



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 Culture, Events & Promotions Committee held on Tuesday 18th November 2025 at 7.00pm in the Town House, 19 Union Street, Yeovil BA20 1PQ; and by video-conference using Zoom meeting software.

Present (in person): Cllrs G Oakes (Chair); T Casey; T Lock; G Oakes; W Read; R White; and D Woan.

In Attendance (in person): Cllrs A Soughton; R Stickland; and A Wilkes. A Card (Chief Executive/Town Clerk); A Burgan (Director of Culture, Events and Promotions; J Pang (Deputy Responsible Finance Officer) and Angela Willis (Engagement Officer, South West Heritage Trust).

Present (Virtually): Cllr A Kendall

There was one member of the press present virtually and no members of the public present.

Public Comment.

The member of the press commended the Council and all those involved for their contributions to the Yeovil Literary Festival, Remembrance Sunday, and the Mayor's Ball.

7.02 pm – Meeting Commenced

11/206 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND TO CONSIDER THE REASONS GIVEN

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

Apologies were received from Cllrs E Hopkins (conflicting engagement), J Jimba (unwell); and Cllr J Lowery (personal reasons).

RESOLVED: to accept the apologies with the reasons given.

11/207 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations at this time.

11/208 MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

The Committee approved as a correct record the Minutes of the previous meeting held on 15th July 2025.

RESOLVED: that the Minutes of the previous meeting held on 15th July 2025 be signed by the Chair as a correct record.

11/209 HERITAGE UPDATE

Yeovil Town Council has a Service Level Agreement with the South West Heritage Trust (SWHT) for the provision of museum services on the Council's behalf. The Engagement Officer from SWHT introduced herself and presented her report. She has been in post since June 2025 and works three days a week. She outlined her priorities for 2025/26, which include developing a public programme, strengthening partnerships, enhancing marketing and communications, supporting volunteers, improving data collection and analysis, and pursuing grant-funding opportunities. She also highlighted several existing and potential grant-funded projects.

Councillors posed a number of questions, all of which were addressed by the Engagement Officer, and offered suggestions on how the service could be further improved.

RESOLVED: that the report be noted.

7:42 pm – The Engagement Officer left the meeting and did not return.

11/201 BUDGET MONITORING UPDATE

The Chief Executive/ Town Clerk introduced the report. She highlighted the projected underspend of £185,959.

The Committee considered the review of reserves in relation to supporting the Octagon Theatre Project. A discussion took place regarding the Regalia Reserve and potential drawdowns from that reserve.

Members asked some other questions which were answered by the Officers.

RESOLVED: (1) to note the budget monitoring update report; (2) to recommend to the Finance & Policy Executive to redesignate: £4,026 from the custom souvenir reserve to the Octagon Theatre Project; £19,806 from the Christmas lights reserve to the Octagon Theatre Project and £10,000 from the regalia reserve to the Octagon Theatre reserve; and (3) to bring a report to a future meeting of this Committee regarding the Mayor's Chain.

11/211 BUDGET SETTING 2026/27

The Chief Executive/Town Clerk introduced the report and noted that further work was required to refine the budget. She advised that discussions would take place between the

Director of Culture, Events & Promotions and the Deputy Responsible Finance Officer to progress this.

One Councillor raised a concern regarding the budget line for the Octagon Theatre.

RESOLVED: (1) to agree the budget setting report (acknowledging further work would be required); and (2) to recommend the budget agreed in (1) to the Finance & Policy Executive.

8:19pm – Cllr A Wilkes left the meeting and did not return.

11/212 YEOVIL LITERARY FESTIVAL UPDATE

The Director of Culture, Events & Promotions provided a verbal update. He reported that the Yeovil Literary Festival took place at the end of October and noted that it had been the busiest festival to date, with over 8,600 tickets sold so far. He added that the event featuring Dame Mary Berry was still scheduled to take place on 26th November 2025. The Festival is delivered as a not-for-profit partnership between Waterstones Yeovil, Yeovil Library, Yeovil Community Arts Association, and Westlands Entertainment Venue. He also highlighted that the event received substantial regional press coverage

8:25pm – Cllr T Lock left the meeting

The Chair shared his experience of attending a session of the event, noting how busy and successful it had been. He described it as an excellent occasion and asked that his appreciation be conveyed to the team at Westlands Entertainment Venue

8:26pm – Cllr T Casey left the meeting

8:26pm – Cllr T Lock returned

The Director of Culture, Events & Promotions noted that the festival had previously been delivered across both the Octagon Theatre and Westlands Entertainment Venue

8:28pm – Cllr T Casey returned to the meeting.

RESOLVED: to note the report.

11/213 TOWN COUNCIL EVENTS UPDATE

The Committee considered the report by the Deputy Town Clerk which outlined recent events. The Chief Executive/Town Clerk informed the Committee that the Deputy Town Clerk had played a pivotal role in organising these events, noting that this was a key factor in the success of both Super Saturday and Remembrance Sunday.

The Chief Executive/Town Clerk reminded the Committee that the Christmas Lights Switch-On would take place on 22 November 2025 in the amphitheatre. This will be the first major event to be held at the venue. Entertainment will be provided by local community groups as well as members of the pantomime cast. The Chief Executive/Town Clerk also noted that the winner of the Children's Christmas Light Competition will be announced at the event.

A question was raised regarding footfall at the events compared with previous years. It was suggested that the Quedam be contacted to provide their figures.

Councillors expressed a desire to see further growth in events. The Chief Executive/Town Clerk explained that this was dependent on budget and resources, noting that the previous recruitment for an Events Co-ordinator had been unsuccessful. In the meantime, the Chief Executive/Town Clerk and Deputy Town Clerk have assumed responsibility for organising the events.

The Chair informed the Committee that the first-ever 'Country West Fest' will take place on 28 March 2026. The festival, focused on country music, will be held at Westlands Entertainment Venue.

The Mayor of Yeovil, Cllr T Lock informed the Committee that the Christmas Concert will be held at St John's Church on 14th December 2025 in support of his charities – Yeovil Freewheeler Blood Bikes and Yeovil Hospital Charity.

RESOLVED: to note the report.

8:37pm – Cllr W Read left the meeting

11/214 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 11/215 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

8:39 pm – Cllr A Kendall and the member of the press left the meeting and did not return.

11/215 OPERATIONAL REVIEW OF WESTLANDS ENTERTAINMENT VENUE
(CONFIDENTIAL)

8:40 – Cllr W Read returned to the meeting.

Discussions took place regarding an operational review of Westlands Entertainment Venue to further enhance Councillors' understanding of the business. The Director of Culture, Events & Promotions was requested to provide a report on the venue's operations at a future meeting.

RESOLVED: that the Director of Culture, Events & Promotions provide (at a later meeting) a report on the venue's operations at a future meeting.

The meeting closed at 8:51pm.

Signed: (Chair)

Date: