



# Yeovil Town Council

Town House  
19 Union Street  
Yeovil  
Somerset  
BA20 1PQ

## Leisure and Environment Committee

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### Leisure and Environment Committee

**Monday 7<sup>th</sup> July 2025**

**7:00pm**

**Hybrid Meeting:**

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

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For further information on the items to be discussed, please contact  
[town.clerk@yeovil.gov.uk](mailto:town.clerk@yeovil.gov.uk).

**Amanda Card**, Chief Executive / Town Clerk  
1<sup>st</sup> July 2025

This information is also available on our website: [www.yeovil.gov.uk](http://www.yeovil.gov.uk)

**Members of Yeovil Town Council are summoned to attend:**

Jade Cabell	Wes Read ( <i>Ex-Officio</i> )
Tareth Casey	Andy Soughton
Karl Gill	Roy Spinner
Andy Kendall	Adrian Wilkes
Jamie Lock (Vice Chair)	Dave Woan
Tony Lock ( <i>Ex-Officio</i> )	

Dave Potten – Co-opted (non-voting) Member

**Public Comments at meetings (held via Zoom)**

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

If you would like to join the meeting via zoom, please e-mail [ytic@yeovil.gov.uk](mailto:ytic@yeovil.gov.uk) by 9:00am on Monday 7<sup>th</sup> July 2025. Instructions will be sent to you to view the meeting.

## **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](http://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.

# **A G E N D A**

## **Public Comment (15 Minutes)**

Due to the confidential nature of the business of item 11/273, under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 s3, a motion to exclude members of the public and press during discussion of this item will be considered by the Councillors. *Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 s3*

### **11/262. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND TO CONSIDER THE REASONS GIVEN**

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

### **11/263. 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).

### **11/264. MINUTES**

To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the meetings held on 19<sup>th</sup> May 2025.

### **11/265. FEEDBACK FROM YEOVIL ALLOTMENT ASSOCIATION BY THE REPRESENTATIVE FROM YEOVIL TOWN COUNCIL**

To receive any feedback via Cllr Spinner.

### **11/266. FEEDBACK FROM CO-OPTED NON-VOTING MEMBER**

To consider a verbal update.

### **11/267. ALLOTMENT LETTING/AVAILABILITY REPORT**

To consider the report by the Assistant Town Clerk attached at page 6 (correct at time of publishing of this agenda).

### **11/268. ALLOTMENTS UPDATE REPORT**

To note the report by the Assistant Town Clerk attached at pages 7 to 8.

### **11/269. YEOVIL IN BLOOM UPDATE**

To consider the verbal report by the Deputy Town Clerk and the Yeovil in Bloom portfolio (circulated separately to Councillors).

**11/270. DEVOLUTION UPDATE REPORT**

To consider the report by the Director of Leisure and Environment attached at pages 9 to 12.

**11/271. PROCUREMENT REPORT PURCHASE OF MOWERS – URGENT DECISION: FOR INFORMATION**

To consider the report by the Director of Leisure and Environment attached at pages 13 to 14.

**11/272. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

The Committee will consider passing a resolution to exclude the press and public from the *next item* in accordance with Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 on the grounds that publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

**11/273. PROCUREMENT REPORT PURCHASE OF MOWERS – CONFIDENTIAL**

To consider the report by the Director of Leisure and Environment attached at pages 15 to 19.

Site Name	Plots on site	Vacant Plots	Let Plots	Percentage of let plots
Elizabeth flats	25	7	18	72%
Goar Knap	42	5	37	88%
Hillcrest	9	0	9	100%
Larkhill	30	1	29	97%
Milford Dip	41	0	41	100%
Monksdale	19	2	17	89%
Newtown	34	0	34	100%
Rustywell	23	2	21	91%
St Georges	28	1	27	96%
Sunningdale	56	5	51	91%
Turners Barn Lane	24	0	24	100%
Totals -	331	23	308	93%

Note -

Highlighted plots have been offered out to potential tenants

33 new tenants joined the allotment sites from March 2025 to June 2025

28 people on the waiting list, with 21.43% first choice for Milford Dip

**ALLOTMENT UPDATES****Best Kept Allotment Competition****Background**

Yeovil Town Council's Best Kept Allotment Competition has been held every year on an unspecified date in the summer months. Every tenant was automatically entered for this competition.

The allotment plots were considered by the judges who visited all sites in one day and considered entries for the following categories:

Best Kept Allotment

Best Individual Crop

Best Allotment Design

Best Produce

Best Winter Produce – not judged for several years

Best Flowers

Best New Allotment Holder

Best Allotment Site Overall

Each prize winner received a trophy to have for one year and an engraved shield to keep. The results evening was held alongside the Yeovil in Bloom Gardening Competition.

**Competition 2025**

The Best Kept Allotment Competition has been a well-loved tradition across the allotments. Unfortunately, the competition will not be taking place in 2025 due to resources and the retirement of our judges. The Yeovil in Bloom Gardening Competition has been postponed for 2025 which has had an impact on the BKA Competition's results evening.

**Growing Together Competition**

This is a new competition for 2025 to recognise the efforts, improvements, helpfulness and community spirit across our allotment sites. This competition gives us a chance to positively promote the allotments and allow the tenants to be involved with the results.

The deadline for nominations is Friday 22 August 2025 and all the Tenant Representatives have been asked for their nomination.



### **Sunningdale Allotment Security**

In November 2021, the padlocks at Sunningdale allotment site were switched to combo padlocks as a temporary measure for the safety of the site. The tenants found the numbers difficult to read and the locks became fiddly. Sunningdale will now return to key padlocks and we are working with the Tenant Representative to ensure every tenant has been issued a new key.

### **Sunningdale Elm Tree**

The tree report identified there was a semi – mature elm tree at Sunningdale allotments that required urgent attention. This has now been removed from the allotments.

The Committee is **RECOMMENDED** to note the report.

(Lucy Ryder, Assistant Town Clerk  
[Lucy.ryder@yeovil.gov.uk](mailto:Lucy.ryder@yeovil.gov.uk))



## **11/270 DEVOLUTION UPDATE REPORT**

### **Introduction**

On the 1<sup>st</sup> August 2024 tranche 1 of the devolution program took place when the facilities at Yeovil Country Park and Yeovil Recreation Centre transferred to Yeovil Town Council under an interim License to Occupy. Tranche 2 of the devolution program involved the transfer of all open spaces across the town, the play areas and the In Bloom program. A Management Agreement was signed on Friday 6<sup>th</sup> June 2025 enabling the new Estates Team to start work on the sites. The freehold transfer of the sites will progress this summer under a newly appointed Head of Devolution at Somerset Council.

### **New staff**

The Estates team was in place by Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> May with new team members completing an induction and driver assessment training towards the end of the month. The Estates Manager has coordinated visits to all sites with new maintenance schedules & routes being completed. The final member of the team joined on 23<sup>rd</sup> June after a second round of recruitment.

The TUPE of the part time play officer is delayed and meetings are on-going with Somerset Council.

### **Management Agreement**

A Management Agreement was signed between Yeovil Town Council and Somerset Council on Friday 6<sup>th</sup> June enabling the Town Council to start work as planned on Monday 9<sup>th</sup> June. The delay was due to a lack of information on Birchfield open space and to allow for legal advice to be taken on the draft document. The document sets out the responsibilities of each organisation in the interim period before freehold transfer.

### **Open Spaces**

Handover visits were completed with Somerset Council (SC) staff on 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> May to all open spaces. Lists of outstanding tree work and bin repairs were shared with the SC team leaders and agreed via the devolution officer for action by Somerset Council. The Estate Manager continues to monitor these for completion. As part of the visit's key future improvements and projects were noted on site record sheets and the Estates Manager is using these to write management and maintenance plans for all spaces. The Parks Engagement Officer is starting work with local groups e.g. Air Cadets at Upper Milford to understand how the sites are used and what aspirations groups may have. This work will develop into engagement activities with the local residents later in the summer.

Examples of works that are proposed –

Upper Milford – improve the boardwalk and access steps, provide nature enhancement areas and work with adjacent Air Cadets to implement and monitor biodiversity improvements. After local consultation & improvement works propose the site as suitable for Local Nature Reserve designation. Implement nature trail and all ability access trail.

Preston Park – clean and upgrade site signage, research via the Heritage Collection the historic records to inform future management, consider moving large bin from hamstone gateway feature, implement wildflower banks on steeper slopes, significant repair works to play area. Interpret history of site through static information and through history walks.

Yew Tree Park – new bollards to be added for additional security of the site, line marking of the large, surfaced pitches to allow basketball and football more effectively. Improvements to general look of car park area, wildflower patches as part of wider scheme with mown central grass for sports and activities, engagement with Scouts over use of site.

Since the beginning of June the team have been faced with almost a deluge of enquires from residents about grass and hedge cutting (significant enquiries for Birchfield), this is due to Somerset Council further decreasing their cutting rounds. The Estates team are doing their best to attend all sites, but obviously exceptionally long grass takes substantially longer to cut and make tidy on these first visits. Residents that the team have spoken to are understanding of the situation.

A new initial suite of signage is in development to welcome users to open spaces, these will be added to with notice boards and blackboards in the coming months and part of the wider plan to provide greater community engagement at the sites.

People counters will be used at gateways across the sites to monitor use and inform future management and maintenance schedules. Footfall is a key question in all grant applications and so having up to date and accurate visitor user figures for facilities is of key importance.

The Town Council now has responsibility for a significant number of trees and woodland areas. The tree management data from past inspections and works is coming in a number of different formats from legacy council systems, we need to find the best way forward to inspect and manage our tree stock. This ensures that our open spaces are safe to access, and also preserves the life of trees as they are proactively managed. The Estates Manager and Director have been speaking with arboriculture teams and other councils to understand which software product they use for tree management and will be seeking demonstrations from a number that offer appropriate tools. Trees that have any target value (paths, buildings) will be inspected a minimum of annually, more frequently if there are concerns over potential failure or infections & disease. To inspect the tree stock team members will hold a minimum of a LANTRA level 1 tree inspection qualification. A new Tree Policy will be drafted for adoption by this committee later this year.

Written monthly site inspections will take place across all the open spaces informing the maintenance schedules and ensuring the team are abreast of any emerging issues.

## **Play**

The Council took on management of 23 play areas on June 6<sup>th</sup>. Somerset Council are still completing the weekly inspections as part of a phased handover and linked to the delayed TUPE of a part time staff member.

The Estate Manager and Estates Officer who is a play specialist have been carrying out baseline inspections and have a number of high priority issues to resolve. Lyde Ward Members will be aware that the Howard Road play area fencing needs removing as it poses a hazard, its replacement will be reviewed in due course. Structurally the raised wooden walkway at Preston Park also needs swift attention. Overall, the play areas are not in a good state of repair and the team will compile a replacement and repair schedule that is inline with the allocated budget for Play.

## **Yeovil In Bloom**

The Gardener has worked exceptionally hard to deliver In Bloom civic displays this spring and summer. The closure of Lufton plant nursery and the late TUPE meant that options were limited for plant supply, however St John's is planted and provided the first team effort as the spring bulbs were stripped (and given to community groups) and summer planting scheme installed.

The focus for 2025 displays includes St John's churchyard, Westlands Entertainment beds, Ninesprings beds, Yeovil Recreation Centre tubs, town centre tubs & hanging baskets, Preston Road war memorial and other town entrance beds. With substantially less labour available than in previous years the Gardener is working his way around as swiftly as he can, not aided by some very dry weather! Our approach from this Autumn will be to make greater use of perennials, reducing the need for as much summer bedding, and the Town House will have weed treatment and a new perennial planting scheme.

The Parks Engagement Officer started on 23<sup>rd</sup> May and immediately was launched into coordinating the It's Your Neighbourhood (IYN) entries and In Bloom judging content. Judging day is Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> July and the formal tour is closing with a community picnic at Ninesprings that will celebrate our green and horticultural communities and groups. Our expectations for this year's outcome are reserved, but we are delighted with the support from communities across the town.

## **Next steps**

The Country Park (grass cutting) and allotment maintenance will be picked up by the Estates Team from 1<sup>st</sup> July and so familiarisation and schedules are being completed for the commencement of those works.

A tree management software programme will be procured and Tree Policy brought to committee.

Staff training will continue and relevant courses completed to ensure the Estates Team are multi-disciplinary with resilience across the team.

The Property team is assisting with the construction of a shed at Yeovil Recreation Centre to store off season grounds equipment securely, so there is more room for the Grounds and Estates team to operate from the main store.

The teams at all locations are now operating in sometimes difficult conditions as further equipment and officers join the Town Council. This summer our operational offices and stores at Ninesprings and Yeovil Recreation Centre will be at capacity. Therefore a watching brief is being maintained on the possible need for a depot site in the future.

The Committee is **RECOMMENDED** to note and comment on the report.

***(Katy Munday, Director of Leisure & Environment***  
***[Katy.munday@yeovil.gov.uk](mailto:Katy.munday@yeovil.gov.uk)***

**11/271 PROCUREMENT REPORT PURCHASE OF MOWERS – URGENT DECISION:**  
**FOR INFORMATION**

**1. Purpose**

This report documents the procurement process for the purchase of two commercial-grade mowers required to support estate maintenance operations. The acquisition is necessary to provide the appropriate machinery to the new estates team who from 1<sup>st</sup> June will have responsibility for the upkeep of grasslands in Yeovil's open spaces, play areas, at the Country Park, across the allotment sites and at Westlands Entertainment Venue.

**2. Background**

From June 1<sup>st</sup> the Estates team will maintain significant areas of land and grassland, including;

Open Spaces – 23 spaces covering c. 30 Ha

Play areas – 23

Country Park – 6 sites covering over 64 Ha, c.8Ha of grassland is mown

Allotment sites - 11

There is currently not any appropriate equipment owned by the Town Council to carry out this maintenance.

**3. Procurement Details**

Research was carried out to understand the type of equipment that the new Estates team would require to fulfill the cutting needs of the new Town Council estate.

Initially an Invitation to Quote (ITQ) was issued in March requesting prices from six suppliers for a batwing mower to cover the large open spaces and a front mounted deck mower (1.8m) wide, for smaller spaces and play areas. Prices received were in the region of £82,000 for the large mower and £22,000 for the smaller mower. This is more than can be spent at the present time.

One option presented as part of the ITQ was the Ferris mower, an American product that despite a smaller cutting deck can travel at greater speeds allowing the larger areas of open space to be completed in an equitable time.

After a demonstration on site at Yeovil Country Park of two sizes of Ferris mowers the conclusion was that they could complete the job. The benefits of buying the Ferris mowers new also includes –

1. Reduced whole body vibration due to effective suspension
2. Two year unlimited hours warranty – or four years if under 500 hours /year
3. Easy to maintain, staff can be trained to carry out some servicing items
4. Robust build
5. Useful for work at Yeovil Recreation Centre (where other items of equipment could therefore be traded in)
6. Full training and induction for all operatives

#### 4. Cost Breakdown

Quotations were sought from suppliers of Ferris mowers -

Item	Quantity	Quotes – including Road kit, inclinometer, DVLA registered		
Ferris ISX 3300 Mower. 61" deck.	1	Loxstons £18,500 (ex VAT)	T H White £19,500 (ex VAT)	Elmstar £19,750 (ex VAT)
Ferris ISX 6200. 72" deck.	1	Loxstons £32,500 (ex VAT)	T H White £36,000 (ex VAT)	Elmstar £36,500 (ex VAT)
Total				

#### 5. Budget

Funding for this purchase has been allocated from the existing Open Spaces budget.

The Committee is **RECOMMENDED**:

- 1) to note the report; and
- 2) the purchase of two Ferris mowers at a total cost of £51,000 from Loxstons Garden Machinery be approved to ensure the Estates Team can complete their new roles and ensure high-quality maintenance of the Town Council estate.

*(Katy Menday, Director for Leisure and Environment -  
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