Yeovil Town Council

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Mayor: Cllr T Lock
Chief Executive/ Town Clerk: Amanda Card BA (Hons), FCPFA, BSc (Open)
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Minutes of the hybrid meeting of the Finance & Policy Executive held on Tuesday 28th October 2025 at 7.00pm held by video-conference using Zoom meeting software; and in the Town House, 19 Union Street, Yeovil BA20 1PQ.

Present (in person): Cllrs A Soughton (in the Chair); T Casey; K Gill; T Lock; R Stickland; A Wilkes and D Woan.

In Attendance (in person): A Card (Chief Executive / Town Clerk); J Pang (Deputy Responsible Finance Officer); Cllrs A Richard (Wyndham Ward) and R White (Westlands Ward).

There was six members of the press present in person and one member of the press present virtually.

Public Comment

A member of the public spoke in support of the Council recording and broadcasting meetings.

7:04pm – the meeting commenced.

11/324 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND TO CONSIDER THE REASONS GIVEN**

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs A Kendall (conflicting engagement); J Lock (conflicting engagement); G Oakes (conflicting engagement); W Read (conflicting engagement); and R Spinner (conflicting engagement).

**Legislation requires that Councillors need to be physically present at the meeting to be shown as present. If a Councillor is unable to attend in person but can attend virtually, then apologies for absence should be given.*

RESOLVED: to accept the apologies with the reasons given.

11/325 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Cllr R Stickland declared a personal interest as Chair of Yeovil Without Parish Council, particularly for agenda item 11/330 PWLB Loan Repayments.

11/326 MINUTES

To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting held on 30th September 2025.

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the meetings held on meeting held on 30th September 2025 be signed by the Chair as a correct record.

11/327 UPDATE REPORT ON YEOVIL TWINNING ASSOCIATION

Councillors considered the update report from the Yeovil Twinning Association. Under the terms of the Service Level Agreement (SLA) between the Association and the Town Council, the Yeovil Twinning Association is required to provide an annual update on its activities.

RESOLVED: to note the update.

11/328 APPROVAL OF PAYMENTS

Members considered the payments made by Yeovil Town Council for the periods:

- 1st July 2025 – 31st July 2025; and
- 1st August 2025 – 31st August 2025.

Cllr A Richards raised a point of order, questioning the legality and compliance of the financial transactions referenced in the audits. He expressed concerns regarding the validity and lawfulness of the item, citing issues with the 2024/25 audit and stating that the Committee could not continue to sign off financial statements that were inaccurate.

The Chief Executive / Town Clerk clarified that the Committee was not being asked to sign off financial statements, but rather to approve payments that had already been made. She further advised that the External Audit report had now been received and would be published imminently.

The Chair ruled that the point of order was not upheld.

A Councillor requested that consideration be given to whether the information could be provided in smaller sections for ease of review.

RESOLVED: (1) to approve the payments made by Yeovil Town Council from 1st July 2025 – 31st August 2025; and (2) to investigate whether the information could be provided in smaller sections for ease of review.

11/329 BANK MANDATE REVIEW

The Committee reviewed the list of bank signatories for NatWest and agreed that amendments were required.

RESOLVED: (1) to agree to remove the two former officers as authorised signatories (Deputy Town Clerk and Finance Officer); and (2) to agree to the additional officer (Deputy Responsible Finance Officer) as an authorised signatory.

11/330 PWLB LOAN REPAYMENTS – ALTERNATIVE FUNDING SOLUTIONS

The Committee considered a report from the Chief Executive / Town Clerk outlining potential alternative funding sources to assist with meeting the annual loan repayments relating to the Octagon Theatre project. The Chief Executive / Town Clerk introduced the report and outlined the implications of potential funding scenarios, including increasing the ticket levy and the possible one-off use of reserves and/or external funding contributions.

A Councillor expressed concern regarding the delay to the Final Business Case and the associated timing risk, noting that there is only a one-year period to draw down the loan once it has been approved. He suggested that the loan application be delayed to mitigate this risk, which would also allow additional time to secure further funding.

The Chief Executive / Town Clerk explained that the original plan had been for the Council to apply for the loan in October 2025, with approval anticipated by December 2025. However, due to the delay in the Final Business Case — as determined by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) timetable — this would have resulted in the Council being required to draw down the loan before DCMS approval had been received. For this reason, it was suggested that the loan application be delayed until between January and April 2026.

Discussions with the Chief Executive of the Somerset Association of Local Councils (SALC) indicated that the consultation results would only remain valid until April 2026; any later, and the results would no longer be considered recent.

The Chief Executive / Town Clerk advised that the revised schedule for the submission of the Final Business Case should not impact the overall programme.

A Councillor expressed the view that the Council had not yet exhausted all available options and proposed the establishment of a working party to explore these further. He also suggested that the Council request a boundary review.

Another councillor stated that each committee should review the reserves relevant to their committee.

RESOLVED: (1) to note the report; (2) that each committee review the reserves relevant to their committee; and (3) that a working party be set up to include the Chairs of Leisure & Environment (Cllr R Spinner); Infrastructure (Property & Assets) (Cllr R Stickland); Culture, Events & Promotions (Cllr G Oakes); Finance & Policy Executive (Cllr A Soughton); Cllr T Casey; and Cllr A Wilkes (Please note; that ex-officios can attend any working party).

11/331 MOTION

Cllr A Wilkes presented a motion concerning the recording and broadcasting of Council meetings, with the aim of enhancing transparency, accessibility, and public engagement.

RESOLVED: (1) to agree in principle to record and broadcast Full Council meetings and key Committee meetings (including Finance & Policy Executive and Planning) via an accessible online platform such as, but not limited to YouTube or Facebook; (2) to request the Chief Executive/Town Clerk to prepare and report back to this Committee on: technical options and indicative costs for live-streaming and/or recording; data-protection, safeguarding, and consent considerations; recommended storage and publication arrangements for recordings; and any required updates to Standing Orders or the Social Media Policy; (3) to approve a three-meeting pilot programme for live-streaming Full Council meetings, following which this Committee will review outcomes and determine whether to adopt broadcasting as standard practice; and (4) to confirm that recordings will form part of the official public record of the meeting in accordance with the Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014, and that all attendees will be notified at the start of meetings that recording and broadcasting is taking place.

The meeting closed at 8:23 pm.

Signed: ………………………….. (Chair) Date ……………………………..