

Yeovil Town Council



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Yeovil Town Council

Annual Report 2019/20

Amanda Card
Town Clerk

19th May 2020

Further information about the Town Council, its responsibilities and its activities is available on the Town Council's website www.yeovil.gov.uk

The website includes agenda and minutes of meetings of the Town Council, its Committees and the Yeovil Crematorium and Cemetery Joint Committee, and the useful contact details.

YEOVIL TOWN COUNCIL – 2019/20

David Recardo –Mayor of Yeovil Town

Pauline Lock – Deputy Mayor of Yeovil Town

Philip Chandler

Jade Dash

Amy Grieves

Nigel Gage

Karl Gill

Peter Gubbins

David Gubbins

Gordon Hunting

Kaysar Hussain

Andrew Kendall

Terry Ledlie

Mike Lock

Tony Lock

Jane Lowery

Sarah Lowery

Graham Oakes

Evie Potts-Jones

Wes Read

Andy Soughton

Roy Spinner

Helen Stonier

Rob Stickland

Yeovil Town Council

- The Council met on 8 occasions during the year.
- In May, we held our Annual Town Council meeting and appointed members to serve on the various Committees to the Town Council and the outside bodies on which the Council is represented. We also elected our Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen on these Committees.
- At the June meeting, the Council approved the Annual Governance Statement and the Accounting Statements for the financial year 2018/19.
- At the July meeting, Ian Timms, Yeovil Refresh Project Manager at South Somerset District Council gave a presentation about the Yeovil Refresh Project. He identified the four themes: transport; development; creating spaces and link places; and the complimentary work. He gave a progress up on each theme.
- Also, at this meeting, the Town Council declared a climate emergency. They undertook to make the Council carbon neutral by 2030 and delegated the Climate Control Action Plan to the Policy, Resources and Finance Committee. The Council also supported going paperless wherever possible.
- At our September meeting, Brad Atkinson (Fire Brigade Union (FBU) rep – Yeovil) gave a presentation regarding the proposed changes to Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Authority. He encouraged Councillors to fill out the consultation on the Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue website.
- At our November meeting, Steve Hart (Yeovil Debt Centre Manager at Christians Against Poverty) introduced the work of Christians Against Poverty. It is a national charity with 292 debt centres. The Yeovil Debt Centre has dealt with 400 cases, of which 88 are now debt free and lives have been transformed. Christians Against Poverty aim to get people debt free within 5 years and once a plan has been set up, the individual or family will not have to speak to their creditors again.
- Also, at this meeting, Andrew Smith; Louise Thomas and Derek Tessmer gave a presentation about the risks associated with the Government's planned relaxation in infrastructure laws for the 5G technology.
- We were also informed of the conclusion of the audit of the Annual Return and the external auditor's comments which gave assurance that Yeovil Town Council have an excellent standard of financial accounting and controls.
- At the December meeting, Kristy Davies (Lead Ranger at Yeovil Country Park) explained that it had been yet another busy year, and they were particularly grateful for the help of the volunteers. She spoke of the Countryside event trails, the Friends of Yeovil Country Park and the projects undertaken. She also highlighted the new species which had been located at the Country Park. Racheal Whaites (Countryside Manager) spoke of the joint working with the Yeovil Rivers Community Trust. She talked about the many activities undertaken including wildlife surveys, park run and park yoga. There had also been vandalism at the park whereby information panels had been destroyed. There was a lot of support from the community and local businesses. Becky Russell

(Community Heritage Ranger) explained that her new role was working across South Somerset alongside the Community Heritage Access Centre (CHAC), working with several groups, including schools and those with Mental Health issues.

- In December, the draft budget for 2020/21 was noted and further consideration would be given to the setting of the 2020/21 precept pending final notification from South Somerset District Council of the tax base and the Crematorium and Cemetery Committee final budget.
- In February, we received a presentation from Katherine Hoskins (Duty Manager and Arts Engagement assistant at Octagon Theatre and Westlands Entertainment Venue) gave a presentation about the Summer School which the Town Council have contributed £1,000 per annum. She explained the programme and the level of attendance for the past 4 years. She also highlighted the benefits of the programme to the young people who attended including those who were from low income families or considered vulnerable. She informed Council that the programme would consist of “the Greatest Dancer Summer School” from 3rd August 2020 to 7th August 2020; and “Castaways Summer School” from 10th August 2020 to 14th August 2020, both weeks with 55 places available.
- Also, at our February Meeting, we gave final consideration to the setting of the 2020/21 budget. We decided to approve the Town Council’s precept as £1,152,589, which resulted in an increase on a Band D charge of £13.08 per year (or 25p per week) and increase from £113.47 to £126.55.
- At this meeting, the Risk Strategy and Risk Assessment for 2020/21 for Yeovil Town Council was approved and adopted.
- At our March meeting, Cllr Val Keitch (Leader of South Somerset District Council) gave a talk about the Future of Local Government in Somerset. She spoke of the response from the four District Councils to the County Council’s Unitary proposal. The proposal centred on collaboration with fellow District Councils as well as collaboration with other public bodies include Town and Parishes. Cllr Keitch commented that it was not about saving the most money but how to deliver the best services for South Somerset. The decision for which proposal was accepted would be carried out by the Secretary of State.

Cllr David Recardo, Chairman of Yeovil Town Council
19 May 2020

Planning Committee

The Committee met once a month during the 2019/20 year until the March meeting after which the restrictions imposed by social distancing, brought about by the Covid-19 pandemic, resulted in all meetings being cancelled. In response to this health emergency, the Government has been very clear that they wish Planning Authorities to continue to support the economy and ensure there are planning permissions ready to be implemented once the economic recovery stage is reached. On this basis, the course of action to be taken under such circumstances and adopted under the Town Council's 'Scheme of Delegation', has been implemented. Details of applications referred to the Town Council for comment have been circulated electronically to members of the Planning Committee, and a co-ordinated response submitted, also electronically, to South Somerset District Council, the Local Planning Authority.

Numerous applications have been received and considered throughout the year. As well as the standard 'full' and 'outline' applications, proposals for advertisements, works to listed buildings, works to protected trees, and proposed changes of use to land and buildings have also been considered. The Town Council is a consultee in the planning application process and South Somerset District Council as the Local Planning Authority takes the final decision. The final decisions taken by the Local Planning Authority are reported back to the Committee, as well as the outcome of planning appeals.

There continues to be a wide variety of proposed development to be considered by the Committee. As always, numerous minor domestic extensions have been dealt with (which need to be considered carefully in terms of their potential impact on the occupiers of neighbouring properties), as well as larger scale developments which can have a significant impact on the Town as a whole. A few applications of note have been considered by the Committee during the year where the Town Council has sought to assist and support the Local Planning Authority in the final determination of the applications, and in some cases highlighting issues for negotiation:

- In October 2019, the Committee considered an application for an unusual proposal to install two feature helicopters on pedestals to mark the entrance of Leonardo Helicopters on Lysander Road (19/02456/FUL). The Committee was keen to support the company which is an important industry in the Town. The application was subsequently permitted by the Local Planning Authority, but the helicopters are yet to be installed.
- The Committee considered proposals for the redevelopment of the Park School, The Park, Yeovil for 24 new dwellings (application 18/02750/FUL) on two occasions in the previous year and had recommended refusal. The proposals were subsequently revised, and the Committee considered the application again in May 2019. The nearby residents had been very opposed to the proposals and had attended the meetings to voice their concerns. The Committee listened to the residents, and maintained their recommendation for refusal of the application on the grounds that: the density of housing is too high; the design is not in keeping with the character of the area; and because the proposed parking arrangement needs to comply with the Somerset County Council Parking Strategy. The Local Planning Authority took these considerations into account, but granted planning permission for the scheme in December 2019 as primarily it was considered to be a 'brownfield site' appropriate for residential redevelopment and was sited within a highly sustainable location in the town centre.

- The Local Planning Authority have continued their negotiations throughout the year in respect of the Local Plan 'key site' on the south western edge of Yeovil's built-up area at Keyford (15/01000/OUT). Whilst the site falls mainly within East Coker Parish, a small part of the site to the north east falls within the Town's boundary. The scale of the development on the outskirts of the Town will have a significant impact, and comprises up to 800 new dwellings, 2.58ha of employment land, a neighbourhood centre, a nursing/care home, community hall, health centre, children's nursery and primary school, leisure facilities and infrastructure. The Committee has welcomed the proposals in general terms but had been concerned (together with East Coker and Barwick & Stoford Parish Councils) about the impact of the development on the local highway infrastructure. In August 2019 the proposals were revised to include a new northern vehicular access from the A37, which the Committee supported.
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- Two applications for improvement works to schools in Yeovil have been received in recent months. In December, the Committee recommended the approval of extensions at Westfield Academy (19/02521/FUL), which was granted planning permission shortly afterwards. And in April this year the Committee supported in general terms an extension and other improvement works at Fiveways School (SCC/3710/2020), but raised serious concerns in respect of the inadequate parking provision proposed given the location of the school which is surrounded by terraced housing. The application is yet to be determined.

Whilst the vast majority of planning applications are approved, a small number are refused each year, and the Town Council plays a part in supporting the Local Planning Authority in providing a case to resist inappropriate and unacceptable development when necessary.

With the high demand for housing, there continues to be a notable number of applications proposing small numbers of new residential properties on 'infill' plots within the existing built-up area. Most of these proposals have been acceptable and help to provide much needed accommodation. Examples considered during the year are two semi-detached houses on land adjacent to 12 Welbeck Road (19/00819/FUL), and two semi-detached houses on land at 20 Highfield Road (19/01591/FUL). Both applications were supported by the Committee and subsequently approved by the Local Planning Authority.

The pressure for housing has also given rise to proposals involving the change of use of existing buildings in the Town centre currently or previously used for shops and offices, to be used for residential units. There has also been a significant number of applications relating to houses in multiple occupation (HMOs). Again, some have been considered to be acceptable, and others not, depending on the context of the proposals.

As Chair, I would like to thank the Committee Members for their commitment to the Planning Committee by taking time to investigate and consider applications ahead of meetings to ensure informed decisions are taken, and also to those who have provided comments under the 'Scheme of Delegation' when Planning Committees could not be held.

Sarah Lowery, Chairman of the Planning Committee
19 May 2020

Grounds and General Maintenance Committee

The Town Council's Grounds and General Maintenance Committee:

- Manages all of Yeovil Town Council's allotment sites
- Manages a wide range of open spaces and amenity areas across the Town
- Manages other important recreational and leisure facilities, including play areas
- Makes arrangements for the Best Kept Allotments Competition
- Acts as a liaison point for all non-financial matters relating to the Yeovil Cemetery and Crematorium

The Committee met on five occasions during the 2019/20 year.

Play Areas

The Committee manages 16 play areas across Yeovil and receives regular reports regarding inspection and maintenance.

Partnership working with South Somerset District Council also enables improvements at play areas around the Town. In 2019 a play area and youth facilities audit was carried out which formed the foundation for a future investment plan of improvement to the Town's play and youth facilities over the forthcoming 5 years.

Youth Facilities

The free Open Access Holiday Activities Programme for young people has been highly successful – this was made possible by funding from Yeovil Town Council, South Somerset District Council and the Yarlinton Housing Group. Exciting activities are provided at Milford Hall, Westfield Academy/ St Peter's Community Centre and Yew Tree Park (Holy Trinity Scout Hall). The overriding aim is to provide stimulating things for young people to do during the school holiday periods in accessible locations across Yeovil. This year the activities included cooking and baking; crafts; strike soccer; bouncing science, exploding science, creating recycled art from rubbish and learning about bugs and small creatures with Bugfest. The numbers of young people attending the activities continue to be excellent (over 5,000) and the feedback has been very positive.

Allotments

The Council's pro-active and flexible approach to allotment management has helped achieve a thriving allotment community, and the active promotion of vacant allotments has maintained an excellent level of allotment lettings across the Town's 11 allotment sites, many with waiting lists. The varied benefits of allotment gardening are explained in the publicity of the vacancies which includes advertising on Facebook, in the press and posters in the community. Residents outside as well as within the parish of Yeovil are currently eligible to have the opportunity to take a tenancy of a Yeovil Town Council allotment.

Each allotment site is encouraged to have a nominated Tenants' Representative. These representatives meet regularly throughout the year with the Town Clerk to discuss allotment issues which have been raised by their fellow tenants and where necessary they are forwarded to the Committee for their consideration.

The judging for the Best Kept Allotments' Competition took place in both summer and winter. The judges have all agreed that the general standard of the allotment sites continues to improve, and prizes were awarded at the annual Super Saturday in Yeovil Town Centre in September.

The income raised from allotment rents helps to meet the costs of maintaining the Town's allotment sites, and any¹ annual rent increase means that the budgeted income represents an acceptable percentage of the overall costs, whilst also continuing to ensure a fair and sustainable approach to their future provision. A mains water charge now re-charges the cost of mains water used by tenants on a site by site basis. This will mean that tenants will be paying for the water actually used, whilst encouraging more environmentally friendly ways of collecting and recycling rainwater thereby reducing the dependency on mains water. This approach is in line with the Council's values of raising awareness of environmental issues, improving the quality of the environment and encouraging an environmentally friendly ethos.

An Allotment Maintenance Working Party has reviewed the Allotment Tenancy agreements, simplifying and updating the wording to make the documents more user friendly.

Allotment Maintenance was closely reviewed and the contract for the work was put out to tender. Yeovil Town Council is now starting a new term of working with local contractors who have proven to be extremely efficient.

Greenspace Areas

The Committee has continued to fund the maintenance of an extensive number of areas of amenity and open spaces in the Town – including Yeovil Country Park. This ensures that local communities have ongoing access to public areas of green space close to where they live. Monitoring and review arrangements identify issues affecting open spaces across the Town, and the outcomes are reported to the Committee on a regular basis.

The Committee provides ongoing support to South Somerset District Council by assisting with funding of a Community Heritage Officer to work within the Country Park team to continue the provision of activities made available by the V3 Project and provide support for the Heritage Officer and volunteers at the Community Heritage Access Centre.

The Countryside team (SSDC) gave a comprehensive report and presentation to the Town Council in respect of the multi award winning Yeovil Country Park. The Park has received Green Flag awards consecutively since 2004, with judges highly commending the work with the volunteers and stating, "The engagement with volunteers is excellent as is their output." The Country Park also proudly holds a prestigious 5 star Best Park award from RHS South West in Bloom and contributes every year to the success of the Town's entry in to the regional South West in Bloom competition, which in 2019 was elevated to the national finals. The Ninesprings Café, Education and Information Centre, which the Town Council helped to fund, is an invaluable resource, both in terms of an excellent facility for communication and marketing, and a lovely meeting point for social and educational purposes.

¹ It has been agreed not to increase the allotment rent in 2020 or 2021

The Committee fully supported proposals for a community project to deliver improvements to the John O'Donnell pavilion building at Yeovil Recreation Centre, which will include a high-quality café and community room. The multiple benefits were recognised, including community cohesion, improved facilities, and extended visits to the facilities. The Committee agreed a £5,000 contribution in support of the developments.

The Committee continued to work with Streetscene services to monitor the provision and use of dog waste bins allocated throughout Yeovil Town, responding as appropriate to suggestions from the community regarding prevention of fouling.

A close working relationship with South Somerset District Council has continued, with the Service Level Agreement as a foundation document for streamlining services and setting out the best way to progress with joint future initiatives.

***Andy Kendall, Chairman of the Grounds and General Maintenance Committee
19 May 2020***

Promotions and Activities Committee

Key aspects of the Promotion and Activities Committee's delegated authority include:

- Yeovil in Bloom
- Development of Town Centre initiatives, activities and events
- Love Yeovil
- Christmas Lights
- Publication of Town Guide and other promotional literature
- Customised souvenirs
- Town Crier, and Town Crier's Competition
- Policy on requests for use of the Town Crest

The Committee met on five occasions during the 2019/20 year.

Yeovil in Bloom

Yeovil was delighted to not only win a gold award in the RHS South West in Bloom competition in 2019, but also to have achieved the honour of taking part in the national competition. The judging for 2019 (including the national competition) took place in July and August and the team worked hard on producing beautiful floral displays, keeping Yeovil clean and tidy, and working alongside volunteers and community groups to ensure that we attained most points possible.

The sponsorship of the floral displays on most of the roundabouts throughout the Town was renewed following a bid process which ensured all businesses were given a fair opportunity to apply for the valuable opportunity. The funds received boost the Yeovil in Bloom initiative, whilst also demonstrating that traders are proud to invest in the horticultural highlights of the Town.

Christmas Lights

The lovely Christmas lights display was erected throughout the Town once again and a celebration evening took place in the Town Centre. The winner of the Christmas lights design competition attended the event to switch on the festive lights for 2019. Local children were invited to design a light in an annual competition. The winning design was made into a LED display light and put up in lower Middle Street as part of the municipal display. We therefore now have a stunning lighted image of Father Christmas going headfirst down a chimney to accompany a Christmas stocking light created last year and the gorgeous gingerbread man light which was designed by the first competition winner in 2017.

Town Guide

Following the launch of the new look Town Guide, several outlets have been asking for stock and the supplies are being snapped up by tourists and residents. The guide is also available online. An excellent reference guide, the booklet also gives an overview of the facilities and events in the Town and contains a useful map. An updated edition of the guide is currently in production.

Yeovil Super Saturday

Yeovil Super Saturday took place on Saturday 28th September, and after the wet weather of 2018, it was a huge relief that all the hard work and preparations were rewarded with a beautiful, sunny day!

The day commenced with a welcome by the Town Crier. Buskers contributed to the buzzing atmosphere throughout the Town with Yeovil Live's "Buskfest", raising money for their choice of charity (School in a Bag). Community stalls were located in lower Middle Street, along with children's craft activities. "Bugfest" provided the opportunity to view insects, reptiles and tarantulas up close and was extremely popular. Their "Wild and Deadly" show was also well received.

Positive feedback was received about the stilt walker, living statues and balloon modeller. Further children's entertainment including circus skills and inflatables were packed with participants in St John's Churchyard, and the marquee provided shelter from the sunshine for the Punch and Judy show and its many spectators throughout the day. Schools and community groups were invited to bring stalls into Town to promote their organisations and/or raise funds. They were grateful for the opportunity and added another dimension to the variety of activities on offer. The library hosted craft activities and there was a vibrant drumming workshop in King George Street.

The Quedam joined in the fun with music, a Zumbathon raising money for Yeovil Hospital Charity, local and eco-friendly stalls, and an exhibition about the history of the Quedam.

St John's Church was once again part of the event as they provided, indoor refreshments, snippets of performances from "The Turbulent Priest", children's crafts and bookstalls.

The feedback from the brilliant, multifaceted day was incredibly positive.

Evie Potts-Jones, Chairman of the Promotions and Activities Committee
19 May 2020

Buildings and Civic Matters Committee

The Buildings and Civic Matters Committee's remit includes:

- Management, maintenance and repair of the Town House
- Management of Monmouth and Milford Community Halls
- Management of Peter Street and Petters Way Public Toilets
- Siting and maintenance of litter and grit bins
- Sponsorship of theatrical, educational and artistic ventures
- Maintenance of War Memorials and the Millennium Clock
- Receiving consultations on Street Naming/House Numbering
- Consultation on Traffic Regulation Orders
- Community Safety

The Committee met on five occasions during the 2019/20 year.

Town House

The Committee agreed that Town House be painted both inside and outside and re-carpeted. Quote were sought and a contractor appointed. Much of the internal works have been completed. The Committee agreed that the masonry and front door colours remain the same. A condition survey was carried out on the wooden frames. Some of the frames were found to be rotted, however the damaged woodwork can be repaired rather than replaces and therefor listed building consents are not required. The external work will require scaffolding and this work is due to be carried out soon. A water dispenser was installed at Town House negating the use for bottle water. The refurbishment of both the staff kitchen and the Council Chamber kitchen have commenced. This now provides a staff rest room.

Community Halls

The Community Hall charges were reviewed, and it was agreed to increase by inflation (CPI at 1.7%) and rounded to the nearest 50p.

Milford Hall continues to be well used and also is the venue for the Centre Pre-School.

Members considered the use of Monmouth Hall and were shown some conceptual ideas about how the site could be used. It was referred to Monmouth Hall working party to consider the options available.

Commercial Energy Performance Certificates

The Commercial Energy Performance Certificates were carried out for Monmouth Hall, Milford Hall and Town House, scoring G, C and D, respectively. Public buildings should attain a minimum energy efficiency score of E. The Commercial Energy Performance scores have been logged on the government's database except Monmouth Hall, which is being held in abeyance, pending the outcomes of Monmouth Hall.

Sponsorship

Yeovil Town Council support for Sports Development of £2160 does help to support and enhance Sport in Yeovil.

HMS Heron Royal Navy Volunteer Band became the official band of the town, with a Service Level Agreement being signed.

Civic Matters

Preston Plucknett War Memorial repairs works carried out by Luke Grafton.

The order of the civic procession for Remembrance Sunday and the Annual Civic Service was agreed and this should now assist in the management of these events.

Community Safety

The Town Council's Speed Indicator Device has been installed in several locations over the past few months, including Reckleford, West Coker Road, Lysander Road, Preston Road, Lyde Road, Goldcroft and Milford Road. The Committee considered that collation of data and agreed that also the SID was primarily a deterrent, it may be necessary to sometime look back at historical data. It was decided to purchase a component to enable remote downloading of data and investigate purchasing another SID. The data is to remain with Yeovil Town Council but to be shared to the appropriate agencies on request.

In June, the Compliance and Enforcement Officer from South Somerset District Council, presented the proposed Public Space Protection Order for Yeovil town centre for street drinking and begging. Yeovil Town Council were invited, as a key agency to give a considered view.

The Committee was also pleased to welcome representatives from the Avon and Somerset Constabulary Yeovil Central Policing Team who regularly attended the meetings throughout the year to update the Committee with current policing matters in the town.

Mike Lock, Chairman of the Buildings and Civic Matters Committee
19 May 2020

Policy, Resources and Finance Committee

The Committee met on 5 occasions during the year.

Grants and Service Level Agreements

We considered 6 grant applications in accordance with our Small Grant Assistance to Local Organisation policy and made awards for £6,352 to 5 local organisations.

Organisation	Purpose of Grant Application	Amount awarded
Headway Somerset	Contribution towards laptops and PCs for the Yeovil Centre	£829
Somerset and Wessex Eating Disorder Association	Contributions towards the costs of a new recovery project	£823
Good Fellowship Club	Contribution towards travel costs	£2,200
Multiple Sclerosis Therapy Centre	Contribution towards the costs of counselling services for members, families and carers	£500
Yeovil Lord's Larder	Contribution to food and essential supplies for people accessing the Lord's Larder during COVID-19.	£2,000

The Service Level Agreement for the Octagon Theatre Summer School was extended for a further year, with a view to review once the Committee had agreed a mechanism to review Service Level Agreements. At a later meeting, the Committee agreed two template documents which would be used for the different types of Service Level Agreement: Service Provider (where Yeovil Town Council are directly receiving a service from the organisation and Sponsorship (where Yeovil Town Council make a financial contribution towards an activity of an organisation).

Policies

The following policies were approved and adopted

Policy	New	Reviewed
Financial Regulations		✓
Grant Policy		✓
Dignity at Work		✓
Community Infrastructure Levy Policy	✓	
Social Media Policy		✓
Complaints Handling Procedures		✓
Disciplinary Policy and Procedures		✓
Grievance Policy and Procedures		✓
Risk Strategy and Risk Assessment		✓
Standing Orders		✓

The Policy, Resources and Finance Committee agreed that unless a change was required due to legal requirements, recommended changes in practices or change in internal operations, that policies would not need to be reviewed every year. They agreed that those policies that were either new or had a major policy revision would be reviewed one year after its effective date, and thereafter no less that every five years.

Youth Council and Youth Clubs

The partnership between the YMCA Mendip and Yeovil Town Council has resulted in a successful delivery of Youth Provision in Yeovil.

The Westfield Youth Club began to operate out of the Westfield Community Centre in November 2019. Milford Youth Club has had its challenges which have now been resolved.

The Youth Council met every third week, until the outbreak of COVID-19. It is likely that Youth Council meeting will be put on hold until September, when the schools return after the Summer Holidays. It will be necessary to rebuild the Youth Council at this time.

Internal Audit

There were 3 internal audits carried out throughout the year by Darkin Miller Chartered Accountants. There were 9 recommendations – 1 high priority; 2 medium priorities; 5 low priorities and 1 information priority. This gives reassurance that there is a sound system of internal controls at Yeovil Town Council. The internal auditor recommended that a formal bank reconciliation is carried out and presented to Policy, Resources and Finance Committee so that Members have clarity over the funds held by the Council, and further confirmation that a key financial control is operating effectively.

Statement of Accounts and Revenue Budget Outturn Report for 2018/19

The Statement of Accounts and Revenue Budget Outturn Report for 2018/19 were approved. There was an underspend of £849 for 2018/19 (£127,908 for 2017/18). As at 31st March 2019, the earmarked reserves (reserves set aside for specific purposes) totalled £50,166 (compared to £40,489 as at 31st March 2018) and the unallocated general fund balance was £681,432 (compared to £704,917 as at 31st March 2018).

Climate Control Action Plan

A Climate Control working party was established to devise and monitor the Climate Control Action Plan. Steady progress is being made to achieve what has been laid out within the Action Plan. Yeovil Town Council have stopped using single use plastics, introduced a water dispenser, investigating a more environmentally van for the Amenities Officer and are beginning to work towards paperless Committee papers.

Paperless

In order to reduce the cost of printing and postage, and to be more environmentally friendly, the Committee formally agreed to allow for electronic summons and agenda via e-mail be implemented. All Members completed electronic service of summons consent forms to give or not give their consent to receive summons and agendas electronically. It was recognised that there were some issues with Members not having adequate devices to read agendas and reports prior to meetings and at the meetings. It was agreed that further work would need to be carried out to review the options for a longer-term solution.

Tender for IT Hardware, Software and Support

This project has now been fully implemented with little disruption to Council services. The Council has introduced an EoFTTC leased line (which gives a guaranteed

bandwidth); new cabling and infrastructure, all data was successfully migrated, and hardware installed. We also had a new network switch installed and have an Uninterrupted Power Source (UPS).

Staff

The Amenities Officer left the Town Council during the year and we are looking to replace this person. We also recruited a new receptionist.

Cllr Graham Oakes, Chairman of Policy, Resources and Finance Committee
19 May 2020