



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 7th October 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; A Kendall; J Lowery; G Oakes; E Potts-Jones; A Richards; J Snell; R Stickland; H Stonier; A Wilkes and D Woan.

Present (virtually): Cllr W Read

In Attendance (in person): A Card (Chief Executive/Town Clerk) and Rev J Pearce.

In Attendance (virtually): L Ryder (Deputy Town Clerk)

There was one member of the public present in person twenty members of the public present in person and four members of the public present virtually.

Public Comment

The Mayor's Chaplain – Rev J Pearce led the Reflections. A moment of silence was observed in memory of Derek Lush, a valued member of the community who served through the Salvation Army and had sadly passed away.

The Mayor's Cadet, Flight Sergeant Boris Velkov, gave a presentation about the 1032 Air Cadets Squadron. He spoke about the 900 Air Cadet Squadrons operating nationally and explained that the 1032 Squadron, formed in March 1964, currently has 61 cadets. He provided a brief history of the Air Cadets, noting that the organisation was originally established to prepare young men for service. Flight Sergeant Velkov highlighted the wide range of activities cadets engage in, including shooting, fieldcraft, leadership training, and, of course, flying. He also emphasised the Squadron's strong community involvement and their participation in numerous fundraising activities.

Adam Dance MP addressed the meeting to speak about the Yeovil Masterplan, with particular focus on the proposed changes to car parks and the ongoing public consultation. He noted that he had contacted many residents and businesses to inform them of his position and encouraged all members of the public to complete the consultation. Mr Dance explained that, following the conclusion of the consultation period, a meeting had been scheduled with Cllr

Mike Rigby at Somerset Council, during which he would be requesting the removal of the proposed car park developments from the Masterplan, citing strong local opposition. He expressed his support for those who had raised concerns, arguing that the car parks should remain in place to encourage footfall into the town centre and to support the local economy.

Seven members of the public spoke to express their concerns regarding the proposed development on the town centre car parks. Several of the speakers, who own businesses along Princes Street, stated that such developments on the carparks would have a detrimental impact on their trade. In addition, concerns were raised about the potential impact on disabled access to the town centre if the car parks were removed.

A member of the public raised concerns regarding the future of the Hyper Acute Stroke Unit (HASU) at Yeovil District Hospital. He referenced the ongoing campaigns by various groups aimed at preserving the unit and stated that, as things currently stand, the Integrated Care Board (ICB) intends to close the HASU in Yeovil in spring. This would result in patients needing to travel to either Musgrove Park Hospital in Taunton or Dorset County Hospital in Dorchester to receive urgent stroke care. He further noted that, according to the Stroke Association, one patient every 22 minutes is currently travelling to hospital by their own means due to delays in ambulance response times. The Association also predicts a 50% increase in stroke cases over the next ten years. The speaker expressed concern that both Musgrove Park and Dorset County Hospitals may not be adequately prepared to accommodate the expected increase in patient numbers.

8:08 pm The meeting commenced.

11/282 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); J Jimba (unwell); J Lock (conflicting engagement); A Soughton (conflicting engagement); R Spinner (personal reasons); W Read* (unwell) and R White (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.

11/283 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 K Hussain declared a personal interest in item 11/291 – Motion (Yeovil Masterplan) as he is a shopkeeper. Cllr A Richards declared a personal interest in item 11/292 – Motion (HASU Closure) as he is a member of the Stroke Steering Reference Group. Cllr A Kendall also declared a personal interest in item 11/292 – Motion (HASU Closure) due to his personal experience of having previously suffered a stroke.

11/284 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS TOWN COUNCIL MEETING

To confirm as a correct record the minutes of the previous Town Council Meeting held on 2nd September 2025.

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the previous Town Council Meeting held on 2nd September 2025 be signed by the Chair as a correct record.

11/285 MAYOR AND DEPUTY MAYOR'S RECENT AND FORTHCOMING ENGAGEMENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Mayor made an announcement regarding the Mayor's Ball on 15th November 2025. He encouraged members to donate a prize. He stated that his charities were Yeovil Hospital Charity – Dementia Care and Yeovil Blood Bikes.

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

11/286 CORRESPONDENCE

The Chief Executive/Town Clerk mentioned that she had received two letters regarding the Masterplan and car parks which Council may wish to refer to on a later agenda item.

11/287 REPORTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FROM COMMITTEES AND OTHER MEETINGS

Planning Committee – 15th September 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 – 8th September 2025

Neither the Chair nor Vice Chair were present to give an update. If Councillors have any question, they should be submitted to the Clerk.

Culture, Events & Promotions Committee – 16th September 2025

This meeting was cancelled due to insufficient business to be transacted.

Infrastructure (Property & Assets) Committee – 9th September 2025

Presented by Cllr R Stickland. An update the meeting was given to Council which included the set-up of the Neighbourhood Police Team; a defibrillator update; highway requests; and CCTV statistics and community safety. A Councillor raised a query regarding the process for adding items to the agenda.

8:26pm – Cllr A Wilkes left the meeting

8:27pm – Cllr A Wilkes returned to the meeting

Finance & Policy Executive – 30th September 2025

Presented by Cllr R Stickland. He gave an update of the discussions held at the meeting which included the deferral of some grant decisions; correspondence from previous successful grant applicants; budget monitoring, the balance sheet, the bank reconciliation; the internal auditors report; the Community Infrastructure Levy and a motion concerning a Yeovil Town Residents Discount Card. 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.

11/288 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 K Gill spoke of the LCN meeting he had recently attended, where the meeting received presentations about the Octagon Theatre; Somerset Youth Justice Team and Spark Sisterhood (about the risks to vulnerable children and young people in rural communities from organised crime) and received an update on the current consultations.

There were no other reports from representatives on Outside Bodies.

RESOLVED: to note the report.

11/289 PROGRAMME OF MEETINGS OF COUNCIL AND COMMITTEES – 2025/26

RESOLVED: to note the correct programme of meetings.

11/290 NOTICE OF AUDIT AND RIGHT TO INSPECT THE ANNUAL GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY RETURN – 2024/25

The external auditor had not yet been able to complete their review in time to enable Yeovil Town Council to publish the required documentation in line with statutory requirements.

RESOLVED: to note the uncertified Annual Governance and Accountability Report (AGAR) 2024/25 and the Notice of August and Right to Inspect the AGAR 2024/25.

11/291 MOTION

Members considered the motion submitted by Cllr T Casey, which had been amended to include Nash Lane Car Park. The motion related to the consultation on the Yeovil Masterplan and the proposal to dispose of and redevelop key car parks at Court Ash, Nash Lane, and Stars Lane. Cllr Casey stated that the Court Ash and Nash Lane car parks were vital for supporting independent shops and cafés along Princes Street, while the Stars Lane car park provided essential access to amenities and services within the town centre.

Cllr R Stickland welcomed the opportunity to discuss the proposals outlined in the consultation from a Yeovil Town Council perspective. He stated that the Town Council should make a formal submission to Somerset Council reflecting its collective view, while also encouraging individual councillors to respond to the consultation in their own capacity. He suggested that rather than outright rejecting the proposals, Yeovil Town Council should put forward constructive suggestions informed by local knowledge.

Council debated the motion and offered support for the motion.

RESOLVED: (1) to formally record Yeovil Town Council's opposition to the sale and redevelopment of Court Ash, Nash Lane and Stars Lane car parks; (2) to confirm Yeovil Town Council's support for the redevelopment of Glovers Walk and the former Wilko site, recognising the regeneration benefits of these schemes; (3) to write to Somerset Council (Leader, and Portfolio Holder) to communicate this position, making clear that Yeovil Town Council supports regeneration but will oppose the disposal of critical car parking assets (Court Ash, Nash Lane and Stars Lane); (4) to encourage local businesses and residents to make their views known through the Masterplan consultation before the deadline of 2 November 2025; and (5) that a working group be established (consisting of Cllrs Casey, Soughton and Stickland), and that it be delegated to that working group to respond to Somerset Council on behalf of Yeovil Town Council.

11/292 MOTION

Members considered the motion submitted by Cllr G Oakes regarding a further call in of the decision to close the Hyper Acute Stroke Unit (HASU).

Cllr G Oakes explained that he is a nurse who trained in Yeovil and was previously responsible for a stroke unit, giving him professional insight into the issue. He expressed concern about the travel times to Musgrove Park Hospital and Dorset County Hospital, noting that although assurances had been given regarding improvements to ambulance response times, these had not materialised. He emphasised that timely treatment is critical in stroke care and stated that

emerging evidence since the original decision indicates that performance targets will not be met, rendering the decision to close the HASU unsafe. He also highlighted the increasing incidents of strokes in the Yeovil area due to its changing demographics, arguing that the service must be future-proofed to meet growing demand.

Council debated the motion and offered support for the motion.

RESOLVED: that the Council write to the Secretary of State for Health asking them to recall the decision to close the Hyper Acute Stroke Unit (HASU) at Yeovil Hospital now that the evidence behind the decision has changed; and should the Secretary of State be minded not to recall the decision that the Town Council will investigate legal proceedings.

Meeting closed at 9:09 pm.

Signed:

Date: