

Yeovil Town Council

Town House
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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 20th January 2026 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); K Gill, A Kendall; T Lock; G Oakes; W Read; R Stickland; A Wilkes; and D Woan.

In Attendance (in person): Cllrs K Parsons and A Richards; A Card (Chief Executive / Town Clerk); and J Pang (Deputy Responsible Finance Officer).

In Attendance (virtual): Cllr J Snell.

There was one member of the press present virtually.

Public Comment

There was no public comment.

7:02pm – the meeting commenced.

11/344 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND TO CONSIDER THE REASONS GIVEN

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs T Casey (work commitments); W Read (conflicting engagement); and J Snell (unwell)*.

**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.

11/345 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr K Gill declared a personal interest in agenda item 11/348 (Grant for Yeovil Street Pastors) in that his brother-in-law was a previous trustee (mentioned within the application) for the Street Pastors.

All Councillors present declared a personal interest in agenda item 11/348 (Grant for Yeovil Street Pastors) as a fellow councillor - Cllr Justice Jumba is a Street Pastor.

11/246 MINUTES

To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting held on 25th November 2025.

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the meetings held on meeting held on 25th November 2025 be signed by the Chair as a correct record.

11/335 APPLICATION FOR GRANT AID

Yeovil Street Pastors - £1,000 towards the cost refresher training, training and uniform for new Street Pastors and contributions towards organisational fees.

Members discussed the services provided by Yeovil Street Pastors and the benefits these bring to Yeovil's nighttime economy.

It was confirmed that Yeovil Street Pastors had approached both Yeovil Without Parish Council and Brympton Parish Council for support.

At this point, Cllr R Stickland declared a personal interest as Chair of Yeovil Without Parish Council.

RESOLVED: (1)) to award £1,000 to Street Pastors; and (2) to remind Street Pastors of considering a Service Level Agreement.

11/336 APPROVAL OF PAYMENTS

Members considered the payments made by Yeovil Town Council:

- 1st November 2025 – 30th November 2025; and
- 1st December 2025 – 31st December 2025

RESOLVED: to approve the payments made by Yeovil Town Council as detailed above.

11/349 BUDGET MONITORING REPORT FOR THE PERIOD ENDING 31ST DECEMBER 2025 (MONTH 1 – 9)

The Chief Executive/Town Clerk presented the budget monitoring report for the period ending 31st December 2025. It was noted that the current forecast indicates an underspend of £369,181, representing 11.2% of the approved budget.

RESOLVED: to note the report.

11/350 BANK RECONCILIATION

Members considered the formal bank reconciliation as at 31st December 2025.

RESOLVED: to approve the formal bank reconciliation as at 31st December 2025.

11/351 BALANCE SHEET

Members considered the Balance Sheet as at 31st December 2025.

The Chief Executive/Town Clerk explained that the document was a new style balance sheet which is the result of the upgraded Sage system (finance system).

A councillor raised a question regarding the costs and budget associated with the Sage system upgrade, to which the Chief Executive/Town Clerk provided a response.

RESOLVED: to approve the Balance Sheet as at 31st December 2025.

11/352 DRAFT BUDGET 2026/27

Members considered the report of the Chief Executive/Town Clerk on the draft budget for 2026/27.

The Chief Executive/Town Clerk explained that the Leadership Team had undertaken a detailed, line-by-line review of the budget, and that the draft budget had been agreed by the relevant Committees and recommended to the Finance & Policy Executive.

She further noted that the Tax Base had increased from 9,492.17 to 9,730.74, an increase of 238.57, which had helped to minimise the impact on Council Tax. As a result, the Band D charge would increase from £347.33 to £369.73, an increase of £22.40.

RESOLVED: that the Finance & Policy Executive, recommend to Council, the budget of £3,597,700 with a precept of £3,597,700 for 2026/27.

11/353 OCTAGON THEATRE FUNDING

The Chief Executive/Town Clerk introduced the report.

The Octagon Theatre Funding Working Party had worked diligently to secure alternative funding in order to reduce the requirement for a PWLB loan. The Chief Executive/Town Clerk reported that, since the publication of the report, confirmation had been received from Langport Town Council of a £250 contribution, which was limited due to the council not holding the General Power of Competence, and from Huish Episcopi Parish Council of a £1,000 contribution. This brought the total amount of one-off contributions from Town and Parish Councils to £97,550, and the total amount of secured alternative funding to date to £603,196. Based on the current position, the impact on Council Tax would be an annual Band D increase of £0.11 per year for 20 years. A further £12,275.70 would need to be secured to remove any impact on the taxpayer.

The Chief Executive/Town Clerk emphasised that the work would not stop at this stage and that efforts would continue to secure additional one-off capital contributions through further engagement with Town and Parish Councils, local businesses, town- and county-wide artistic groups, and any grant funding that may be available.

In response to a question from a councillor, the Chief Executive/Town Clerk explained that an external fundraiser was being sought to identify suitable funding opportunities and to prepare funding bids on behalf of the Council.

A councillor asked about the consultation costs and whether the Council would be reimbursed from the capital sums collected. The Chief Executive/Town Clerk confirmed that the Council had agreed to bear these costs and that they would not be reimbursed.

She clarified that the consultation costs were not included within the £15 million project costs, but were a separate cost incurred by the Council as part of the requirement to undertake public consultation in connection with the PWLB loan process.

Another councillor, who sat on the Octagon Theatre Funding Working Party, stated that the work of the Working Party had aimed not only to remove any impact on the Council Tax payer, but also to reduce the loan requirement as far as possible. He thanked the members of the Working Party and the officers involved for their commitment and hard work.

The Chair also thanked the members of the Working Party and the officers involved for their commitment and hard work, and stated that, if necessary, any shortfall required to ensure there was no impact on the Band D Council Tax should be met from reserves.

RESOLVED: (1) to note the report and the work of the Octagon Theatre Funding Working Party; (2) to note that the Culture, Events & Promotions Committee have agreed to increase the ticket levy at both Westlands Entertainment Venue and Octagon Theatre will be increased to £2 per ticket; and (3) to agree that the amount to be borrowed would have no impact on the Council Tax, with any shortfall to be met from reserves, and that the final borrowing amount would be determined at the Town Council meeting to be held on 3 March 2026.

11/354 RISK STRATEGY AND RISK ASSESSMENT

Members considered the Risk Strategy and Risk Assessment.

The Chief Executive/Town Clerk highlighted that any recommended amendments had been clearly marked for ease of reference.

RESOLVED: to recommend the adoption of the Risk Strategy and Risk Assessment to Town Council

11/355 COMPLAINTS HANDLING PROCEDURE

Members reviewed the Complaints Handling Procedure.

The Chief Executive/Town Clerk highlighted that all recommended amendments had been clearly marked.

RESOLVED: to approve the recommended amendments and adopt the amended Complaints Handling Policy.

11/356 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED: to exclude the press and public from the remainder of the meeting in accordance with Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 on the grounds that publicity of agenda item 11/357 would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 s3

11/357 INSURANCE PROCUREMENT

Unfortunately, the information required had been delayed by the Insurance Broker, who had carried out the competitive process on behalf of the Council.

RESOLVED: to delegate the selection of the insurance provider to the Chief Executive / Town Clerk in consultation with the Chair or Vice Char

The meeting closed at 7:59 pm.

Signed: (Chair) Date