



Yeovil Town Council

Town House
19 Union Street
Yeovil
Somerset
BA20 1PQ

Policy, Resources and Finance Committee

Policy, Resources and Finance Committee

Tuesday 24th September 2024

7:00pm

Hybrid Meeting:

**Face-to-face at Town House, 19 Union Street, Yeovil
BA20 1PQ; and virtual using Zoom meeting software**

For further information on the items to be discussed, please contact town.clerk@yeovil.gov.uk.

Amanda Card,
Chief Executive / Town Clerk
18th September 2024

This information is also available on our website: www.yeovil.gov.uk

Members of Yeovil Town Council are summoned to attend:

Tareth Casey

Karl Gill

Andy Kendall (*Ex-officio*)

Tony Lock (*Ex-officio*)

Jane Lowery

Graham Oakes

Evie Potts-Jones

Ashley Richards

Andy Soughton (Chair)

Royston Spinner

Rob Stickland (*Vice Chair*)

Adrian Wilkes

Dave Woan

Public Comments at meetings

Members of the public may attend the meeting either physically or via zoom.

If you would like to join the meeting via zoom, please e-mail ytic@yeovil.gov.uk by 9:00am on Tuesday 24th September 2024. Instructions will be sent to you to view the meeting.

Equality Act 2010

The general public sector equality duty places an obligation on a wide range of public bodies (including town and parish councils) in the exercise of their functions to have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not

The protected characteristics are:

Age	Race
Disability	Religion or Belief
Gender Reassignment	Sex
Marriage and Civil Partnership	Sexual Orientation
Pregnancy and Maternity	

Recording of Council Meetings

The Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 allows both the public and press to take photographs, film and audio record the proceedings and report on all public meetings (including on social media).

Any member of the public wishing to record or film proceedings must let the Chair of the meeting know prior to, or at the start of, the meeting and the recording must be overt (i.e. clearly visible to anyone at the meeting), but non-disruptive. Please refer to our Policy on audio/visual recording and photography at Council meetings at www.yeovil.gov.uk. This permission does not extend to private meetings or parts of meetings which are not open to the public.

Members of the public exercising their right to speak during the time allocated for Public Comment who do not wish to be recorded or filmed, need to inform the Chair who will instruct those taking a recording or filming to cease doing so while they speak.

A G E N D A

Public Comment (15 Minutes)

Due to the confidential nature of the business of item 11/237 – 11/239, under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 s3, a motion to exclude members of the public and press during discussion of this item will be considered by the Councillors. *Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 s3*

11/225 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND TO CONSIDER THE REASONS GIVEN

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

11/226 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).

11/227 MINUTES

To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting held on 14th May 2024 and 29th May 2024.

11/228 GRANTS

There are no grants.

11/229 YEOVIL TWINNING ASSOCIATION

To consider the letter attached at page 6 from Yeovil Twinning Association.

11/230 INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT

Members to consider the report of the Internal Auditor as attached at pages 7 to 14.

11/231 MEMBERS ALLOWANCES 2023/24

Members to note the Members Allowance for 2023/24 as attached at page 15 and to note that it will be published on the website.

11/232 CHRISTMAS EVENT: URGENT BUSINESS – STANDING ORDER 4 (d) (xiv)

Members to consider the report of the Deputy Town Clerk as attached at page 16, regarding the Christmas Lights Switch On.

11/233 RECOMMENDATION FROM GROUNDS AND GENERAL MAINTENANCE COMMITTEE

Members to consider the report of the Deputy Town Clerk regarding an increase in allotments rents (charge effective for the period 1st October 2025 until 30th September 2026) as attached at page 17.

11/233 REVIEW OF THE SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

Members to review the Social Media Policy (due for reviewing September 2024), with the suggested amendments highlighted in yellow, as attached at pages 18 to 21.

11/234 FLEET MANAGEMENT AND DRIVER POLICY

Members to approve and adopt the Fleet Management and Driver Policy as attached at pages 22 to 40.

11/235 SCHEME OF DELEGATION

Members to approve and recommend to Town Council, the new Scheme of Delegation following the decision of Town Council (minute 11/206 – Town Council meeting - 3rd September) as attached at pages 41 to 49.

11/236 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

The Committee will consider passing a resolution to exclude the press and public from the *next items* in accordance with Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 on the grounds that publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

11/237 JOB ROLE REVIEW (STAFFING IN CONFIDENCE)

Members to consider the report of the Town Clerk (to follow)

11/238 ADDITIONAL RESOURCES REQUEST (STAFFING IN CONFIDENCE)

Members to consider the report of the Town Clerk (to follow)

11/239 RECOMMENDATION FROM PROMOTIONS AND ACTIVITIES COMMITTEE

Members to consider the report of the Town Clerk (to follow)

Dear Councillors

For some considerable time Yeovil Twinning Association (YTA) has been experiencing financial challenges, despite our attempts to raise money with annual events such as Garden Parties and our recent successful Quiz Night.

Our income from membership fees has been depleting steadily due to the ageing of long term members. Some have become unable to host or travel abroad, some have sadly died. Attracting new, younger members is a challenge and we have been holding monthly coffee mornings to spread the word with this in mind.

Accumulated funds are quickly depleted when we host in Yeovil and costs are always rising. In June this year the Taunusstein visitors will be coming to Yeovil. The coach to transport them from Heathrow to Yeovil and back again alone will cost YTA £900. £25 per head will be the charge to YTA for each guest's meal at the formal dinner (to which the Mayor is always invited). Additional costs will be £202.50 for each guest's admission to the Sculpture Park, and a visit to West Coker Twine Works will be £50 overall. A total cost of £1,577.50.

As you can see, we need some financial backing and I am writing to you to ask if YTA would be eligible for some form of financial support?

We would be very grateful to receive such help as the future of the YTA and Yeovil's links with the three twin towns in Europe is in severe jeopardy unless more funding can be obtained. We as a group would be very sad to lose the connections.

Additionally for your information, on 19th October 2024 Herblay will be celebrating the 40th Anniversary with Yeovil with a Civic Reception to mark the occasion. They have made it known that there will be a formal invitation to the Yeovil Town Mayor's office which we hope will be accepted. YTA members will be going and accept they have to pay for themselves.

Yours sincerely,

Darryl Stimpson - Chair

Bridget Dollard - Deputy Chair

FINAL

Internal audit report 2023/24

Visit 2 of 2

YEOVIL TOWN COUNCIL

Date: 23rd July 2024

Report author: R Darkin-Miller
Email: r.darkin@darkinmiller.co.uk

Introduction

This report contains a note of the audit recommendations made to Yeovil Town Council following the carrying out of internal audit testing remotely on 19th June 2024 with some later remote working.

The audit work has been carried out in accordance with Appendix 9 of the 2014 'Governance and Accountability for Local Councils: A Practitioners' Guide', as supplemented by the additional tests required by later AGARs.

An internal audit covers the review of the operation of the Council's internal control environment. It is not designed to review and give full assurance over every transaction carried out by the Council. Instead it enables the auditor, following the sample testing of a number of different types of transaction, to give an opinion as to whether or not the control objectives are being achieved across a range of financial and governance systems.

Audit Opinion

The internal audit for 2023/24 has now been completed in accordance with the provisions of the Practitioners' Guide and the CIPFA code of internal audit practice.

Based on the sample testing carried out at this final audit visit and during the year, all of the Council's current financial controls appear to be operating effectively, with the exception of the following:

Internal Auditor note on test N: Publication

I checked to see that the Council complied with the publication requirements for the previous year's Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR). The Council had to publish before 03/07/23 (the start of its public rights period) ss1&2 of the AGAR, and the public rights notice including a declaration that the accounting statements were unaudited.

On or before 30/09/23, the Council was required to publish the notice of conclusion of audit, and ss1-3 of the AGAR (including the completed external audit report).

The Clerk provided evidence that the public rights documents were published before the start of the public rights period, and that they remained in place until the end of the period. The notice of conclusion and ss1-3 of the audited AGAR were not published until 03/10/23 as the external auditor did not provide the external audit report until after the Clerk had left for the day on Friday 29/09/23. The notice of conclusion documents were still on the website at the date of the first audit visit of 23/24.

The evidence shows that the Council complied with the public rights publication requirements, but that it was unable to comply with the requirements for the notice of conclusion. I have therefore assessed the test as a 'fail', albeit recognising that the Council's ability to comply was detrimentally impacted by the late arrival of the external audit report.

Audit Recommendations

Recommendations made during the audit are shown in appendix one to this report.

Recommendations are graded as follows:

Rating	Significance
High	Either a critical business risk is not being adequately addressed or there is substantial non-conformity with regulations and accepted standards.
Medium	Either a key business risk is not being adequately addressed or there is a degree of non-conformity with regulations and accepted standards.
Low	Either minor non-conformity with procedure or opportunity to improve working practices further.

The number of recommendations made at this audit visit and their priority are summarised in the following table:

Rating	Number
High	2
Medium	4
Low	0
Info	1
TOTAL	7

The number of recommendations made at all of the audit visits in 2023/24 and their priorities are summarised in the following table:

Rating	Visit 1	Visit 2	TOTAL
High	0	2	2
Medium	5	4	9
Low	2	0	2
Information	0	1	1
TOTAL	7	7	14

I would like to thank Amanda Card – Town Clerk, Sally Fremantle – Deputy Town Clerk, Lucy Ryder – Assistant Town Clerk, and Neil Gage – Finance Administrator for their assistance during this audit.

<p>5.2 – Check what value should be charged for the recharge to the Burial Committee for the Clerk’s services</p>	<p>I checked to see that the correct prices were charged for a sample of receipts. I found that Council prices agreed for 4/11 samples, with 6/11 not being applicable as the 'price' was set by a third party (e.g. bank interest). I was unable to agree the price for 1/11 receipts relating to the salary recharge to the Joint Burial Committee. The budgeted Town Council figure was £1k, but the total recharged for 23/24 was £3.3k. The Town Clerk confirmed that she was investigating.</p> <p>I recommend that the Town Clerk checks why the salary recharge is different to the amount budgeted. This will help to ensure that correct price is charged for all services provided by the Council.</p>	<p>M</p>	<p>We will investigate the charge for the Burial Committee and assess whether it is a fair charge to the burial committee</p>	<p>Deputy Responsible Finance Officer</p>	<p>November 2024 (in time for budget setting)</p>
<p>5.3 – Ensure debt chased and implement debt management policy</p>	<p>I checked to see that all income due to the Council is collected. I found that the aged debt report at 31/03/24 included £1.9k/29% of debt over 120 days. This included a credit balance of £145 relating to payments on account, leaving a gross debt of £2.1k. £1.7k of this related to a prior year invoice on which payments are being made by instalments. £400 relates to hall hire dating back to December 2023. The debtor owed a total of £520.50 at 31/03/24. The</p>	<p>M</p>	<p>Agree. The Council will have a higher exposure to risk of invoices not being paid on time. We will work on a debt management policy and process.</p>	<p>Chief Executive / Town Clerk and Deputy Responsible Finance Officer</p>	<p>November 2024</p>

	<p>Town Clerk noted that this invoice will be chased for payment.</p> <p>I recommend that the Council puts in place a debt management policy and a regular debt management process in order to ensure that all debts are recovered. This will be particularly important as the Council expands its service provision over the next two years.</p>				
9.1 – Ensure formal petty cash reconciliation is prepared and retained	<p>I checked to see that there is a bank reconciliation for each account. I found that a formal bank reconciliation is prepared for the Council’s bank accounts, which is supported by bank statements, but that the petty cash count is not supported by a formal record of the amount of cash and receipts held in the petty cash tin at the period end. The Finance Assistant noted that a reconciliation is carried out, but that once the cash is balanced the rough notes are discarded.</p> <p>I recommend that a formal petty cash reconciliation is prepared each month which notes the number and value of coins and notes held, and the amount of receipts held in the tin, with the value reconciled to the figure shown in the finance system. This will allow the identification, investigation and resolution of any differences, and help to reduce the risk of fraud and error.</p>	M	A formal petty cash reconciliation will be carried out. This will be rolled out to the additional sites for services that are being transferred to Yeovil Town Council.	Deputy Responsible Finance Officer	November 2024

<p>10.1 – Ensure VAT accounts cleared down</p>	<p>I checked to see that debtors and creditors have been properly recorded. I found that there was evidence to support all debtor and creditor balances noted at 31/03/24, but that the VAT control accounts had not been cleared down after the quarterly VAT returns had been prepared and filed. This means that the VAT liability account has a debit balance of £97k, offset by balances of £1.4k, (£9k) and (£68k) on the sales tax, purchase tax and VAT repayment accounts respectively. The only balance which should be showing at the year-end is the VAT liability balance of £20.4k as agreed to the VAT return.</p> <p>When the VAT return is run each quarter, the balances on the sales and purchase tax accounts should be cleared down to the VAT liability account. This should be cleared by the payment of the VAT due (to HMRC or the Council).</p> <p>I recommend that the VAT accounts are properly cleared down each quarter, and that a journal is posted to properly clear down the historic VAT balances in order to ensure that the VAT accounts show the correct balance. This recommendation has been made in previous audits.</p>	<p>M</p>	<p>Agreed</p>	<p>Deputy Responsible Finance Officer and Finance Officer</p>	<p>Each quarter</p>
<p>10.2 – Set up earmarked reserves in 24/25</p>	<p>I noted that the Council currently uses accruals as a proxy for setting aside earmarked reserves. Accruals should only be used to bring in expenditure for</p>	<p>H</p>	<p>Agree</p>	<p>Chief Executive / Town Clerk</p>	<p>May 2025</p>

	<p>goods or services received during the year for which an invoice has not been received by the year end. I discussed two different methods of accounting for earmarked reserves with the Clerk, who confirmed that this would be addressed in the 24/25 accounts as part of a larger exercise to bring in the balances relating to a number of services that the Council will take over running from Somerset Council in the coming year.</p> <p>I recommend that the Council puts reserve accounting in place in 24/25, in order to ensure that the balance sheet is correctly stated.</p>			and Deputy Responsible Finance Officer	
10.3 – Adjusted errors	<p>The following errors were adjusted in the draft accounts:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The 22/23 figures for other payments, debtors and reserves were restated by £3.6k following the restatement of the Yeovil Crematorium and Cemetery figures by Somerset Council during the preparation of the 23/24 financial statements. Other payments was increased by this amount; debtors and reserves were decreased. 2. The 22/23 staffing costs figure was increased by £40k to reflect staffing costs that had been coded to other payments. Other payments 22/23 were decreased by the same amount. There was no impact on reserves. 3. The 23/24 annual precept was increased by £75k relating to the element of precept paid to the Council in relation to its contribution to the Burial 	Info			

	<p>Committee. Other receipts was decreased by £397 relating to income for the Mayor's charity omitted in error. Other payments was increased by £75k to bring in the related costs from both adjustments.</p> <p>4. The 23/24 fixed asset total was restated on the draft AGAR to match the prior year figure, as there were no changes to the register in year.</p>				
10.4 – Ensure agreed audit recommendations are implemented	<p>I checked to see that agreed audit recommendations had been implemented. I found that eight internal audit recommendations had not been implemented. A high level recommendation about diversifying investments to safeguard the Council's bank balances is in progress. The remaining medium or low level recommendations were made again in 23/24 where required. I noted that the External Auditor identified issues with the risk assessment and publication controls in their final audit report for 22/23. The Council addressed the risk control issue, but was unable to comply with the publication requirements as the final External Audit report was issued late.</p> <p>I recommend that all agreed recommendations are actioned within deadline in order to reduce the risk of fraud and error.</p>	H	<p>We will review all the outstanding audit recommendations and formulate a plan to ensure that they are all implemented.</p> <p>Devolution took priority this year and we did not have enough resource to implement audit recommendations.</p>	Chief Executive / Town Clerk and Deputy Responsible Finance Officer	January 2025

Yeovil Town Council

Members Allowances



Notice is hereby given that the following parish basis allowances were paid to the Members of the Town Council during the municipal year 2023/24.

Councillor	Annual Allowance
Barry Boyton	£1,253.28
Jade Cabell	£1,253.28
Tareth Casey	£1,253.28
Kayleigh Fieldsend (from 27 th July 2024)	£703.78
Nigel Gage (until 21 st January 2024)	£1,148.84
Karl Gill	£1,253.28
Emma-Jayne Hopkins	£1,253.28
Kaysar Hussain	£1,253.28
Andrew Kendall	£1,253.28
Pauline Lock (until 1 st June 2024)	£100.54
Tony Lock	£1,253.28
Jamie Lock	£1,253.28
Jane Lowery	£1,253.28
Sarah Lowery	£1,253.28
Graham Oakes	£1,253.28
Evie Potts-Jones	£1,253.28
Wes Read	£1,253.28
Ashley Richards	£1,253.28
Jeny Snell	£1,253.28
Andy Soughton	£1,253.28
Royston Spinner	£1,253.28
Rob Stickland	£1,253.28
Helen Stonier	£1,253.28
Liam Watts (until 17 th October 2023)	£603.24
Adrian Wilkes (from 3 rd January 2024)	£313.32
David Woan	£1,253.28

The allowances are paid in accordance with the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003.

Amanda Card

Chief Executive / Town Clerk

24th September 2024

11/232 CHRISTMAS EVENT: URGENT BUSINESS – STANDING ORDER 4 (d) (xiv)

At the May meeting of the Promotions and Activities Committee it was agreed to request a breakdown of costs for the Christmas Event and refer the matter to the Policy, Resources and Finance Committee to consider the extra budget required. As the meeting of the Policy, Resources and Finance Committee did not take place, the matter was dealt with under Standing Order 4 (d) (xiv). The budget allocation of £8,000 for Love Yeovil to provide the Christmas Light Switch-on Event was agreed:

Promotions and Activities budget allocation £2,000; and the additional £6,000 to be met from contingencies.

It is **RECOMMENDED** that the report be noted.

(Sally Freemantle, Deputy Town Clerk - sally.freemantle@yeovil.gov.uk)

11/233 RECOMMENDATION FROM GROUNDS AND GENERAL MAINTENANCE COMMITTEE

At the meeting held on 9th September 2024, the Grounds and General Maintenance Committee considered the allotment rent review.

The Council reviews allotment rents on an annual basis - the last allotment rent review was carried out in 2023 when it was agreed that the charge would increase from 49p per m² to 50p per m². All tenants were given twelve months' notice of the increase effective from 1st October 2024.

The Grounds and General Maintenance Committee agreed that they would recommend to Policy, Resources and Finance Committee that the allotment rent be increased to 53p per m² for the period 1st October 2025 to 30th September 2026.

The table below shows the impact of increasing the rent.

Charge per sq. metre	50p	53p
Sq. metres	48,970	48,970
Budgeted Income (£)	24,485	25,954
Budgeted Expenditure (£)	24,443	25,560
(Shortfall)/Surplus (£)	42	394
(Shortfall)/Surplus (%)	0.2%	1.5%
Average Annual charge (based on 143m²)	71.50	75.79
Average Weekly charge (based on 143m²)	1.38	1.45
% increase (compared to previous year)	2%	5%

The Committee is **RECOMMENDED**:

- 1) to note the report; and
- 2) to agree that the allotment rent be increased to 53p per m² for the period 1st October 2025 to 30th September 2026.

*(Sally Freemantle, Deputy Town Clerk – 01935 382424 or
sally.freemantle@yeovil.gov.uk)*

YEOVIL TOWN COUNCIL



SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

1. Introduction

- 1.1. This policy is intended to help Councillors and Council Officers make appropriate decisions about the use of social media such as emails, blogs, wikis, social networking websites, podcasts, forums, message boards, or comments on web-articles, such as Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn and other relevant social media websites.

The Council will encourage the use of social media for the purposes of:

- providing and exchanging information about services;
 - supporting local democracy;
 - gathering citizen insights and managing citizen relationships;
 - promoting cultural events or tourism for the area;
 - supporting community cohesion, neighbourliness and resilience; and
 - creating internal communications and learning and development.
- 1.2. This policy outlines the standards the Council requires Councillors and Officers to observe when using social media, the circumstances in which the Council will monitor the use of social media and the action to be taken in respect of breaches of this policy.
- 1.3. This policy supplements and should be read in conjunction with all other policies and procedures adopted by the Council, such as the Equal Opportunities Policy, Data Protection Policy, Disciplinary Procedure, Members' Code of Conduct and such like.
- 1.4. This policy does not form part of any contract of employment and it may be amended at any time.
- 1.5. This policy covers all individuals working at all levels with the Council, including all elected and co-opted Councillors, the **Chief Executive/Town Clerk** and all other employees and volunteers (collectively referred to as Officers in this policy).

2. Scope of Policy

- 2.1. The Council has a corporate presence on the web, Facebook, **LinkedIn** and by use of email, which it uses to communicate with people who live in, work in and visit Yeovil Town.

- 2.2. The Council also has presence on the web and social media for Yeovil Country Park, Yeovil Recreation Centre, Westlands Entertainment Venue and South Somerset Heritage Collection.
- 2.3. The Council will always try to use the most effective channel for its communications. We may ask those who contact us for their preferred channel of communication when we deal with them. Over time the Town Council may add to the channels of communication that it uses as it seeks to improve and expand the services it delivers. When these changes occur this Social Media Policy will be updated to reflect the new arrangements.
- 2.4. All Councillors and Officers are always expected to comply with this policy to protect the reputation, privacy, confidentiality, and interests of the Council, its services, employees, partners and community.
- 2.5. Serious breaches of this policy by employees may be dealt with under the Employee Disciplinary Procedure. The Council may take disciplinary action in respect of unlawful, libellous, harassing, defamatory, abusive, threatening, harmful, obscene, profane, sexually oriented or racially offensive comments by an employee.

Breach of the policy by volunteers will result in the Council no longer using their services and, if necessary, appropriate action will be taken.

Behaviour required by the Members' Code of Conduct shall apply to online activity in the same way it does to other written or verbal communication. Councillors will bear in mind that inappropriate conduct can still attract adverse publicity, even where the code does not apply. Remarks are easily withdrawn, apologised for and forgotten when made in person, but posting them on the internet means that they have been published in a way that cannot be contained. Online content should be objective, balanced, informative and accurate. Councillors must be aware that their profile as a Councillor means the more likely it is they will be acting in an official capacity when blogging or networking.

It must be remembered that communications on the internet are permanent and public. When communicating in a 'private' group it should be ensured that the Council would be content with the statement should it be made public.

3. Rules for using social media

- 3.1. Officers and Councillors must not allow their interaction on any websites or blogs to damage their working relationships with others. They must not make any derogatory, discriminatory, defamatory or offensive comments about other Officers, Councillors, the Council or about the people, businesses and agencies the Council works with and serves.

- 3.2. Posts must not to contain anyone's personal information, other than necessary basic contact details
- 3.3. If Officers or Councillors blog or tweet personally, and not in their role as an Officer or a Councillor, they must not act, claim to act, or give the impression that they are acting as a representative of the Council. They should not include web links to official Council websites as this may give or reinforce the impression that they are representing the Council.
- 3.4. All Officers and Councillors must ensure they use Council facilities appropriately. If using a Council-provided website, blog site or social networking area, any posts made will be viewed as made in an official capacity. **They must** **Do** not use Council facilities for personal or political blogs.
- 3.5. The Council will appoint a nominated person(s) as moderator(s). They will be responsible for posting and monitoring of the content on Council pages, ensuring it complies with the Social Media Policy. The moderator(s) will have authority to immediately, without notice or comment, remove any posts from the Council's social media pages if they are deemed to be inflammatory or of a defamatory or libellous nature. Such post will also be reported to the Hosts (i.e. Facebook) and the **Chief Executive / Town Clerk** for Council records.
- 3.6. The Council will appoint a nominated "Webmaster" to maintain and update the Town Council Website and **associated websites**. The websites **s** may be used to:
 - post notices and minutes of meetings;
 - provide information about the Council;
 - advertise events and activities;
 - post good news stories;
 - advertise vacancies;
 - 'share' information from partners i.e. Police, Library, District Council, etc.
 - announce new information appropriate to the Council;
 - post other items as the Council see fit; and
 - Facebook and/or Twitter, etc, may be used to support the website and its information as above.
- 3.7. Officers and individual Town Councillors are responsible for what they post. They are personally responsible for any online activity conducted via their published e-mail address, which is used for Council business. Both Officers and Councillors **are strongly advised to must** have separate Council and personal email addresses.
- 3.8. All social media sites in use should be checked on a regular basis to ensure the security settings are in place.
- 3.9. When participating in online communication Officers and Councillors must:

- be responsible and respectful; be direct, informative, brief and transparent;
 - always disclose their identity and affiliation to the Council;
 - never make false or misleading statements;
 - not present themselves in a way that might cause embarrassment. They must protect the good reputation of the Council;
 - be mindful of the impact that any post may have on Officers, Councillors and volunteers;
 - be mindful of the information posted on sites and make sure personal opinions are not published as being that of the Council;
 - keep the tone of comments respectful and informative;
 - refrain from posting controversial or potentially inflammatory remarks; language that may be deemed as offensive relating to race, sexuality, disability, gender, age or religion or belief should not be published on any social media site;
 - avoid personal attacks, online fights and hostile communications;
 - do not post comments that you would not be prepared make in writing or face to face;
 - never name an individual third party unless you have written permission to do so;
 - seek the permission of the owner to publish original photographs or videos from the persons or organisations in the video or photograph before they are uploaded. You must check that there is parental permission before photos of children are used;
 - respect the privacy of other Councillors, Officers and residents; and
 - never post any information or conduct any online activity that may violate laws or regulations, such as libel and copyright.
- 3.10. Residents and Councillors should be aware that not all communication through social media requires a response, although an acknowledgement should be made if appropriate.
- 3.11. If a matter raised in any form of social media needs further consideration by the Council it should be referred to the Policy, Resources and Finance Committee. Again the 'poster' shall be informed via the page or direct message that this is the case and invited to contact the Chief Executive / Town Clerk direct. Any response agreed by the Council will be recorded in the minutes of the meeting.
- 3.12. Reports of any concerns regarding content placed on social media sites should be reported to the Chief Executive / Town Clerk for referral to the Policy, Resources and Finance Committee.

Yeovil Town Council
24th September 2024

To be reviewed: September 2029

YEOVIL TOWN COUNCIL

FLEET MANAGEMENT AND DRIVER POLICY – INCLUDING DRIVER HANDBOOK



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24. Driver benefits

1. Introduction

- 1.1. This Policy and Driver's Handbook has been designed to provide essential Health & Safety Instruction, guidance and information to drivers whilst driving Council fleet vehicles. Setting out policies and procedures for driving at work to assist with reducing risks associated with vehicles and their use.
- 1.2. The Council is not only committed to reducing the level of road accidents but also to reducing the level of risk faced by employees when driving, improving general road safety and encouraging the principles of safer and economical driving.
- 1.3. The Council recognises that the Health & Safety of its employees extends to driving a motor vehicle whilst on Council business, this could be an owned, leased hired or borrowed vehicle. It will therefore ensure that employees are suitably appraised for their roles and responsibilities by means of this handbook and associated procedures.
- 1.4. Each employee will be requested to sign to acknowledge they have received and understood the requirements within the document. New starters to the Council that are required to drive a council owned, leased, hired or a borrowed vehicle as part of their role will receive a copy during their induction. A signed copy is to be sent to the Fleet Admin team (Leisure Assistant role) whilst retaining a copy on the employee's personal file.

Note: The term "vehicles" is used throughout the Drivers Handbook and all associated documents connected with the safe use and operation of all vehicles. Vehicles refers to all modes of transport; cars, vans, tractors, ride-on-mowers etc that are used on the public highway that MUST abide by the Highway Code when on the Public Highway. Those vehicles (tractors, ride-on-mowers etc) that are also used off-road must follow the Risk Assessments and Safe System of Work for their safe operation when not being used on the Public Highway.

2. Responsibility

- 2.1. The law is a joint responsibility. It is not only the driver that may potentially face fines, criminal and/or civil charges for committing driving offences, the council may too. Offences include every aspect of driving under the Road Traffic Act, infringements will be identified by site visits, and/or roadside spot checks by the Police and/or other authorised officials.
- 2.2. Many others may become 'Secondary offenders', either with or without knowing that the offence has been committed. The penalties are generally the same as for the primary offence. Using, allowing, causing, permitting, aiding and abetting, counselling and procuring and/or being involved in a conspiracy for the offence to occur could incur charges/penalties/actions to be taken

against the Council and any supervisor/line manager involved with the driver/offence as well as implicate the organisation and driver themselves.

- 2.3. Other liabilities for managers include a breach in statutory legislation relating to Employment Laws/Acts and a Civil liability to Health and Safety in addition to the Councils internal policies and procedures.
- 2.4. The Council will maintain accurate records relating to all vehicles and drivers coordinated by Fleet Admin (the Leisure Assistant role). Vehicle records will ensure plant and vehicles are safe to operate and appropriate vehicles are able to drive on the Highway. Records will inform decision making about replacement programmes and fuel recording will feed into data capture for carbon monitoring. Driver records will ensure all fleet drivers are safe to operate and that over the course of time, through ill health or otherwise, driver competency does not deteriorate.
- 2.5. If any driver or any council employee has concerns about fleet maintenance, management, particular vehicles or procedure they can contact;

healthandsafetyteam@yeovil.gov.uk

Fleet Admin – Scott Harris on 01935 462616

Director for Leisure & Environment – Katy Menday on 07310 215053

- 2.6. Current service standards to be monitored and reported annually include;
 - Completion of daily user checks on all highway vehicles
 - Completion of walk around checks on all other vehicles
 - Quarterly driver licence checks
 - Driver assessments every other year
 - Annual service for all vehicles including small plant
 - Annual MOT for all highway vehicles
 - Fuel use recording
- 2.7. Combing fuel records and use of the Zellar data dashboard will allow the fleet team to create an action plan to improve the carbon footprint of the Council's Fleet in future months and years.

3. Driver Responsibilities

- 3.1. All drivers are expected to undertake the following:
 - Park responsibly

- Drive and behave responsibly in all work activity
- Abide by the Council's Code of Conduct
- Ensure you are fit to drive (this includes not being under the influence of drugs or alcohol, see section 24)
- Advise your manager of any medical conditions and medication that may affect your ability to drive
- Ensure all glasses or corrective lenses required are worn
- Ensure all hearing aids are worn
- Advise your manager of any driving violation, accidents, fixed penalty points, or vehicle damage, any near misses
- Ensure the correct driving licence is held for any vehicle you drive, before you drive it
- Ensure vehicle familiarisation training has been completed and you are familiar with its operation,
- Undertake daily walkaround checks of any vehicle(s) before use, complete any paperwork as required and at the end of shift and report any defects identified.
- Wear seatbelts whilst travelling in vehicles
- Ensure all required PPE is worn
- Ensure all loads are secured prior to travel and complete regular checks to ensure load integrity is not potentially compromised
- Ensure good housekeeping of tools/equipment/chemicals carried and cleanliness of your vehicles to prevent slips/trips and/ or ill health
- Ensure all fuel is carried safely e.g. suitable transportation receptacles are used with the maximum amounts not exceeded, vehicle signage, storage
- No smoking/vaping within vehicles
- No mobile phone/PDA use whilst driving; this includes No headphones/ear bud use whilst driving
- No food/drink to be consumed whilst driving
- No private use of Council fleet vehicles

Note: Drivers must also have a thorough understanding of the current Highway Code, including the legislation/recommendations/regulations detailed within, and effectively observe these at all times.

[The Highway Code - Guidance - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/the-highway-code)

4. Driving Licence

- 4.1. Drivers are legally responsible for ensuring that they are in possession of a current and valid driving licence for the category of vehicle being driven. If a driver receives penalty points for any road traffic offence, they must immediately report this to their manager. This must be reported to the Fleet Admin (Leisure Assistant role) team for further advice.
- 4.2. The Council also requires drivers to notify their line manager and the Fleet Team with immediate effect should a licence be suspended or withdrawn due to any prosecution or medical condition. For lost/stolen/damaged driving licence replacement please contact DVLA

[Replace a lost, stolen, damaged or destroyed driving licence - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/replace-lost-stolen-damaged-or-destroyed-driving-licence)

- 4.3. The manager is legally responsible for making sure they allocate vehicles to drivers as per the entitlement/category on the driver's licence. Failure to ensure that a driver has the correct license category may result in the driver being uninsured.
- 4.4. The Fleet admin team will carry out three monthly DVLA licence checks, all drivers will be required to provide their driving licence number and a check code to enable this. Failure to provide the required codes will result in a suspension from driving duties.

[View or share your driving licence information - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/view-or-share-your-driving-licence-information)

Failure to disclose changes to your licence will result in disciplinary action aligned to the HR policies. See items 4.1 and 4.2 above.

5. Fuelling/Charging Procedure

- 5.1. Please adhere to all site rules, health and safety instructions and signage when re-fuelling. The Esso garage on Reckleford is the current nominated garage, present your YTC ID badge for the fuel to be charged. Fuel cards are being investigated for future use.
- 5.2. It is advised that all vehicles are refuelled before they register below a quarter of a tank or charged as and when possible, to ensure the tank/battery range is kept at the maximum possible.

6. Driver's Hours

- 6.1. Managers, alongside drivers, must make sure work-related journeys are properly planned and scheduled, taking account of adequate time, breaks, driver fatigue, and as far as is practicably possible, congestion, weather conditions and any other factors. Weights and measures, vehicle condition and any other legal requirements must always be observed. This includes planning all other possible work-related duties so that employees have sufficient time to drive safely within speed limits, and with adequate rest periods to reduce the risk of driver fatigue and tiredness.
- 6.2. Everyone should also observe working Time Directive rules, irrespective of role and any related requirement(s). Working Time Regs

[Understanding the Working Time Regulations - Working time rules - Acas](#)

7. Seatbelts

- 7.1. The Highway Code makes it clear that once seatbelts have been fitted to a vehicle they **MUST** be worn. This includes all vehicle types. Seatbelts may be temporarily removed for vocational vehicle manoeuvres when reversing only. The Highway Code, road safety and vehicle rules.

[Seat belts: the law: Overview - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

8. Daily Checks (Prestart/Walkaround/End of Shift)

- 8.1. Daily checks must be undertaken prior to the vehicle being used on the public highway. Failure to undertake and record daily checks sufficiently could put driver and other highway users at risk.
- 8.2. Before the start of each working day the driver must carry out daily vehicle checks. This must be recorded on a Daily User Check (DUC) form. Pads of forms will be provided in each vehicle and these forms will be collected and saved by Fleet Admin on a monthly basis.
- 8.3. Failure to carry out daily checks may result in the driver being subject to disciplinary procedures. The Council management has a duty to address any infringement with vehicle users and may take disciplinary action against the driver, and possibly manager, as a result.
- 8.4. Drivers are also required to complete the same walk-round checks at the end of the day to ensure defects can be rectified as soon as possible to reduce vehicle downtime and lack of service provision. Defects can be reported to healthandsafetyteam@yeovil.gov.uk or 01935 462616.
- 8.5. Improper use and issues relating to roadworthiness and all other driving offences relating to the use of all other vehicle types may also include

sanctions, endorsements, and penalties, against the driver, management and the Council. Disciplinary action may be taken against any driver who is found to be using a vehicle on a public highway in an improper fashion or condition.

9. All Other Vehicle Types/Visual Checks

9.1. All vehicles must be visually checked at the start and end of each shift and documented. Attention should be given to:

- Tyres/Wheels (wear/damage/inflation/fixing/debris),
- Mirrors and Windows (cleanliness/damage, adjusted),
- Bodywork and Decals, (sharp edges/damage or missing),
- Lights and Lenses (cracks/damage/'white light'/bulbs/adjusted),
- Seatbelt fittings/horn is audible
- Reversing arms
- Presence of First Aid box/Fire Extinguisher (including content, date and pressure), Warning Triangle
- Other relevant safety/legally required equipment.

Checks are aligned with the daily user check form and a clip board with a vehicle check form is provided for use for each vehicle. These forms will be collected and saved by Fleet admin on a monthly basis.

Note: How the vehicle 'feels', sounds and be aware of any excessive smoke or fluid leaks. Please report any concerns immediately to supervision/line management. All matters relating to improper use, as above, will also be applicable and may result in disciplinary action being taken against a driver.

10. Reporting Defects

10.1. If a driver or vehicle operator is aware of any defect on their vehicle or machine, they MUST act on it immediately. Details of the defect should be logged on the daily check form and reported directly to the Fleet Admin. Defects can be reported to healthandsafetyteam@yeovil.gov.uk or 01935 462616

Note: All staff are reminded that conducting any kind of temporary/DIY repair(s) to a vehicle or machinery is prohibited and against this Policy instruction. Improper use of any item or equipment is also prohibited. Only correct use, as specifically stated in the manufacturer's instructions and use 'as intended' should be observed, after appropriate adequate and relevant training has been

received. Please check with Line Management if you have any concern(s) or this is not clear.

11. Cab Interior/Vehicle Cleanliness

- 11.1. The vehicle driver is personally responsible for maintaining a safe, clean, and tidy condition of their vehicle and its work equipment/contents on board. Please ensure any vehicle is left in a safe and clean condition for the next person.
- 11.2. Spot checks will be made to ensure consistent and effective care is taken of allocated vehicles to ensure they are maintained to the required standard.

Note: Drivers should ensure the vehicle dash and windscreen area always clear of items. This is a legal requirement.

12. Authorised Vehicle Use, Personal Use

- 12.1. Only authorised drivers may drive Council fleet vehicles. All drivers must ensure that they have passed the appropriate driving assessment. Drivers must have passed the relevant assessment for any specific equipment or addition to a driving category.
- 12.2. Fleet vehicles may only be used for the purposes authorised by the Council and for the purposes of delivering a role. Any driving and use of vehicles outside of these parameters must be agreed by the Director for Leisure & Environment and the Insurance Department, any relevant documentation/mandates must be completed before approval is granted.
- 12.3. The use of Council fleet vehicles for personal use is strictly prohibited, as is leaving a vehicle unattended or in an unauthorised location overnight. This would also include any location other than the pre-agreed vehicle 'Base' location or other location previously not agreed by the Director for Leisure & Environment.
- 12.4. Any unauthorised/personal vehicle use may be deemed a potential breach of the Council's Code of Conduct and may result in disciplinary action being taken against the driver. In addition, there shall be no unauthorised passengers, this includes pets. Authorised passengers are Council employees, registered volunteers and contractors working on behalf of the Council. All other potential passengers must be authorised by the Director for Leisure & Environment.
- 12.5. There may be other exceptions and protocols in place that allow certain drivers to take Fleet vehicles home for operational reasons although, as referenced above, this must also be pre-agreed with the Director for Leisure & Environment.
- 12.6. In addition, vehicles that are authorised by the Director for Leisure & Environment to be taken home will need to be supported by an insurance

declaration. The declaration will need to be signed off by the Director for Leisure & Environment. Insurance declaration forms are available from the Fleet Admin office.

- 12.7. Drivers should always adhere to the speed limit on the public highway and those at facilities including open spaces.
- 12.8. Any personal items left in the vehicle are the responsibility of the owner. The Council will NOT reimburse for any lost or stolen personal items.

Note: Please check with your line manager/Fleet if you are unsure.

13. Deterioration in driving performance

- 13.1. Managers reserve the right and have a duty to report a deterioration in driving performance and must investigate complaints based on observations/reports of poor driving/incidents/accidents to assess whether any further action is necessary. This may lead to informal or formal disciplinary action in accordance with Disciplinary policy dependant on the circumstances. An OH referral may also be required.

Note: Driving courses are to be used only as a training aid. Failure to meet assessment standards will highlight the need for more specific driver training and may, in some cases, render the employee unable to drive for the Council.

- 13.2. Drivers will complete a driver assessment every two years with a qualified assessor, failure to complete or pass the assessment will result in further action. See 13.1 above.

14. Site and Vehicle Safety

- 14.1. When parking vehicles, please use any Council allotted parking areas/bays and show due consideration to others and never park across walkways/paths. Always reverse into the parking bay, it is safer to drive out of a parking bay. Always apply the parking handbrake fully, leave in neutral and ensure any vehicle-specific equipment is safely turned off (beacons etc). Please also ensure the vehicle is left with the windows/sunroof/doors closed and the vehicle is secure. Please also observe the guidance around cab interior, vehicle storage and cleanliness.
- 14.2. Never leave the vehicle unattended with the engine running. It will invalidate the vehicle insurance, pose a security risk should the vehicle be stolen or misused, and it may also be considered a disciplinary offence.
- 14.3. Unattended vehicles should always have the keys removed and vehicle cabs/doors secured with tools/equipment stored out of sight. In situations where the engine would need to be running i.e. for use with a PTO, an

additional door key could be supplied to secure the cab whilst the vehicle's engine is running.

- 14.4. In normal circumstances if the vehicle is parked or left unattended; turn off the engine, especially if close to offices, huts, sheds or within confined spaces such as workshop/garage areas. Lock it and keep the key with you until you can return it to its allocated cabinet or hand to Fleet admin, as appropriate.
- 14.5. Please be careful when getting into or out of any vehicle, especially a light van or car, so as not to cause damage/injury on door surround or persons. Please also be aware of your immediate surroundings such as lighting condition and ground surface and take environment/weather conditions into account whenever entering or exiting a vehicle being sure to always have three points of contact to prevent slips/falls. Please also ensure all appropriate PPE is worn at all times.
- 14.6. When climbing into or out of the cab of a high vehicle with appropriate rearwards exit ladder or steps, please adopt the correct procedure:

Always adopt the three points of contact rule

- Face the cab (always exit a high cab backwards)
- Take a firm grip on the handles/holds provided (never the steering wheel)
- Make sure of your footing by using steps or step rings
- Always check area outside door is clear before opening and stepping down/out

15. Reversing

- 15.1. Please avoid reversing unless it is absolutely necessary. Never reverse from a side road into a main road. If ever required to do so, always use another member of staff to assist. Do not reverse any further than is absolutely necessary and keep any such manoeuvres to a minimum.
- 15.2. Do not rely on mirrors alone, whenever possible, arrange for an attendant/banks person/vehicle marshal to guide your manoeuvres however, they must be fully trained to do so. Please use other driver aides such as reversing cameras or proximity sensors for additional assistance, if fitted.
- 15.3. Please also get out and check the immediate surroundings to ensure you are familiar with any hidden hazards and obstructions, safety is key. Always check that there are no pedestrians – particularly children or distracted people potentially unaware of their surroundings – or obstructions behind your vehicle before reversing.

- 15.4. Please take extra care whenever reversing and use an appropriate speed. Do not reverse with side/tail lift platforms deployed/out/down or on the ground and ensure audible warning devices are signalling whilst carrying out manoeuvres.
- 15.5. Please also ensure any specialist vehicle related items and/or equipment is securely stowed and any doors, cage doors or similar considerations such as tail boards are securely closed and fastened where appropriate.

16. Near Misses/Hits, Accidents and Road Traffic Collisions

- 16.1. ALL vehicle incidents/accidents MUST be reported by the driver to the driver's manager and Fleet Admin no matter how minor.
- 16.2. Although not a physical accident, any 'Near Miss' or 'Near Hit' must be reported immediately to your manager. If you are witness to something that 'nearly occurred' or 'almost happened' please discuss this with your manager so any further safety concerns can be addressed without waiting for an accident or collision. The information gained is useful and the Council continually looks to improve the H&S culture within the organisation and protect the welfare of all. All vehicles have been issued with "BUMP" forms; this form should be completed by the driver at the scene of any accident / incident when it is safe to do so. The form provides sections to be completed and provided to any other drivers involved in the incident.
- 16.3. Following all vehicle incidents/accidents the manager must ensure that an initial fact-finding investigation is completed to consider solutions to prevent any recurrence and/or ensure the driver has a driving assessment. All investigations and any subsequent management actions will be formally conducted in accordance with the Council's Disciplinary policy.

Note: After any accident, as appropriate, the driver may be asked to retake a driving assessment with a suitably qualified assessor in line with the council's procedures.

- 16.4. With an accident/collision that involves injury to person(s), or if any circumstance relating to the accident is considered dangerous considering other factors (e.g. speeding) or the fault of the driver, a driving assessment should take place whenever the driver is able to drive. Drivers must not drive council operated vehicles again until a driving assessment has been undertaken and passed.
- 16.5. If any serious injury to the driver was sustained, the sickness management procedure should be followed. If the driver is not fit or able to undertake a driving assessment initially, up to 7 days should be granted before the driving assessment takes place following any return. The driver should be put on other duties during this time if that is the case.

- 16.6. Vehicle Fires - In the event of a vehicle fire the driver and all passengers MUST exit the vehicle as quickly and safely as possible. Fire extinguishers are located in all vehicles but are only to be used to aid a safe exit for the driver and passengers.
- 16.7. Council employees are not trained fire fighters. Fire extinguishers should be checked daily as part of the driver's daily walk round checks. If the fire extinguisher is out of date this should be removed immediately and replaced with one that is in date. This can be supported via Fleet admin.
- 16.8. As soon as Council employees have safely exited the vehicle, the Emergency Services (999) should be called reporting the location, advise if there are any injuries, traffic related issues caused by the vehicle fire and any other details asked of them. Staff should also ensure that members of the public do not attempt to go near the vehicle. Once the Emergency Services have been contacted staff should report immediately to their team leader/section lead.
- 16.9. Drivers must report immediately if they strike a bridge of any type, but particularly railway bridges.

17. Breakdowns

- 17.1. In the event of a breakdown, drivers should follow the procedure below:
 - Pull over in a safe place if possible and be aware of the immediate environment and related dangers.
 - Turn on hazard lights.
 - Switch off engine and remove the keys.
 - Ensure hi-visibility clothing is worn.
 - If required, exit the vehicle with extreme caution.
 - Lock the vehicle.
 - Ensure that you retreat to a place of safety – away from the vehicle, road and any potential danger if safe to do so.
 - Report the breakdown to your manager and contact the Council's nominated recovery company:

DJ Recovery, 01935 712587 or 07814 263139, Dj.recoverygroup@gmail.com for recovery.

Arrange recovery to Sure Start Garage:

01935 422771

Unit 3, Abbey Trading Estate, Stourton Way, Yeovil, BA21 3AR

[Home - Surestart Automotive \(surestartuk.co.uk\)](http://surestartuk.co.uk)

If you require support with tyres, please contact:

S L Tyres 07523 713 114

info@sltyres.co.uk

Or for hydraulic issues:

Under Pressure (Hydraulic Hoses)

01935 422574

07968 135133

accountsup@btinternet.com

If your breakdown is a non-road vehicle then contact Loxstons Groundcare:

Loxstons Groundcare

01460 242562

service@loxston.co.uk

Loxston Groundcare, New Road, Seavington St Mary, Ilminster,
Somerset TA19 0QU

Further support is available from Fleet admin on 01935 462616.

18. Lone Working

18.1. The need may arise to routinely, or periodically, work alone. Procedures are in place and the driver understands what to do in the event of the following foreseeable emergencies: -

- Vehicle/Equipment failure
- Illness
- Accidents (Personal and Driving)
- Violence and Aggression

18.2. A risk assessment should be carried out by the Service taking the significance of each factor into account and be understood by all relevant staff.

19. First Aid

- 19.1. All Council vehicles carry a first aid kit. If any item(s) is used, this should be formally reported to line management where the use can be recorded and the item(s) replaced, as appropriate. Please ensure the first aid kit contents and items are within their use by dates.

The first aid kit should be checked daily when completing the driver walk round before leaving the depot.

- 19.2. In the case of substance exposure please seek medical help immediately. Details of each substance and the necessary first aid measures can be found on the data/COSHH sheets. Information is available from your team leader/section lead.
- 19.3. In the event of an industrial injury/accident at work which requires medical attention or treatment, please contact your manager. An accident report must be completed and returned to healthandsafetyteam@yeovil.gov.uk.

20. No Smoking Policy

- 20.1. It is illegal to smoke or vape inside any Council operated vehicle. Both driver and passenger(s) are required to refrain from smoking/vaping whilst in any Council fleet vehicle. Any breach of this rule will lead to disciplinary action.
- 20.2. No smoking signs or stickers are found in the vehicle cab/cockpit area. Please do not remove, obscure, or deface these, they are a legal requirement. If stickers are missing, damaged or unreadable, please report any concerns to your team leader/section lead so that they can be replaced as appropriate. Checking the no smoking sign is in the cab is part of a driver's legal duty when conducting daily walk round checks.

21. Mobile Phone and PDA Usage

- 21.1. Hand-held mobile phones and any other equipment such as PDA's (Personal Digital Assistants) must not be used whilst driving and it is illegal to do so, (in the eyes of the law driving can be stationary with engine running) It will also be considered a disciplinary offence if any driver is found to be using a mobile phone or PDA whilst in control of a Council fleet vehicle. Any breach of this rule will lead to disciplinary action.

Exemption – making a call to emergency services (999 or 112) if it is not safe to stop.

- 21.2. The Council does not require any driver to make or respond to calls or text messages whilst driving. Please stop in a safe place, turn the engine off and remove the ignition keys before returning any missed calls. Only a driver's assistant/passenger can operate a handheld device whilst the vehicle is driven.

- 21.3. Please also be aware that any form of 'distraction whilst driving' can be defined as an offence. This includes the use of or looking at any electronic device such as a Sat Nav, eating or drinking, being distracted by things outside the vehicle such as objects or noises or having music too loud.
- 21.4. Other mental distractions such as arguing with a passenger can also be included and the driver can be subject to the appropriation of penalty points, on the spot fines and even having their licence revoked if they have passed within the last 2 years. It is also important to be aware that having an obscured view of the road counts within the above.

22. Penalty Charge Notices

- 22.1. Please be aware that any PCN accrued due to driver error remain the driver's responsibility to ensure payment is made in full. Following the issue of a PCN, the Director for Leisure & Environment will ascertain where the responsibility lays with the contravention and inform the driver of their findings.
- 22.2. In certain circumstances, a representation can be made and if successful, the PCN may be nullified, however, this is solely for the Director of Leisure & Environment to decide.
- 22.3. Should a driver refuse or be unable to pay for whatever reason, the circumstances must be investigated and, if appropriate, the driver may be subject to disciplinary action within the Council's disciplinary procedures.

Note: All Council fleet vehicles must adhere to the same rules and regulations as stated in the Highway Code, there will be no preferential treatment for Local Authority drivers over any other road users. T

The Highway Code, road safety and vehicle rules - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

23. Fitness to Drive: Alcohol and Drugs, Medical Conditions, Medication, Disabilities

- 23.1. Whilst at work, drivers MUST not be under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol whilst on duty. Any breach of this rule will be dealt with within the Council Disciplinary policy, with the employee being suspended whilst an investigation takes place. Dependent on the findings of any investigation, the employee may be dismissed without notice (summary dismissal).
- 23.2. Drivers who are required to start early, which is a common requirement, are reminded that it is not conducive to drink excessively the night before they are required to drive a vehicle. Drivers are reminded that it is an offence under road traffic legislation to be in control of a vehicle while under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol.

- 23.3. Drivers should consult with their doctor if prescribed any medication to determine if it is safe to continue to drive and/or operate machinery. When taking 'over the counter' medicines, a pharmacist can also offer sound advice. Please declare any issue, or ill-effects, which may potentially affect your ability to drive safely because of taking any medication.
- 23.4. Where possible, the Council will make every effort to assist employees to continue working who may be temporarily rendered unfit to drive as a result of taking medication or suffering from illness but who are still able to undertake other duties.
- 23.5. Drivers MUST inform their manager of any pre-existing or new medical condition which could affect their ability to drive safely. Any possible adjustment(s) or exemptions for drivers due to medical conditions, requirements or disabilities will also be supported as far as reasonably practicable.
- 23.6. Drivers MUST also report any pre-existing or new medical condition which could affect their ability to drive safely. This includes prescribed medication,

[Check if a health condition affects your driving: Overview - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk)

- 23.7. If the manager has any concern, they should first discuss the matter with the driver and then seek advice from HR and their manager(s).
- 23.8. Drivers should undergo regular eyesight tests in line with their prescription if prescribed corrective lenses, or every 2 years as a maximum to ensure they meet the legal requirement for driving and are responsible to ensure they are fit to drive legally.
- 23.9. Drivers with disabilities that may affect the safe operation of vehicles and equipment must raise any concern(s) and discuss any difficulties with your manager. It may be necessary for an individual risk assessment to be undertaken to identify ways to assist that person whilst discharging any driving duties and/or machine operations. Please feel free to discuss any matter with your line management and HR.
- 23.10. All drivers are required by law to declare any second jobs to their line manager. All work, whether driving or office based contribute to a driver's weekly working hours. The Council has a duty of care to ensure that all drivers have sufficient rest. All drivers must declare the hours they are working at a second place of employment to enable the Fleet team and Director for Leisure & Environment to determine potential impacts and manage your working time.

24. Driver benefits

- 24.1. All permanently employed drivers of the Council shall have any relevant licence or certification paid for by the Council if it is a legal requirement to undertake the full responsibilities of their position e.g. Sit in ATV certification.
- 24.2. If a licence or certification is not a legal requirement to undertake full responsibilities of the position at the Council, the Council will not maintain it. For example, no activity at the Council currently requires an ADR Licence, any renewal of an existing ADR Licence will be the responsibility of the licence holder. If services and/or legislation changes, this will then be reviewed and offered as a fully paid training opportunity to all drivers.

Yeovil Town Council
24th September 2024

To be reviewed: September 2029

Driver Declaration

I have received a briefing and been issued a copy of the Yeovil Town Council Driver's Handbook. I understand what has been set out and agree to comply with the policy.

Print Name.....

Sign.....Date.....

Service Area.....

Induction completed on – date -

Manager issuing

Print Name.....

Sign.....Date.....

YEOVIL TOWN COUNCIL

SCHEME OF DELEGATION



1. Introduction

- 1.1 The scheme of delegation enables the Town Council to function efficiently and effectively.
- 1.2 Without the Scheme of Delegation, every decision would have to be taken by Full Council. Decision making powers are delegated as appropriate to both Committees and Officers.
- 1.3 Powers cannot be legally delegated to individual Councillors or Working Parties.
- 1.4 Working Parties are ordinarily established to investigate and/or review a particular matter, to report back to the relevant Committee or Full Council with its findings, which may include a recommendation.

2. General

- 2.1 All Committees are delegated with the powers and duties shown below (paragraph 4) subject only to the following exceptions:
 - (a) Standing Orders;
 - (b) Any special or general directions which the Town Council may give from time to time;
 - (c) The matters specifically reserved for determination by full Town Council as listed below (section 3); and
 - (d) Any relevant statutory provisions.

3. Full Council:

3.1.1 Membership and Frequency of Meeting:

3.1.1.1 Consists of: All 24 Councillors.

3.1.1.2 Scheduled to meet: eight times per year, with three reserve dates (meetings will only be held if necessary).

3.1.2 Matters reserved for Full Council:

- (a) To set and approve the Council's budget and precept;

- (b) To approve the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR);
- (c) To make, amend or revoke Standing Orders; Financial Regulations and this Scheme of Delegation;
- (d) To adopt or revise the Council's Code of Conduct;
- (e) To confirm (by resolution) that the Council satisfies the criteria to exercise the General Power of Competence;
- (f) To approve and adopt the Council's Risk Strategy and Risk Assessment;
- (g) To Appoint the Committees;
- (h) To nominate or appoint representatives of the Council to outside bodies;
- (i) To make, amend or revoke byelaws;
- (j) To authorise the terms and purposes for any application for borrowing approval;
- (k) Approval of purchase, acquisition by other means, lease, sale or disposal of land and property;
- (l) To confirm the appointment of the Chief Executive / Town Clerk;
- (m) To approve schemes involving capital expenditure. Once approved and the estimated cost agreed by the full Town Council the appropriate Committee may proceed with it subject to any tender accepted not exceeding the approved estimate;
- (n) To consider any matter of major policy or of sufficient interest or novelty that members would wish that it be debated by full Town Council; and
- (o) To consider all other matters which must, by law, be reserved for the Full Town Council.

4. Delegation to Committees

4.1 Finance and Policy Executive:

4.1.1 Membership and Frequency of Meeting:

4.1.1.1 Consists of: Mayor (ex-officio), Deputy Mayor (ex-officio), Chair of each Committee, representative of each Committee, proportionate representation from opposition group(s), (usually between 12 and 14 members).

4.1.1.2 Scheduled to meet as a committee: at least six times per year.

4.1.2 Matters delegated for consideration and determination:

(a) To review policy and submit reports to Council consulting with the appropriate

- Committee on any revision of current policy;
- (b) To determine all personnel matters including the appointment of Chief Executive / Town Clerk subject only to any personnel matters delegated directly by Town Council to the Chief Executive / Town Clerk;
 - (c) To review Budget Monitoring at each meeting, and the Outturn position;
 - (d) To settle disciplinary matters (via a Staffing Committee) in accordance with the agreed Disciplinary Procedures;
 - (e) To control the Town Council's finances and insurances and to review the expenditure and income budgets from time to time;
 - (f) To recommend to Full Council, the Risk Strategy and Risk Assessment and to ensure that the Council are adequately insured for all appropriate risks;
 - (g) To action the recommendations from the Internal Auditor;
 - (h) To determine all applications for grants (except any that may be delegated to any other Committee) subject to all applications being considered on their merits;
 - (i) To authorise the commencement of any action or appeal before the lands or industrial tribunal or in any court;
 - (j) To oversee all Youth Services provisions including Youth Clubs, detached work and Youth Council; and
 - (k) To consider the annual budget request for the Finance and Policy Executive; and to consider the annual budget requests for all Committees.

4.2 Leisure and Environment Committee

4.2.1 Membership and Frequency of Meeting:

4.2.1.1 Consists of: Mayor (ex-officio), Deputy Mayor (ex-officio), reflecting the political balance of the Council (usually between 10 and 12 members).

4.2.1.2 Scheduled to meet as a committee: at least six times per year.

4.2.2 Matters delegated for consideration and determination:

- (a) To manage all allotment sites in Yeovil Town;
- (b) To annually review the allotment rents subject to consideration by Finance and Policy Executive and approval of Town Council;
- (c) To arrange the Best Kept Allotments Competition;
- (d) To manage all open spaces and play areas under delegated powers from Somerset Council (until such times that all open spaces and play areas are

- devolved to Yeovil Town Council);
- (e) To manage Yeovil in Bloom;
 - (f) To manage Yeovil Country Park;
 - (g) To manage Yeovil Recreation Centre;
 - (h) To manage Ninesprings Café and the Rec Café;
 - (i) To consider Footpath maintenance;
 - (j) To act as a liaison point for all non-financial matters relating to the Yeovil Cemetery and Crematorium;
 - (k) To oversee the Fleet and all matters associated; and
 - (l) To consider the annual budget request of Leisure and Environment Committee for recommendation to the Finance and Policy Executive.

4.3 Infrastructure (Property and Assets) Committee

4.3.1 Membership and Frequency of Meeting:

4.3.1.1 Consists of: Mayor (ex-officio), Deputy Mayor (ex-officio), reflecting the political balance of the Council (usually between 10 and 12 members).

4.3.1.2 Scheduled to meet as a committee: at least six times per year.

4.3.2 Matters delegated for consideration and determination:

- (a) To manage all aspects of Milford Hall;
- (b) To manage, repair and maintain all Town Council land, buildings and its contents;
- (c) To oversee all facilities management;
- (d) To maintain the Hospital Sub-way Mural;
- (e) To provide, site, maintenance of litter bins and dog waste;
- (f) To maintain the War Memorials;
- (g) To maintain the Millennium Clock;
- (h) To act as consultee on street naming and house numbering;
- (i) To act as consultee on Traffic Regulation Orders;
- (j) To oversee the Community Safety function relevant to the Town Council (including CCTV, Community Ambassadors, defibrillators and Speed Indicator Devices (SIDs));

- (k) To manage, repair and maintain Town Council public noticeboards;
- (l) To manage, repair and maintain Public Toilets;
- (m) To act as consultee on town centre street scene development; and
- (n) To consider the annual budget request of Infrastructure (Property and Assets) Committee for recommendation to the Finance and Policy Executive.

4.4 Planning Committee

4.4.1 Membership and Frequency of Meeting:

4.4.1.1 Consists of: Most members sit on this Committee.

4.4.1.2 Scheduled to meet as a committee: at least twelve times per year.

4.4.2 Matters delegated for consideration and determination:

- (a) To consider all planning applications and planning matters affecting Yeovil Town; and
- (b) To consider the annual budget request of Planning Committee for recommendation to the Finance and Policy Executive.

4.5 Culture, Events and Promotions Committee

4.5.1 Membership and Frequency of Meeting:

4.5.1.1 Consists of: Mayor (ex-officio), Deputy Mayor (ex-officio), reflecting the political balance of the Council (usually between 10 and 12 members).

4.5.1.2 Scheduled to meet as a committee: at least six times per year.

4.5.2 Matters delegated for consideration and determination:

- (a) To manage Westlands Entertainment Venue;
- (b) To work collaboratively with Somerset Council regarding the Octagon;
- (c) To develop Town Centre initiatives, activities and events (including Super Saturday);
- (d) To organise ad hoc events on behalf of the Town Council;
- (e) To manage, repair and maintain Christmas Lights and to organise the Christmas Lights Switch on event;
- (f) To arrange for the publication of town guide and other promotional literature;
- (g) To arrange customised souvenirs;

- (h) To manage the Community Heritage provision (including the South Somerset Heritage Collection);
- (i) To oversee the corporate marketing and communications strategy;
- (j) To oversee the Civic function including regalia and the Mayor;
- (k) To manage all aspects of the Town Crier (including appointment, conditions of service, uniform and the Annual Town Criers' Competition);
- (l) To consider the requests for the use of the Town Crest, in line with policy; and
- (m) To consider the annual budget request of Culture, Events and Promotions Committee for recommendation to the Finance and Policy Executive.

5. Delegation to Chief Executive / Town Clerk

- 5.1 The Chief Executive / Town Clerk is the Proper Officer of the Town Council as defined in law.
- 5.2 The responsibilities and duties of the Proper Officer is set out within law and Council policies.
- 5.3 The following matters are delegated to the Town Clerk.
 - (a) To issue all statutory notifications;
 - (b) To receive Declaration of Acceptance of Office;
 - (c) To receive and record notices disclosing pecuniary interests;
 - (d) To hold the Council's seal and affix it to documents in accordance with Standing Orders;
 - (e) To sign notices and other documents on behalf of the Council;
 - (f) To sign the summons to attend meetings;
 - (g) To manage and be responsible for all Council staff, either directly or indirectly;
 - (h) To ensure compliance with Standing Orders;
 - (i) To ensure compliance with Financial Regulations;
 - (j) To determine accounting policies, records and control systems;
 - (k) To manage the provision of Council services, buildings, land and resources;
 - (l) To act on behalf of the Council in urgent situations and report back to the Council as soon as practicably possible;

- (m) To deal with dispensation requests from Members under the Code of Conduct;
- (n) To deal with matters specifically delegated by Council; Committee or within policies;
- (o) To appoint all employees in accordance with the Council's staff structure;
- (p) To authorise additional hours of work for existing staff on a temporary basis to support the business needs of the Council;
- (q) To maintain the register of casual workers;
- (r) To maintain the register of volunteers;
- (s) To be responsible for the overall management of all budgets in accordance with Council policies;
- (t) To issue press releases on any Council activity exercise in accordance with Council policy;
- (u) To determine the outcome of employee probationary periods, following a probationary review having taken place;
- (v) To ensure proper administration of the Council's affairs;
- (w) To agree up to five days special leave with pay in any one year for compassionate or other grounds i.e. bereavement and family illness. (Compassionate leave more than five days up to ten days is subject to approval of the Mayor, Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Finance and Policy Executive);
- (x) To agree the use of Council Chamber and related facilities:
 - (i) by outside organisations or groups associated with public service (excluding any political organisation) for meetings only, subject to any use being restricted to Town Council Office hours and to such use being also restricted to local or identifiable organisations;
 - (ii) free of charge for meetings of groups of Town Councillors, whether political or not, provided that such meetings are directly related to Town Council business; and
 - (iii) free of charge for meetings organised by the Town Council, or any other local authority, involving Members and/or Officers of the Town Council;
- (y) Town Clerk granted reasonable discretion to refuse to accept items for inclusion through the Council post where they are:

- (i) Political, or
 - (ii) Deal with opposing or supporting decisions on items not directly the concern of the Town Council and/or where the Town Council has not reached a view.
- (z) Where it is impracticable to refer a request for street naming to the Buildings and Civic Matters Committee, the Chief Executive / Town Clerk is authorised to respond on behalf of the Town Council following consultation with the relevant Ward Members;
- (aa) Where it is impracticable to refer a planning application to the Planning Committee, the Chief Executive / Town Clerk is authorised to respond on behalf of the Town Council following consultation with the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Planning Committee and the relevant Ward Members.

6. Responsibilities of Councillors

6.1 Attendance at meetings:

- (a) To attend both Council meetings and Committee meetings (to which they have been appointed); and should attendance not be possible, apologies and reasons should be given to the Clerk of the Committee.
- (b) To read agendas and documents before the meeting

6.2 To undertake casework (specific council-related issues) within the ward they represent and to signpost to the appropriate Councillor if any request falls outside of ward; or the appropriate level of Council if the requests fall outside the remit of the Town Council.

6.3 To not give any promises that the Council will undertake to carry out any actions; or that the Council accept or assume any responsibility for a situation. Issues must be raised through the correct channels.

6.4 Unless duly authorised:

- (a) Councillors shall not approach Officers (other than the Chief Executive / Town Clerk; Director of Leisure and Environment; Director of Culture, Events and Promotions; Deputy Town Clerk; Deputy Responsible Finance Officer; or Assistant Town Clerk);
- (b) Councillors shall not approach contractors and customers;
- (c) Councillors shall not visit any Council property to undertake evaluation, assessments or carry out any work; and
- (d) Councillors shall not issue orders, instructions or directions.

- 6.5 To adhere to the Standing Orders, the Code of Conduct and all other policies of the Town Council
- 6.6 To ensure that the Council's Register of Members' Interest are always kept up to date and to declare any personal, prejudicial or pecuniary interests at Council and Committee meetings.

7. Urgent Business

Unless otherwise provided, the Town Clerk shall, from time to time, after consulting the Chairman of the Committee concerned (or, in his/her absence, the Vice-Chairman of the relevant Committee); the Mayor (or, in his/her absence, the Deputy Mayor) and a named representative(s) of the Opposition Group(s) on the Council, take all necessary steps for protecting the interests of, or advancing the business of the Town Council, providing that action taken shall in all cases be reported to the next appropriate meeting of such Committee (*Standing Order 4 (d) (xvi)*).

Adopted: TBA
To be reviewed: TBA