



Yeovil Town Council

Town House
19 Union Street
Yeovil
Somerset
BA20 1PQ

Mayor: Cllr T Lock
Chief Executive / Town Clerk: Amanda Card BA (Hons), FCPFA, BSc (Open)
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Minutes of the meeting of Yeovil Town Council held on Monday 30th June 2025 at 7:30pm held by video-conference using Zoom meeting software; and in the Town House, 19 Union Street, Yeovil BA20 1PQ.

Present: Cllrs T Lock (Mayor); B Boyton; T Casey; K Gill; E Hopkins; K Hussain; J Jimba; A Kendall; J Lock; J Lowery; E Potts-Jones; W Read; J Snell; A Soughton; R Spinner; R Stickland; A Wilkes and D Woan.

Present (virtually): Cllr H Stonier

In Attendance (in person): A Card (Chief Executive/Town Clerk); L Ryder (Assistant Town Clerk); and D Recardo (Mace Bearer).

In Attendance (virtually): J Pang (Deputy Responsible Finance Officer) (from 7:37pm).

There was one member of the public present virtually (from 7:39pm) and one member of the press present virtually.

Public Comment

The Mayor of Yeovil, Cllr T Lock stated that his Chaplain – Rev Jim Pearce was unwell in hospital. It was agreed that a card should be sent on behalf of the Council

The member of the press noted the Town Council had flown the Armed Forces Flag. He enquired whether in future the Council would be mindful to put on an event. He had received information that grants were available. This was referred to a future meeting of the Culture, Events & Promotions Committee to discuss.

7:34 pm The meeting commenced.

11/258 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 J Cabell (work commitments); G Oakes (conflicting engagement); A Richards (unwell); and H Stonier* (personal reasons).

**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.

11/259 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).

Councillor	Reason	Interest
Cllr A Kendall Cllr T Lock Cllr G Oakes Cllr E Potts-Jones Cllr W Read Cllr J Snell Cllr A Soughton Cllr D Woan	Member of: Somerset Council	Personal

In addition, Cllr R Stickland declared a personal interest in 11/265 – 2024/25 Outturn Report for the year Ended 31st March, in that he was the Chair of Yeovil Without Parish Council who had been mentioned.

11/260 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS TOWN COUNCIL MEETING

To confirm as a correct record the minutes of the previous Town Council Meetings held on 6th May 2025 and 13th May 2025.

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the previous Town Council Meetings held on 6th May 2025 and 13th May 2025 be signed by the Chair as a correct record.

7:37 pm – J Pang (Deputy Responsible Finance Officer) joined the meeting virtually.

11/261 MAYOR AND DEPUTY MAYOR'S RECENT AND FORTHCOMING ENGAGEMENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

RESOLVED: to note the Mayor's and Deputy Mayor's recent and forthcoming appointments and engagements.

7:39 pm – A member of the public joined the meeting virtually.

Planning Committee – 14th May 2025 / 16th June 2025

Presented by Cllr J Snell. An update of planning applications discussed at the meetings held were given to Council. There were no questions.

Leisure & Environment Committee – 19th May 2025

Presented by Cllr R Spinner. He reported that the non-voting co-opted member had been appointed. The allotments were 92% let. The Committee considered a tree report and noted that a proactive approach was being taken to tree management. Discussions were held about approaching neighbouring parish councils to contribute to the cost of devolved services. The Chief Executive / Town Clerk confirmed that all possible revenue streams would be explored and relevant grant applications would be made as they became available. An update of the Yeovil in Bloom initiative was given. The new Parks Engagement Officer was introduced. There were no questions.

Culture, Events & Promotions Committee – 27th May 2025

Presented by Cllr D Woan. The Committee had agreed to be custodians of the A-Z of Yeovil's History website. He reminded Council that Super Saturday was on 5th July 2025. Feedback was received regarding VE Day 80 celebrations. The Mayor of Yeovil, Cllr T Lock mentioned the Mayor's Civic Service and what a success it had been this year. There were no questions.

Infrastructure (Property & Assets) Committee – 28th May 2025

Presented by Cllr R Stickland. He gave an update of the discussions held at the meeting which included a defibrillator and bleed kit update. The membership of Health and Safety working party had been agreed. A request for resources for Property and Community Wardens was also agreed pending agreement from Finance & Policy Executive and the Staffing Committee. The Town CCTV had also been discussed. The Mayor of Yeovil, Cllr T Lock mentioned that he had recently attended an event, where the location could potentially be host to a defibrillator and a bleed kit. There were no questions.

Finance & Policy Executive – 3rd June 2025

Presented by Cllr R Stickland. He gave an update of the discussions held at the meeting which included some grant applications; the approval of payments; the extension of the Service Level Agreement for Westfield Youth Services; the Outturn Report for 2024/25, the Income Collection and Debt Management Policy; the Treasury Management Investment Strategy and a Bully and Harassment Policy (and procedures) and the Menopause Policy. There were no questions.

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the above Committees be noted together with any resolutions and recommendations contained therein to be ratified.

11/263 REPORTS FROM REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES

Members who represent the Town Council on Outside Bodies were invited to take the opportunity to report on any matters of interest.

At this point Cllr E Hopkins declared a personal interest in this item as she was a Trustee for the Birchfield Community Association. She spoke of the AGM held on 20th May 2025. A new secretary had been appointed but not a chair. The Chairing of the meetings would be carried out on a rotational basis. The next AGM has been set for 19th May 2026 and the next ordinary meeting for 9th September 2025. She spoke about how the Somerset Decarbonation Energy Group was so impressed with energy efficiency of the building, that they made a film for training purposes. The hall was also presented an Energy Award. The Birchfield Community Association website is now running <https://birchfieldcommunity.co.uk/>.

Cllr J Lowery referred to Westfield Community Association. There is an open meeting on 7th July 2025 at 7pm at St Peter's Community Hall and will be discussing the closure of Yeovil Maternity Unit. Any questions should be directed to Cllr A Wilkes as a Trustee of Westfield Community Association.

There were no other reports from representatives on Outside Bodies.

RESOLVED: to note the report.

11/264 ANNUAL GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY RETURN 2024/25

Council considered the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) for 2024/25. The Chief Executive / Town Clerk stated that the return had been distributed but that there had since been some adjustments and that she was now in receipt of the Internal Auditor's report.

The Chief Executive / Town Clerk presented the return page by page.

The first page covered was the Annual Governance and Accountability Return which considers the internal controls. The Chief Executive / Town Clerk stated that for the most part the answers were "yes". She reminded Council about the significant amount of change that the Council had been through, however it had impacted the internal controls. This was detailed within the report circulated. Assertion 2 was given a "no" response was given. Assertion 4 was also given a "no" response due to the lateness of information received from Somerset Council in 2023/24 which impacted the approval dates, and dates for publication.

7:46 pm – Cllr E Hopkins left the room.

The Chief Executive / Town Clerk re-iterated that the Finance Team had completed a significant amount of work; and that it was important for Council to recognise this.

7:41 pm – Cllr E Hopkins returned.

The Chief Executive / Town Clerk proceeded to present the Accounting Statements for 2024/25 which had changed slightly to the statements which had previously been circulated. She explained each of the items and the differences in values between this year and last year.

A Councillor stated that he had only one business day to review the statements; and a request was made that in future, it would be helpful if the information be provided. Another Councillor agreed. The Chief Executive / Town Clerk understood the points made, however she stressed that there was a reliance for information to be received from Somerset Council and that the AGAR needed to be internally audited. For the reasons explained, this year was somewhat tricky. However, it is envisaged that now with appropriate processes in place, that all being well, information would be disseminated sooner in future. In addition, it is a statutory requirement that the AGAR is approved and signed by 30th June 2025, so there was no luxury of putting the meeting date back.

The Chief Executive / Town Clerk proceeded to present the Internal Auditor's Report which was received at 6:35pm that evening. Paper copies of the report were distributed and Chief Executive / Town Clerk went through the report in detail. She stated that she was disappointed that there were some "no's". She highlighted the increase in internal audit days. Some questions were asked regarding the number of internal audit days in the future and what the penalties for the "no's" would be. The Chief Executive / Town Clerk stated that for the time being it is likely that the number of audit days would remain the same; and that she was not aware of any penalties, other than possibly a harsher external audit. Councillors expressed that due to the changes that the Council had faced during the year, the internal audit report was good. The Chief Executive / Town Clerk stated that she was disappointed as she strived for perfection.

A copy of the revised AGAR is attached to these minutes.

RESOLVED: (a) that Council approve the annual governance statement; and that the Chair sign the Annual Governance Statement 2024/25 (*16 for; 2 abstentions*); (b) that Council note the issues described within the report; Council approve the Accounting Statements 2024/25; and that the Chair sign to confirm that these accounting statements were approved (*15 for; 3 abstentions*); (c) that Council note that the outcome of the External auditor certificate and report 2024/25 be brought to Council on completion; (d) that Council note the outcome of the Internal auditor certificate 2024/25; (e) that Council note that the required inspection and notice procedures to be followed; and (f) to thank the Finance Team for their hard work and commitment.

11/265 2024/25 OUTTURN REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH 2025

Council considered the Outturn Report for the year ended 31st March 2025.

RESOLVED: (1) to note the report; (2) to note the overall outturn for Yeovil Town Council in 2024/25 was £2,782,551 (£1,900,486 expenditure and £882,035 reserves). The explanation

of significant variances as highlighted in Appendix A; (3) to approve the movement in reserves listed above; (4) to note the new Earmarked Reserve – Peter Street Toilet Refurbishment; Yeovil Recreation Centre Sinking Fund; Westlands Entertainment Venue; Octagon Theatre; and Ticket Levy; (5) to note the Earmarked Reserve Balances; and (6) to note the Unallocated General Fund Balance.

11/266 APPOINTMENT OF COMMITTEES

Council considered the appointment of the Staffing Committee.

RESOLVED: that the following Members be appointed to serve on the Staffing Committee for the ensuing year: Cllrs T Casey; T Lock; G Oakes; A Soughton; R Stickland; H Stonier and A Wilkes.

11/267 UPDATE ON USE OF SOMERSET COUNCIL PROPERTY

The Leader of the Council made a statement regarding the use of Somerset Council property, which can be summarised as follows.

There were various factors to consider regarding the location of the Town Criers Competition. Somerset Council were unable to respond to our request in a timely fashion regarding the use of the Entertainment Area and the screen. Preparation had to continue in terms of the Event Management Plan and joining instructions for competitors, therefore a decision to use it was King George Street was made. When Somerset Council did respond, they indicated that there would be a charge and that the screen had not yet been connected. The charge was minimal but at the time of our request we had no indication of the extent of the charges. We hope to use the Entertainment Area and screen next year.

It has since been agreed that there will be no fee for events that are deemed as a benefit to the local community and that hold no commercial value to the individual/organisation requesting use of the space. For this to happen the relevant documentation is required - a risk assessment; an event Management Plan and public Liability insurance (minimum of £5,000,000.00). A permit will be issued upon receipt of this documentation.

RESOLVED: to note the statement.

11/268 NALC CONFERENCE – POWER SHIFT 2024/25

The Chief Executive / Town Clerk presented her report, which updated Council on the NALC Conference in which she was asked to speak about Yeovil Town Council's journey of devolution.

RESOLVED: to note the report.

11/269 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 the remaining agenda items 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.

8:31pm – all those who attend the meeting virtually and the Mace Bearer left the meeting and did not return.

11/270 CORRESPONDENCE (CONFIDENTIAL)

Councillors discussed correspondence concerning devolution at Somerset Council and the Closure of Yeovil Maternity Unit.

It was confirmed that Cllr J Lowery, hoped to attend the Westfield Community Association meeting regarding the Closure of Yeovil Maternity Unit meeting as the representative for the Councillor. However, any Councillor could attend this meeting in their own right.

At this point, Cllr A Wilkes declared a personal interest in that he was a Trustee of Westfield Community Association.

RESOLVED: to note the correspondence .

Meeting closed at 8:46 pm.

Signed:

Date: