information is requested, the Councillor's role and responsibilities, the Council function to which the information relates, and any legal, confidentiality or data protection obligations that apply. Each request will be considered on its own merits, having regard to the Councillor's ability to fulfil their duties effectively and the Council's obligations to protect information where appropriate.

6.6 **Personal and Confidential Information**

6.6.1 Particular care should be exercised where requests involve personal, confidential or commercially sensitive information.

6.6.2 Examples include:

- Employee personnel files;
- Grievance, disciplinary or capability records;

- Recruitment and selection documentation;
- Personal information relating to residents, tenants or service users;
- Information protected under data protection legislation;
- Legally privileged advice;
- Commercially sensitive contracts, quotations or tender submissions; and
- Information provided to the Council in confidence.

6.6.3 In such cases, a Councillor must demonstrate a clear and specific need to know. Even where a need to know exists, access may be limited, redacted, provided by supervised inspection, summarised, or refused where disclosure would breach data protection legislation, employment law, contractual obligations, legal privilege or confidentiality requirements.

6.6.4 Councillors receiving exempt, confidential, personal or commercially sensitive information must ensure that such information is stored and handled securely and must not disclose, circulate, copy or use that information other than for the proper discharge of their duties as a Councillor.

6.7 Determining Need to Know

6.7.1 The Chief Executive/Town Clerk will normally determine whether a sufficient need to know exists, having regard to relevant legislation, confidentiality obligations, data protection requirements and the Councillor's role and responsibilities. Where appropriate, legal or professional advice may be sought.

6.7.2 Councillors should provide sufficient information regarding the purpose of their request to enable an informed assessment to be made.

6.7.3 In considering whether a need to know exists, regard will be had to the Councillor's duties as an elected member, including:

- Participation in Council and Committee decision-making;
- Scrutiny and monitoring of Council activities, services and expenditure;
- Representation of constituents and community interests; and
- Any specific responsibilities delegated by the Council.

6.7.4 In considering requests for information, regard should also be had to the principles of proportionality, transparency, accountability and the efficient use of Council resources. Requests should be supported where reasonably necessary to enable Councillors to discharge their duties effectively, whilst recognising the Council's obligations to balance openness with legal, confidentiality and data protection requirements.

6.7.5 Any information provided must only be used for the purpose for which it was supplied and must not be disclosed to others without proper authority.

- 6.7.6 Where a Councillor disagrees with a decision to refuse or limit access to information, the matter may be referred to the Executive for review. In undertaking such a review, the Executive shall consider whether the provisions of this Protocol have been applied correctly and may seek legal or professional advice as necessary
- 6.7.7 Nothing in this Protocol shall require the disclosure of information where disclosure would be unlawful or would breach data protection legislation, employment law, legal privilege, contractual obligations or any duty of confidence owed by the Council.

6.8 Freedom of Information

- 6.8.1 Nothing in this Protocol prevents a Councillor from making a request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, although Councillors will normally seek information through their role as elected members in the first instance.
- 6.8.2 Such requests will be considered in accordance with the requirements of the Act. Councillors should note that rights of access available through their role as elected members may differ from rights available to members of the public under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

7. Correspondence

- 7.1 Correspondence between Councillors and Officers should be conducted professionally and respectfully.
- 7.2 The Council expects that:
- Correspondence should only be copied to other Councillors where there is a legitimate Council purpose for doing so;
 - Confidential information will be treated appropriately;
 - Officers will normally issue official correspondence on behalf of the Council; and
 - Councillors will not issue instructions or commitments on behalf of the Council unless specifically authorised.

8. Press and Media

- 8.1 The Council recognises the importance of accurate and responsible communications.
- 8.2 Media enquiries should normally be managed through the Chief Executive/Town Clerk.
- 8.3 When dealing with the media:
- Officers may provide factual and professional information;
 - Officers must not express political opinions;

- Chairs of Committees may act as Council spokesperson where appropriate;
- Public statements on behalf of the Council should reflect agreed Council policy; and
- All communications must comply with relevant legislation and Council policies.

9. Social Media

9.1 Councillors and Officers should use social media responsibly.

9.2 Users must:

- Maintain professional standards;
- Respect confidentiality;
- Avoid conduct that could bring the Council into disrepute;
- Comply with the Members' Code of Conduct and Council policies; and
- Avoid personal criticism of Councillors, Officers or members of the public.

10. Confidentiality

10.1 Councillors and Officers must:

- Respect confidential information;
- Process information in accordance with data protection legislation;
- Avoid unauthorised disclosure of information; and
- Use Council information only for legitimate Council business.

11. Resolving Concerns

11.1 Concerns Raised by Officers

11.1.1 Where concerns arise regarding the conduct of a Councillor, Officers should:

- Seek informal resolution where appropriate;
- Raise concerns with the Chief Executive/Town Clerk;
- Follow the Council's grievance procedures where necessary; and
- Refer potential breaches of the Members' Code of Conduct through the appropriate standards process.

11.2 Concerns Raised by Councillors

11.2.1 Where concerns arise regarding the conduct, behaviour or performance of an Officer, Councillors should:

- Raise concerns privately and constructively;
- Discuss matters with the Chief Executive/Town Clerk in the first instance;

- Where concerns relate to the Chief Executive/Town Clerk, Councillors should raise the matter with the Staffing Committee;
- Avoid criticism of Officers in public meetings or social media; and
- Use the Council's established employment procedures where formal action is required.

11.2.2 Councillors must not seek to manage employee performance directly.

12. Responsibilities

12.1 Councillors

12.1.1 Councillors are responsible for:

- Complying with this Protocol;
- Maintaining professional relationships with Officers;
- Respecting Officer roles and responsibilities; and
- Supporting good governance.

12.2 Officers

12.2.1 Officers are responsible for:

- Providing professional and impartial advice;
- Maintaining constructive relationships with Councillors;
- Implementing Council decisions; and
- Complying with this Protocol.

12.3 Chief Executive/Town Clerk

12.3.1 The Chief Executive/Town Clerk is responsible for:

- Supporting effective Councillor-Officer relationships;
- Providing advice on the interpretation of this Protocol;
- Managing employee matters;
- Promoting good governance; and
- Ensuring consistent application of this Protocol.

13. Breaches of this Protocol

13.1 Breaches of this Protocol by Councillors may be considered under the Members' Code of Conduct where appropriate and where the conduct complained of falls within the scope of the Code.

13.2 Breaches of this Protocol by employees may be dealt with under the Council's disciplinary procedures.

13.3 Informal resolution should always be considered where appropriate.

14. Monitoring and Review

- 14.1 The Council will keep this Protocol under regular review to ensure it remains effective and reflects legislative and organisational requirements.
- 14.2 This Protocol will be reviewed every five years or sooner where changes in legislation, guidance or operational requirements necessitate amendment.

Yeovil Town Council
September 2026
To be reviewed: September 2031

11/396 TRANSFER OF OPEN SPACES AND PLAY AREAS – ACQUISITION OF FREEHOLD INTEREST

Report Author: Amanda Card – Chief Executive / Town Clerk
E-mail: amanda.card@yeovil.gov.uk
Meeting: Town Council
Date: 6th October 2026

Council is **RECOMMENDED:**

- 1) to note the report;
- 2) to note the valuation, condition information, planning matters, legal and title matters, financial implications and business case set out within this report;
- 3) having considered the matters required by Financial Regulation 16.4, to approve the acquisition of the freehold interest in the open spaces and play areas listed in Appendix 1, at a peppercorn consideration (£1 if demanded);
- 4) to authorise the execution and sealing of all necessary legal documentation in accordance with Standing Order 26; and
- 5) to authorise the Chief Executive/Town Clerk to complete all actions necessary to give effect to this resolution.

Purpose of Report

To seek formal Council approval for the acquisition of the freehold interest in the open spaces and play areas transferring from Somerset Council to Yeovil Town Council in accordance with Financial Regulation 16.4.

Background and Chronology

As part of the local government devolution programme, Yeovil Town Council has progressively assumed responsibility for a range of assets and services previously provided by Somerset Council.

The key decisions relating to the transfer of open spaces and play areas are as follows:

- **23 April 2024 (Minute 11/206)** – Policy, Resources and Finance Committee considered a report on the devolution of assets and services and recommended that Town Council take on full responsibility for all open spaces, play areas and Yeovil in Bloom.
- **14 May 2024 (Minute 11/191)** – Town Council resolved to take on full responsibility for all open spaces, play areas and Yeovil in Bloom and approved the associated funding and budget provisions.

- **19 May 2025 (Minute 11/258)** – Leisure and Environment Committee authorised the Management Agreement for Tranche 2 of the Devolution Programme.
- **1 June 2025** – Yeovil Town Council assumed responsibility for the management and maintenance of the open spaces and play areas.
- **25 November 2025 (Minute 11/343)** – Finance & Policy Executive authorised the legal deeds relating to the proposed freehold transfer to be executed in accordance with Standing Order 26.

The freehold transfer forms part of the agreed Devolution Programme and will proceed as appropriate following completion of the necessary legal processes and approvals.

Land to be Acquired

The proposed acquisition comprises the open spaces and play areas listed in Appendix 1. These assets have been managed and maintained by Yeovil Town Council since 1 June 2025 and are currently used as public open spaces, recreation land and children's play facilities for the benefit of the community.

Valuation

The freehold interest is being transferred by Somerset Council to Yeovil Town Council at a peppercorn consideration (£1 if demanded).

The transfer forms part of a local government devolution arrangement and is not a commercial transaction. Given the public open space and recreational use of the land, officers consider the consideration appropriate having regard to the nature and purpose of the transfer.

The principal financial commitment arising from the transfer is the ongoing maintenance, management and future lifecycle costs of the assets, which the Council has already agreed to assume as part of the devolution process.

Condition of the Property

Since 1 June 2025, the Council has managed and maintained the open spaces and play areas under the Management Agreement.

Through routine inspections, play area inspections, maintenance activities and site assessments, officers have developed a detailed understanding of the condition of the assets and any associated maintenance liabilities. The site inspections and asset condition assessments undertaken by officers constitute the Council's assessment of the condition of the assets for the purposes of Financial Regulation 16.4.

Officers are satisfied that the Council understands the maintenance responsibilities and future liabilities associated with ownership and that the assets are suitable for transfer.

Planning, Covenants, Easements and Other Legal Matters

Officers are not aware of any planning permissions affecting the Council's proposed use of the land as public open space and recreation land, and the existing community use of the sites will continue following transfer.

The Council's solicitors have reviewed the title information and transfer documentation. The land is subject to rights, easements, covenants and restrictions typical of public open space and recreation land. The Council's legal advisers have confirmed that there are no title matters that would prevent the Council acquiring and continuing to use the land for community purposes.

Business Case

The acquisition will:

- secure long-term local ownership of important community assets;
- protect public open spaces and play facilities for current and future residents;
- provide certainty regarding the long-term management of the land;
- allow local decision-making regarding maintenance and future improvements;
- support the environmental, recreational and community wellbeing objectives of the Council; and
- deliver the objectives previously approved by Council as part of the Devolution Programme.

The acquisition is consistent with previous Council decisions and with the approved Having previously resolved to take on responsibility for the open spaces and play areas, and having managed and maintained the assets since 1st June 2025, the Council considers acquisition of the freehold interest to be the appropriate mechanism for securing long-term ownership and control of these community assets.

Compliance with Financial Regulation 16.4

Financial Regulation 16.4 states:

"No interest in land shall be purchased or otherwise acquired, sold, leased or otherwise disposed of without the authority of the council, together with any other consents required by law. In each case a written report shall be provided to council in respect of valuation and surveyed condition of the property (including matters such as planning permissions and covenants) together with a proper business case (including an adequate level of consultation with the electorate where required by law)."

This report provides information relating to the valuation, condition, planning matters, covenants, legal matters and business case relating to the proposed acquisition. No additional statutory consultation requirements have been identified.

Financial Implications

The transfer is at a peppercorn consideration. Ongoing maintenance and future capital investment requirements will continue to be considered through the Council's normal budget-setting and asset management processes.

Freehold to be transferred

- Westfield Grove Recreation Ground & Play Area
- Monksdale Recreation Ground
- Pembroke Road Open Space & Play Area (Oxford Road)
- Rosebery Avenue
- Kingston View Recreation Ground
- Howard Road Recreation Ground
- Fielding Road Recreation Ground
- Grass Royal Recreation Ground
- Milford Park (including Recreation Ground, Adventure Park, Skatepark, MUGA and Community Hall)
- Higher Milford Valley Playing Field (Upper Milford Valley)
- Lower Milford Valley Playing Field
- Westland Road Recreation Ground & Play Area
- Preston Park & Play Area
- Sidney Gardens
- Turners Barn Lane
- Yew Tree Park Recreation Ground
- Century Park
- Birchfield Park (West only)
- Bell Chase
- College Green
- Oaklands Road
- St John's Road Play Area & Compound
- Summerhouse View Play Area
- Harbin Close Play Area
- Abbots Meade Play Area

The detail has been sent separately within Appendix 1.

11/397 ACQUISITION OF ADDITIONAL WORKSPACE AT PEN MILL TRADING ESTATE

Report Author: Tim Cook – Director of Property & Community
 Amanda Card – Chief Executive / Town Clerk

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

Meeting: Town Council

Date: 6th October 2026

Council is **RECOMMENDED:**

- 1) to note that the Property & Community Committee, at its meeting held on 9th June 2026, agreed that Yeovil Town Council should proceed with the leasing of a business unit at Pen Mill Trading Estate;
- 2) to note that the Council, at its meeting held on 30 June 2026, ratified the resolutions and recommendations of the Property & Community Committee relating to this matter;
- 3) to note that lease negotiations have now been concluded and that the lease documentation is ready for execution;
- 4) in accordance with Scheme of Delegation paragraph 3.12 and Financial Regulation 16.4, to formally approve the acquisition by lease of the business unit at Pen Mill Trading Estate for the purposes set out in the previously considered reports; and
- 5) to authorise the Chief Executive/Town Clerk to execute the lease and any ancillary documentation necessary to complete the transaction on behalf of Yeovil Town Council.

Purpose of Report

To advise Council of the decisions already taken in respect of the proposed lease of a business unit at Pen Mill Trading Estate, to note that Council ratified the relevant committee resolutions on 30th June 2026, and, for completeness and good governance, to seek a formal Council resolution approving the acquisition by lease in accordance with Scheme of Delegation paragraph 3.12 and Financial Regulation 16.4.

Background

At its meeting held on 9th June 2026, the Property & Community Committee considered a report regarding the provision of additional workspace for Yeovil Town Council.

Following consideration of the report, the Committee resolved:

- (1) to note the report;
- (2) to agree to securing the vacant business unit on the Pen Mill Trading Estate;
- (3) to recommend an up to budget of £165,000 for capital works; and
- (4) to delegate authority to the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Chair of the Property & Community Committee and the Chair of the Executive, to finalise and sign the lease.

The proposal was subsequently considered by the Executive on 23rd June 2026, which supported the project and delegated authority to the Chief Executive/Town Clerk, in consultation with the relevant Chairs, to finalise and sign the lease.

At its meeting held on 30th June 2026, Yeovil Town Council received the reports and recommendations from its committees. Council resolved:

“That the minutes of the above Committees be noted together with any resolutions and recommendations contained therein to be ratified.”

Accordingly, the resolutions of the Property & Community Committee relating to the proposed lease of the Pen Mill Trading Estate premises were ratified by Council.

Current Position

Following completion of negotiations and legal discussions, the lease documentation has now been finalised and the Council is in a position to proceed with execution of the lease.

Whilst Council ratified the relevant committee resolutions on 30th June 2026, it is considered prudent and in the interests of transparency, good governance and audit assurance that Council now expressly approves the acquisition of the property by way of lease before the lease is executed.

Financial and Governance Considerations

Scheme of Delegation paragraph 3.12 and Financial Regulation 16.4 require matters relating to interests in land to be authorised by Council.

Council has previously ratified the relevant committee resolutions. However, given that the transaction concerns the acquisition of an interest in land by way of lease, a specific Council resolution will provide a clear and unambiguous record of the Council's approval prior to completion of the transaction.

The process to agree to secure the building at 1 Oxford Road included a business case demonstrating the need, exploration of the market to produce a shortlist of available property, drop in sessions for both Members and Officers, engaging a commercial agent to inform support officers to understand the current market conditions. All details have been previously reported to Council via the Property & Community Committee.

The acquisition of the business unit at Pen Mill Trading Estate represents a significant long-term commitment for the Council. The principal risks associated with the lease have been assessed and are considered manageable and proportionate to the operational benefits of securing additional workspace. The key risks and mitigation measures are summarised below.

Assessment of Risk

Financial Risk

The Council will commit to an initial annual rental liability of £39,500 together with utility, maintenance, insurance and operational costs associated with occupation. Future rent reviews may increase the rental liability over time. This risk is mitigated through the four-month rent-free period, the inclusion of a tenant break option after ten years, and regular budget monitoring through the Council's financial management processes.

Property Condition and Dilapidations Risk

Under the terms of the lease, the Council accepts responsibility for repair and maintenance of the premises. However, this risk has been substantially mitigated through the inclusion of a Schedule of Condition, which limits the Council's repairing obligations to the condition of the property at the commencement of the lease and reduces the potential for significant dilapidations liabilities at lease expiry.

Operational Risk

The acquisition is intended to address existing accommodation constraints and provide improved operational facilities for Council staff, equipment and services. Delays in completing planned refurbishment works could affect the efficient occupation of the building. To mitigate this risk, the project has been phased to ensure that key operational areas can be occupied immediately, with essential welfare, security and access improvements prioritised.

Market and Accommodation Risk

Failure to secure suitable accommodation would constrain future service delivery and limit opportunities to improve operational efficiency. The Council has undertaken a review of available property options, developed a business case and engaged professional advisers before identifying this property as the preferred solution.

Environmental Risk

Potential liability associated with historic contamination has been addressed through negotiations with the landlord and the inclusion of environmental protections within the lease documentation. The Council's liability is restricted in accordance with the agreed lease provisions.

Overall Assessment

Having considered the financial, operational, legal and property-related risks associated with the proposed lease, officers are satisfied that appropriate mitigation measures are in place and that the residual risk to the Council is low to medium and acceptable in the context of the operational benefits to be achieved.

Summary of Lease

The detailed negotiations have largely been in line with the original Heads of Terms. The proposed lease secures long-term (20 years) occupation of the property at an initial rent of £39,500 per annum, with a four-month rent-free period and a tenant break option in year 10. The Council has secured important protections through solicitor negotiations, notably the Schedule of Condition limiting repair liabilities and a comprehensive environmental contamination exclusion and indemnity.

Lease Term

- Proposed lease term of 20 years, expiring in 2046.
- Tenant break option after 10 years (2036), exercisable on at least six months' notice.

Rent

- Initial annual rent of £39,500 per annum.
- Rent payable monthly in advance.
- Four-month rent-free period from commencement, during which only a peppercorn rent is payable if demanded.

Rent Review

- Rent reviewed every five years.
- Revised rent will be the higher of:
 - CPI-linked rent increase; or
 - Open market rental value.
- CPI increases are capped at 4% per annum.
- An upwards-only provision (rent cannot fall below passing rent).

Repairing and Maintenance Responsibilities

The lease is effectively on a **full repairing basis**, but importantly:

- The Council's repairing obligations are to keep the Property in good and substantial repair and condition" subject only to the Schedule of Condition limitations. Obligations are limited by a Schedule of Condition attached to the lease. The Council is not required to put the property into a better condition than that evidenced at lease commencement.
- The Council is responsible for repair, maintenance, decoration and upkeep of the leased premises.
- The landlord retains responsibility for common parts and wider estate infrastructure.
- The landlord retains responsibility for historic contamination.

This is a significant protection for the Council given the age and condition of the building.

Other costs relating to lease provisions

- Estate service charge. – No established charge. All future repairs and maintenance of the access road to be negotiated on a case by case basis.
- Common part charge. As above.

There is no formal service charge regime, but the Council remains liable for a reasonable proportion of specific maintenance, access road, service media and insurance costs.

The complete, final draft of the lease is available on request, via appointment.

Building alterations – Update

Members will recall that Alan Young was engaged to provide advice and drawings to enable accurate costing of refurbishment/repurposing works.

The lease is accompanied by a 'Licence to Alter' which details the works required for the building to meet the operational requirements. Works required include the provision of additional toilet facilities and welfare space, additional office space created in the downstairs space (previously used as open plan retail area), installation of a passenger lift and removal of racking and an engineering solution to support the mezzanine floor.

Security and access arrangements are already in place and will 'go live' at the point of occupation. The IT infrastructure enables the office space to be used immediately ensuring a YTC presence in the building from day one.

The planned works are phased with improved welfare provision and passenger lift prioritised in the first phase. The Estates Team can operate from the workshop area from day one due to the fact that much of the work through the Autumn requires small tools. Phase 1 will also include security fencing around the site.

Phase 2 will see the work to remove the racking and install a steel frame to support the mezzanine, the new office space will be created along with new toilets in the

downstairs front area of the building. Phase 2 will be done ahead of the Spring to enable the safe storage of larger machinery.

Phase 3 will include works to the mezzanine to establish additional meeting space and storage areas. This work is subject to budget availability as the area is useable as it is.

Plans for the complete works have been submitted to building control and quotes for the phase 1 work have been obtained.

Equality Impact

The proposed works, including installation of a passenger lift and improved welfare facilities, will improve accessibility and support compliance with the Council's obligations under the Equality Act 2010.