



# 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 Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2026 at 7:30pm held by video-conference using Zoom meeting software; and in the Town House, 19 Union Street, Yeovil BA20 1PQ.**

**Present:** Cllrs W Read (in the Chair); B Boyton; J Cabell (from 8:18pm); T Casey; K Gill; A Kendall; J Lowery; G Oakes; K Parsons; E Potts-Jones; J Snell; A Soughton; R Stickland; H Stonier; R White; A Wilkes and D Woan.

**In Attendance (in person):** A Card (Chief Executive/Town Clerk); L Ryder (Deputy Town Clerk) and Rev J Pearce.

**In Attendance (virtually):** Cllrs J Jimba (from 7:57pm) and A Richards.

There were ten members of the public present in person, two members of the public and one member of the press present virtually.

## **Public Comment**

The Deputy Mayor of Yeovil, Cllr W Read, informed the Council that Cllr T Lock was currently unwell and in hospital.

The Chair asked for nominations for a Vice Chair for this meeting.

**RESOLVED:** that Cllr E Potts-Jones be Vice Chair.

The Mayor's Chaplain delivered his "Reflections".

Four members of the public, including three stroke survivors, voiced their support for the motion later in the agenda.

*7:47 pm The meeting commenced.*

## **11/315 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 T Lock (unwell); E Hopkins (conflicting engagement); K Hussain (work); J Jimba (unwell)\*; and R Spinner (recovering from an operation).

*\*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.

**11/307      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).

<b>Councillor</b>	<b>Reason</b>	<b>Interest</b>
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

Cllr J Lowery declared a personal interest in item 11/322 - PWLB Loan Approval due to her daughter working at both Octagon Theatre and Westlands Entertainment Venue.

Cllr A Kendall declared a personal interest in item 11/297 – Correspondence relating to the Hyper Acute Stroke Unit Closure due to his personal experience of having previously suffered a stroke.

**11/317      MINUTES OF PREVIOUS TOWN COUNCIL MEETING**

To confirm as a correct record the minutes of the previous Town Council Meeting held on 27<sup>th</sup> January 2026.

**RESOLVED:** that the minutes of the previous Town Council Meeting held on 27<sup>th</sup> January 2026 be signed by the Chair as a correct record.

**11/318      MAYOR AND DEPUTY MAYOR'S RECENT AN FORTHCOMING ENGAGEMENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

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

**11/319      CORRESPONDENCE**

There was no correspondence.

## **11/310      REPORTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FROM COMMITTEES AND OTHER MEETINGS**

### **Planning Committee – 16<sup>th</sup> February 2026**

An update on planning applications discussed at the meetings was provided to the Council. No questions were raised.

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

### **11/311      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.

Cllr W Read gave an update regarding the Westfield Community Association Annual General Meeting. Cllr K Parsons and Joanna Bogunska from Sparks both gave presentations.

Cllr A Kendall informed the Council about the activities of Yeovil Twinning Association.

There were no other reports from representatives on Outside Bodies.

**RESOLVED:** to note the reports.

*7:57 pm - Cllr J Jimba joined the meeting virtually.*

### **11/322      PWLB LOAN APPROVAL**

The Chief Executive/Town Clerk introduced the report regarding the approval for the PWLB loan. She supplemented the report with a verbal update. She informed Council that town and parish councils continue to consider their contributions toward the project.

She reminded Council that the ticket levy intended to fund the loan repayments comprised contributions from both the Octagon Theatre and Westlands Entertainment Venue. She highlighted that the Octagon Theatre would not be operational until its reopening; consequently, the Octagon Theatre levy would not be collected while the venue remained closed. Any resulting shortfall in the ticket levy required to service the loan repayments would be met from the Octagon Theatre budget line (£209,470).

She reiterated that the loan will be arranged on a fixed-term basis, with the final interest rate confirmed on the day of drawdown. Current projections were calculated using an assumed rate of 5.8%, providing a prudent estimate. She noted that a lower rate at drawdown would be beneficial, but there is a risk of an increase; therefore, the exact annual repayment will not be known until the loan is drawn down.

It was proposed by Cllr A Soughton and seconded by Cllr R Stickland to borrow £2,700,000. The Chief Executive/Town Clerk highlighted that this would amount to an annual loan repayment of £229,855.

**RESOLVED:** (1) to note the report (2) to agree that £2,700,000 would be borrowed (*voting: 15 for; 1 abstention*)\*1; (3) to seek the approval of the Secretary of State Ministry of Housing,

Communities and Local Government to apply for the Public Works Loan Board loan of £2,700,000 over the borrowing term of 20 years for the contribution towards the Octagon Theatre Project. The annual loan repayments will come to approximately £229,855\*<sup>2</sup>; (4) to agree that it is not intended to increase the council tax precept for the purpose of the loan repayments; and (5) to authorise the Chief Executive /Town Clerk to submit the borrowing application and to complete all necessary documentation to give effect to this resolution.

*\*1 For (W Read; B Boyton; T Casey; K Gill; A Kendall; J Lowery; G Oakes; K Parsons; E Potts-Jones; J Snell; A Soughton; R Stickland; H Stonier; A Wilkes and D Woan); Abstention Cllr R White).*

*\*2 For (W Read; B Boyton; T Casey; K Gill; A Kendall; J Lowery; G Oakes; K Parsons; E Potts-Jones; J Snell; A Soughton; R Stickland; H Stonier; A Wilkes and D Woan); Abstention Cllr R White).*

### **11/323      MOTION**

Cllr T Casey introduced his motion.

Cllr Casey spoke of the potential risks in the proposal to relocate the hyper-acute stroke service. His motion was to follow through on exploring legal challenges. He cited ambulance data and stroke audit findings suggesting that many patients from the Yeovil area could exceed the national 180-minute treatment target if redirected elsewhere for stroke care, since timing is critical in stroke treatment, delays could lead to permanent harm. He also highlighted concerns raised during consultation about long travel times, rural ambulance delays in Somerset, and workforce pressures. The motion asked the council to formally investigate possible legal action to ensure the decision is fully tested, evidence-based, and defensible.

Cllr A Soughton proposed an amendment to the motion requiring the council to first investigate the cost of legal support before engaging legal services.

Cllr G Oakes supported the aim of saving the hyper-acute stroke unit, warning that failure could cost lives and noting the issue had already been debated several times while the unit's closure was approaching. He proposed an additional amendment that a confidential report be considered under the council's urgent business procedures (Standing Order 4 (d) (xvi)) rather than going through the full council process, allowing faster decision-making. He also emphasised that the stroke unit serves the people of South Somerset.

During the discussion, Cllr R Stickland declared a personal interest as Chair of Yeovil Without Parish Council.

Cllr T Casey, who proposed the original motion, accepted both amendments. The Chief Executive/Town Clerk asked for clarification that the council would first obtain the cost of legal advice and then seek that advice if it was affordable, which was confirmed.

**RESOLVED:** (1) To acknowledge that the ministerial call-in route has now been exhausted; (2) to instruct the Chief Executive/Town Clerk to obtain an estimate of costs from a law firm with expertise in public law and NHS service reconfiguration for the provision of specialist legal advice on: whether there are viable grounds for Judicial Review or other legal challenge;

whether the statutory tests for service reconfiguration were lawfully applied; whether the consultation and decision-making process was procedurally sound; whether relevant clinical evidence was properly considered; the applicable time limits for challenge; and the likely costs, risks and prospects of success of pursuing such action; (3) that in accordance with urgent business procedures (Standing Order 4(d)(xvi)), a decision be made regarding the cost and whether to proceed with obtaining the specialist legal advice. If the decision is to proceed, the Chief Executive/Town Clerk is to be instructed to progress the matter accordingly; (4) to explore whether any potential legal action could be undertaken jointly with other affected councils, Members of Parliament, or stakeholder organisations to: share financial exposure; strengthen representation; and avoid duplication of action; (5) that a confidential report outlining the strength of any legal case; estimated financial exposure (including adverse cost risk); procedural deadlines and strategic options available to the Council, be considered under the Council's urgent business procedures (Standing Order 4 (d) (xvi)), in order to determine if, and how to proceed. (*Voting: for: unanimous*)

*7:57 pm - Cllr J Cabell joined the meeting in person.*

**11/265      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 11/314 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

**11/314      REQUEST FOR DISPENSATION – SIX MONTH ATTENDANCE RULE**  
**(CONFIDENTIAL)**

Members considered the report regarding the dispensation for the six-month attendance rule.

**RESOLVED:** (1) to note the report; and (2) to approve the reason for absence in accordance with Section 85 (1) of the Local Government Act 1972.

*Meeting closed at 8:22 pm.*

Signed:

Date: