



Yeovil Town Council

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Yeovil Town Council

The Meeting... **Yeovil Town Council**

The Time... **7.30pm**

The Date... **Tuesday 7 September 2010**

The Place... **Town House, 19 Union Street, Yeovil**

If you need this information in large print, Braille, audio or another language, please ring 01935 382424



**QUALITY
TOWN
COUNCIL**

Alan Tawse

Alan Tawse

Town Clerk

31 August 2010

Please contact Alan Tawse at the Town House for more information about this meeting

YEOVIL TOWN COUNCIL

Philip Chandler – Mayor of Yeovil

Clive Davis – Deputy Mayor

J Vincent Chainey

Bridget Dollard

Tony Fife

Julian Freke

Dave Gooding

Pete Goodman

John Grana

David Greene

Peter Gubbins

John Hann

Steve Hawker

Simon Hester

Andrew Kendall

Ruth Kendall

Tony Lock

Ian Martin

Pat Martin

Tom Parsley

Wes Read

David Recardo

Alan Smith

AGENDA

Prayers

Public Comment (15 Minutes)

1. MINUTES

To confirm as a correct record the Minutes of the previous meeting held on 3 August 2010.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

4. MAYOR AND DEPUTY MAYOR'S RECENT AND FORTHCOMING ENGAGEMENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

(See attached at pages 3 to 4)

5. CORRESPONDENCE

6. COMMUNITY HEALTH AND WELL-BEING 5

7. COUNCIL TAX REFERENDUMS 6 - 23

8. STREET NAMING 24

9. NORTH DORSET DISTRICT COUNCIL PRESENTATION 25

10. REPORTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FROM COMMITTEES AND OTHER MEETINGS

(The Minutes of the following meetings are open to discussion. Where a Committee has made a recommendation, that will be listed on a separate sheet circulated with the Agenda).

Planning and Licensing Committee

2 August 2010

11. REPORTS FROM REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES

Yeovil Youth Council 26 - 29

26 July 2010

Yeovil Twinning Association

30 -31

10 June 2010

Public Comment (15 Minutes)

List of Engagements attended/to be attended by His Worship The Mayor of Yeovil, Councillor Phil Chandler and the Deputy Mayor of Yeovil, Councillor Clive Davis from 31 July to 5 October 2010

31/07/10	The Mayor of Yeovil, Councillor Phil Chandler, attended Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Service's charity ladder climb
31/07/10	The Mayor of Yeovil, Councillor Phil Chandler, and Deputy Mayor of Yeovil, Councillor Clive Davis, attended Lark Community Association's fun day
02/08/10	The Mayor of Yeovil, Councillor Phil Chandler, attended the celebration and officially re-opening of the new bus link between Yeovil Junction and Yeovil Pen Mill
03/08/10	The Mayor of Yeovil, Councillor Phil Chandler, attended the South Somerset Citizen Advice Bureau's AGM
04/08/10	The Mayor of Yeovil, Councillor Phil Chandler, attended Hinton Harvey Group's opening ceremony
07/08/10	The Mayor of Yeovil, Councillor Phil Chandler, presented the Yeovil Town Ladies FC with a certificate of recognition at Huish Park
08/08/10	The Mayor of Yeovil, Councillor Phil Chandler, attended Burnham-on-Sea and Highbridge Town Council's Annual Civic Service
10/08/10	The Mayor of Yeovil, Councillor Phil Chandler, sponsored the ball at the Yeovil Town FC –v- Crystal Palace FC match
14/08/10	The Mayor of Yeovil, Councillor Phil Chandler, attended the Summer Fete at Somerset Care Residential Home
14/08/10	The Deputy Mayor of Yeovil, Councillor Clive Davis, attended West Abbey Care Centre's garden party
18/08/10	The Mayor of Yeovil, Councillor Phil Chandler, and Deputy Mayor, Councillor Clive Davis, met with Chief Inspector Sean Williams.
22/08/10	The Mayor of Yeovil, Councillor Phil Chandler, attended the Yeovil Allotment Association first Annual Show
27/08/10	The Mayor of Yeovil, Councillor Phil Chandler, and Deputy Mayor of Yeovil, Councillor Clive Davis, attended SomerZest at the Octagon Theatre
28/08/10	The Mayor of Yeovil, Councillor Phil Chandler, attended 'Community Safety Day' in lower Middle Street
28/08/10	The Mayor of Yeovil, Councillor Phil Chandler, attended Newtown Tenants' and Residents' Association's Annual Fete
28/08/10	The Mayor of Yeovil, Councillor Phil Chandler, attended Chard Town Council's fundraising evening
29/08/10	The Mayor of Yeovil, Councillor Phil Chandler, attended Swanage Town Council's Civic Service
02/09/10	The Mayor of Yeovil, Councillor Phil Chandler, will attend Breatheability Presentation Evening
03/09/10	The Mayor of Yeovil, Councillor Phil Chandler, will attend Poole Town Council's Civic Day
05/09/10	The Mayor of Yeovil, Councillor Phil Chandler, will attend Ferndown Town Council's Civic Service
06/09/10	The Mayor of Yeovil, Councillor Phil Chandler, will attend the Anglo Polish Society performance
06/09/10	The Mayor of Yeovil, Councillor Phil Chandler, will attend Yeovil Shopmobility charity night
10/09/10	The Mayor of Yeovil, Councillor Phil Chandler, will attend Dorchester Town Council's Civic Day
10/09/10	The Mayor of Yeovil, Councillor Phil Chandler, will attend Crewkerne Town Council's Civic Evening

11/09/10	The Mayor of Yeovil, Councillor Phil Chandler, will attend the Mayor of Sturminster Newtown's Civic Day
14/09/10	The Mayor of Yeovil, Councillor Phil Chandler, will attend North Dorset District Council's Civic Day
14/09/10	The Deputy Mayor of Yeovil, Councillor Clive Davis, will attend SSVCA Funding Fayre
15/09/10	The Mayor of Yeovil, Councillor Phil Chandler, will attend a South West in Bloom reception
16/09/10	The Mayor of Yeovil, Councillor Phil Chandler, will meet with Gavin Boyle of Yeovil District Hospital
18/09/10	The Mayor of Yeovil, Councillor Phil Chandler, will attend the Alzheimer's Society Memory Walk
18/09/10	The Mayor of Yeovil, Councillor Phil Chandler, will attend the first of the Yeovil & District Chrysanthemum & Dahlia Society's annual shows
20/09/10	The Mayor of Yeovil, Councillor Phil Chandler, will attend Somerset Area Cruse Bereavement Care Annual Business meeting
22/09/10	The Mayor of Yeovil, Councillor Phil Chandler, will attend Reckleford Children's Centre Advisory Board meeting
23/09/10	The Mayor of Yeovil, Councillor Phil Chandler, will attend the NHS Foundation Trust's Annual Meeting
26/09/10	The Mayor of Yeovil, Councillor Phil Chandler, will attend the Somerset County Council Civic Service
28/09/10	The Mayor of Yeovil, Councillor Phil Chandler, will attend Preston School's Open Day
29/09/10	The Mayor of Yeovil, Councillor Phil Chandler, will attend Barnabas Housing's AGM
01/10/10	The Mayor of Yeovil, Councillor Phil Chandler, will attend Oakland's Primary School's Bike Safety scheme

6. **COMMUNITY HEALTH AND WELL-BEING**

In line with a request by the Policy, Resources and Finance Committee, James Dival – Community Health and Well-being Project Manager (SSDC) will attend the meeting and give a short presentation on the success of the recent Yeovil StreetFest event, and the level of deprivation in various wards in Yeovil and the work that is being undertaken in the local community to combat this issue.

(Alan Tawse, Town Clerk – 01935 382424)

7. COUNCIL TAX REFERENDUMS

Introduction

The Government recently issued a consultation paper (copy attached at pages 6 to 23) setting out proposals to introduce referendums to veto excessive council tax increases by all precepting authorities – including town and parish councils – as an alternative to capping by central government.

It has been estimated that the costs of conducting a referendum in Yeovil Town would be in the region of £10,000.

The scope of the consultation, which ends on 10 September, is to seek views on the practicality and technical feasibility of the proposed scheme – particularly from local authority practitioners. A list of questions for consultation to which responses are welcome is set out on page 21.

Issues

Bearing in mind the scope of the consultation, timing is going to be a crucial factor, and it is noted that the proposed “principles” which the Secretary of State would draw up each year for approval by Parliament would be published in late November/early December.

In South Somerset, the billing authority (South Somerset District Council) asks all town and parish councils to set their precepts by mid-December. However, given the need to have regard to the approved principles and, if deemed necessary, to set a “shadow budget” this deadline would need to be revised. It is noted in the consultation paper that the legal deadline is 14 February, and with this in mind, this issue has been raised with the billing authority to establish the scope for change.

Turning to other deadlines, the proposed latest date for referendums (first Thursday in May) would appear to be too late. By that time, the billing authority will have issued the council tax bills on behalf of all precepting authorities and any subsequent changes in the levels of precept by any of these authorities arising from referendums would involve unnecessary expense if it is felt that new bills needed to be issued.

Whilst it is acknowledged that this would not be a legal requirement, by bringing the deadline date forward to say the first Thursday in March, this could be avoided. The Government is presumably motivated by the date of local elections and the potential to save money by holding referendums on the same date. However, in shire counties, this only applies twice in the four year electoral cycle.

On a related point, if this date is not brought forward, it is suggested that the right for a local resident to be refunded (and re-billed) that year on request be reconsidered given the administrative costs involved and the scope in the

proposed legislation to allow refunds at the end of the year and/or credits on tax liability in the following year.

Another point that needs to be clarified is the method of calculating the increase in a precepting authority's level of council tax in setting the principles. Would this be based on the increase in Band D *per property* or would it be based on the *overall level of precept*? Where large scale residential development has taken place in a parish, the resultant changes in the tax base can have the effect of skewing the impact of the change on individual households.

One other factor that needs to be taken into account is the pressure on election administrators in organising referendums, particularly in shire areas during the lead up to district/parish elections where it is not uncommon for staff to be dealing with over 150 contests involving around 1,000 candidates.

Recommendation

Council is **RECOMMENDED** to consider whether it wishes to respond to the attached consultation paper and, if so, whether it wishes to reply to the specific questions and to include the above-outlined comments on the practicality and technical feasibility of the proposed scheme.

(Alan Tawse, Town Clerk – 01935 382424)



Local referendums to veto excessive council tax
increases
Consultation



Local referendums to veto excessive council tax increases

Consultation

Department for Communities and Local Government
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About this consultation

Scope of consultation

Topic of consultation	A proposal to allow local referendums to veto excessive council tax increases as an alternative to capping by central government.
Scope of consultation	This consultation seeks views on the practicality and technical feasibility of the scheme, particularly from local authority practitioners.
Geographical scope	England. The relevant legislation covers both England and Wales but the administration of council tax in Wales is a matter for the Welsh Assembly Government.
Impact assessment	Relevant provisions will be included in the Localism Bill, which will be subject to a full impact assessment.

Basic information

To	Local authorities (including police authorities, fire and rescue authorities and local precepting authorities). Representative organisations (including the LGA, London Councils, IRRV, Cipfa, NALC) and others with an interest in local taxation issues.
Body responsible for the consultation	Department for Communities and Local Government
Duration	Six weeks (30 July to 10 September). This is in line with the arrangements agreed under the <i>Framework for Partnership</i> with the Local Government Association.
Enquiries	Jasna Begum Local Government Finance Directorate Department for Communities and Local Government Zone 5/D2 Eland House Bressenden Place London SW1E 5DU Telephone: 030 3444 1304 Email: counciltax.consultations@communities.gsi.gov.uk
How to respond	To either of the addresses above.
Additional ways to become involved	Not applicable.
After the consultation	The Government will take into account the responses to this consultation in its preparation of draft clauses for the forthcoming Localism Bill, to be laid before Parliament in the first Parliamentary session.
Compliance with the code of practice on consultation	This consultation complies with the Code.

Background

Getting to this stage	The Coalition <i>Programme for Government</i> , published on 20 May 2010, stated that the Government would “give residents the power to veto high council tax increases.”
Previous engagement	Not applicable

This consultation document and consultation process have been planned to adhere to the Code of Practice on Consultation issued by the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills and is in line with the seven consultation criteria, which are:

1. Formal consultation should take place at a stage when there is scope to influence the policy outcome.
2. Consultations should normally last for at least 12 weeks with consideration given to longer timescales where feasible and sensible.
3. Consultation documents should be clear about the consultation process, what is being proposed, the scope to influence and the expected costs and benefits of the proposals.
4. Consultation exercises should be designed to be accessible to, and clearly targeted at, those people the exercise is intended to reach.
5. Keeping the burden of consultation to a minimum is essential if consultations are to be effective and if consultees’ buy-in to the process is to be obtained.
6. Consultation responses should be analysed carefully and clear feedback should be provided to participants following the consultation.
7. Officials running consultations should seek guidance in how to run an effective consultation exercise and share what they have learned from the experience.

Representative groups are asked to give a summary of the people and organisations they represent and, where relevant, who else they have consulted in reaching their conclusions when they respond.

Information provided in response to this consultation, including personal information, may be published or disclosed in accordance with the access to information regimes (these are primarily the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA), the Data Protection Act 1998 (DPA) and the Environmental Information Regulations 2004).

If you want the information that you provide to be treated as confidential, please be aware that, under the FOIA, there is a statutory Code of Practice with which public authorities must comply and which deals, amongst other things, with obligations of confidence. In view of this it would be helpful if you could explain to us why you regard the information you have provided as confidential. If we receive a request for disclosure of the information we will take full account of your explanation but we cannot give an assurance that confidentiality can be maintained in all circumstances. An automatic confidentiality disclaimer generated by your IT system will not, of itself, be regarded as binding on the department.

The Department for Communities and Local Government will process your personal data in accordance with the DPA and in the majority of circumstances this will mean that your personal data will not be disclosed to third parties. Individual responses will not be acknowledged unless specifically requested.

Your opinions are valuable to us. Thank you for taking the time to read this document and respond.

Are you satisfied that this consultation has followed these criteria? If not or you have any other observations about how we can improve the process please contact:

CLG Consultation Co-ordinator
Zone 6/H10
Eland House
London SW1E 5 DU

or by e-mail to: consultationcoordinator@communities.gsi.gov.uk

Consultation process

The Department for Communities and Local Government invites comments on the proposals set out in this document. This is a technical consultation seeking views from experts on the practicalities of implementing our proposals. Given this, the consultation will run for a shorter timeframe of six weeks – until **10 September 2010**.

When responding, please state whether you are responding as an individual or representing the views of an organisation. Responses to this consultation must be received by **10 September 2010**.

You can email your response to: counciltax.consultations@communities.gsi.gov.uk

Or you can respond in writing to:

Jasna Begum
Local Government Finance Directorate
Department for Communities and Local Government
Zone 5/D2 Eland House
Bressenden Place
London SW1E 5DU

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Introduction

1. Band D council tax has more than doubled since 1997-98 and high increases in the past have led to various measures designed to constrain local discretion, including council tax capping. Often these measures appeared to be based on the presumption that Government ministers and their civil servants knew better than local communities what was in their best interest. The Coalition Government is determined to reverse this presumption and to rebalance the role of the central state and local communities. This will see the Government playing a much smaller role, with powers and responsibilities being devolved to the most appropriate level, wherever possible empowering local people so that they have a direct say in important decisions that affect their lives. In relation to council tax, this means abolishing capping and giving local people a stronger role in determining annual increases. The Government intends to introduce legislation to achieve this at the earliest opportunity.

Current system

Council tax

2. Council tax is a tax on the capital value of domestic properties. It is the main source of locally-raised income for many local authorities and is therefore an important source of funding. The Local Government Finance Act 1992 ('the 1992 Act') provides for certain local authorities to levy and collect council tax:

- billing authorities (the Common Council of the City of London, London boroughs, metropolitan districts, non-metropolitan districts, and unitary authorities) are required to send out a bill each year to council taxpayers and to enforce collection
- major precepting authorities (the Greater London Authority, non-unitary county councils, police authorities, and fire and rescue authorities) and local precepting authorities (the sub-treasurer of the Inner Temple, the under-treasurer of the Middle Temple, town, parish or community councils, the chairman of a parish meeting, and charter trustees) issue precepts to billing authorities for the collection of council tax on their behalf

3. Properties are allocated into one of eight valuation bands, from Band A to Band H, and this information is used to calculate the council tax base for an area by converting the number of actual properties into an equivalent number of Band D properties¹. Billing authorities and major precepting authorities calculate their own 'basic amount of council tax'² and use this to determine the liability of individual properties. Local precepting authorities, by contrast, simply inform the billing authority of their total budget requirement for the year and leave it to the billing authority to calculate the relevant council tax. The bill which is sent to the council taxpayer shows the amounts required by each billing and precepting authority in the area and the percentage increase in each since the previous year.

¹ Band A properties are liable to pay two thirds of the 'standard' Band D amount. Band H properties are liable to pay double the Band D amount. The remaining bands lie in between these two points. The council tax base is a weighted average based on these proportions.

² An authority's basic amount of council tax is the amount set by the authority under section 33(1) of the 1992 Act if the authority is a billing authority, or section 44(1) of that Act if the authority is a major precepting authority. It is the amount that would be payable in respect of a Band D dwelling if all local precepts and special expenses were payable in respect of all chargeable dwellings in the authority's area.

Capping

4. Successive governments have reserved the right to limit increases in domestic taxation where these have been judged to be excessive. Under current capping legislation (see Chapter 4A of Part 1 of the 1992 Act, which was inserted by the Local Government Act 1999), 36 authorities have had capping action taken against them since the 1999 powers were first used in 2004-05.

5. In order to take capping action, the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government must first determine whether the amount calculated by an authority as its budget requirement is excessive, in accordance with a set of principles. If the Secretary of State sets principles, the legislation requires him to set a principle based on authorities' budget requirements. The Secretary of State may set any other principle. In practice there has always been at least one other principle based on council tax increases.

6. If a local authority sets an excessive budget requirement, the Secretary of State may either:

- designate it in relation to the year in question, which would require the authority to re-bill council taxpayers or
- nominate the authority and either:
 - (a) designate it in advance in respect of the following financial year, which effectively means that Government sets the following year's budget requirement for the authority or
 - (b) set a notional budget requirement for the year in question, against which increases in subsequent years can be measured in deciding whether or not these are excessive

7. A criticism made about capping has been the policy of central government to set capping principles after local authorities have set their budget requirements. This has meant that authorities could not be certain whether or not the council tax increases they were setting would be capped.

Parish precepts

8. There has been a growing awareness in recent years of the council tax increases set by local precepting authorities, and of the very high precept increases set by some town and parish councils in particular. Increases in council tax revenue from town and parish councils have outstripped those for England in each of the last five years. The average town and parish precept set in some billing authorities (around £100) is larger than that of the smallest shire district of Breckland (£68). It is right that local precepting authorities should have the resources they need to support neighbourhoods and local communities. However it is also right that council taxpayers are protected from excessive increases.

Introduction of local referendums

Legislation

9. The Government will introduce legislation at the earliest opportunity requiring any billing or precepting authority which sets an excessive council tax increase to hold a referendum. The key elements of the scheme will be as follows:

- (a) The Secretary of State will have the power each year to determine a principle based on a comparison of an authority's level of council tax with the level in the previous year. The legislation will enable the Secretary of State to set additional principles; it will also allow him to determine different sets of principles for different categories of local authorities.
- (b) These principles will be published in a report for approval by the House of Commons. If the principles are approved, any authority planning an excessive council tax increase will be required to prepare a 'shadow budget' based on the maximum non-excessive council tax increase allowed by the principles.³ They will also be required to inform the Secretary of State by notice.
- (c) Any billing authority, local precepting authority or major precepting authority which exceeds the principles will be required to hold a referendum of all registered local electors. Local authorities will be free to hold referendums at any point after the House of Commons has approved any principles set. Referendums must take place no later than the first Thursday in May, to ensure that the process is not subject to delay and that local authorities have certainty over their budgets as quickly as possible in the new financial year.⁴
- (d) The organisation and administration of referendums will fall to billing authorities and will be modelled on the existing provisions for mayoral referendums⁵ where relevant and appropriate. The legislation will allow billing authorities to recoup costs where referendums are held on behalf of a precepting authority. It will also require that only one referendum is held in circumstances where an excessive increase is set by more than one authority in the same geographical area.
- (e) The legislation will require the authority proposing the excessive increase ('the relevant authority') to prepare supporting factual material setting out the proposed council tax increase and budget, the comparative non-excessive council tax rise and shadow budget, and the estimated cost of holding the referendum. At the same time that bills are sent to council taxpayers, the billing authority will send this information, together with polling cards, to every registered local elector. Local councillors would of course be free to make the case for any excessive increase, but the relevant authority would be prohibited from campaigning on the issue.

³ Consistent with Section 25 of the Local Government Act 2003, the chief financial officer (for billing authorities and major precepting authorities) would be required to report on the robustness of the estimates in the shadow budget requirement and the adequacy of the reserves provided for in the calculations.

⁴ In every year the ordinary day of election of councillors is the same day for all local government areas in England and Wales. It is the first Thursday in May or such other day as may be fixed by the Secretary of State by order (see section 37(1) of the Representation of the People Act 1983).

⁵ The Local Authorities (Conduct of Referendums) (England) Regulations 2007.

- (f) If the proposed rise in council tax were rejected, the relevant authority would immediately adopt the shadow budget and transfers from the Collection Fund would be reduced accordingly. It would also be required to inform the Secretary of State by notice. The billing authority would be able to issue new bills immediately, offer refunds at the end of the year or allow credits against liability in the following year. However, consistent with existing legislation⁶, billing authorities will be required to refund (and re-bill) any local resident who requests this.

10. This scheme will be applicable to each billing authority, local precepting authority and major precepting authority (including police authorities, fire and rescue authorities and the Greater London Authority). It would also apply to directly elected Police and Crime Commissioners when they come into being. Whilst there would only be one referendum in each geographical area, there would be a separate vote for each element of the overall council tax bill where an authority had set an excessive increase. Voters in these areas would be given a number of voting forms (or a number of separate questions on the same form).

Policy

11. It is not envisaged that the legislation will require the Secretary of State to publish principles at a specific point each year. However, as a matter of policy, the Government intends to propose principles at around the same time as publication of the provisional Local Government Finance Report and to have both the Local Government Finance Report and the report containing the principles debated by the House of Commons at the same time. This will allow local authorities to complete their budget setting and billing processes in the normal way, and to prepare shadow budgets in good time.

12. There are occasions when authorities may set council tax increases that are very large when expressed in percentage terms, even though the absolute cash increase is very small. To prevent such authorities from being required to hold a referendum – and to protect the large majority of smaller parish councils and other local precepting authorities – the Government intends, again as a matter of policy, to include a standard *de minimis* principle which would provide a ‘double lock’ mechanism. This would exclude authorities where **either** (a) the increase in the basic amount of council tax is below a defined amount **or** (b) the total income generated (ie. the council tax requirement) is below a fixed level.

13. The Government sees advantages in giving the Secretary of State discretion to determine different sets of principles for different categories of authorities (such as police authorities and fire and rescue authorities) – and to determine how those categories are defined. This would allow him to take into account circumstances affecting only particular categories of authorities – for example, the potential impact of Formula Grant distribution on different categories of authorities, or pressures on a service or services provided by a particular category of authority.

⁶ See, for example, section 31(4) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992.

Process

14. The Government believes it is right to require billing authorities to organise referendums given their existing responsibility for administering local government elections. The Government also believes that the referendum franchise should extend to all local electors, not just those liable for council tax, since all benefit in some way from the provision of local services. It is aware that this proposal would exclude council taxpayers who, for whatever reason, do not have a right to vote in local elections.

15. The Government intends to model the provisions for council tax referendums on the existing provisions for mayoral referendums where relevant and appropriate. In particular, this would:

- place certain restrictions on the steps that may be taken, and the expenditure that may be incurred, by a local authority in connection with a referendum
- require the referendum to take place within a specified time period
- set out the structure of the question to be asked

16. There will be no minimum requirement for voter turnout and a simple majority of those voting will be sufficient to determine the outcome of the referendum. If a majority vote in favour of an excessive increase, the relevant authority would continue to receive transfers from the Collection Fund based on its original budget. If a majority vote against an excessive increase, the relevant authority would immediately adopt the shadow budget and transfers from the Collection Fund would be reduced accordingly. In either case, the authority would be required to inform the Secretary of State of the outcome of the referendum and explain to council taxpayers the process for repayment of money where appropriate.

17. A proposed timetable for announcing the council tax principle, local authorities budgeting and billing process, and holding referendums, is attached at Annex A.

Abolition of capping

18. The introduction of council tax referendums will provide a direct link between local residents and the spending decisions of the local authorities to whom they pay their council tax. The Government therefore intends to repeal Chapter 4A of the 1992 Act in its entirety. However, until provisions for council tax referendums are in place, the Government reserves the option to use existing capping powers to protect council taxpayers from excessive increases where necessary.

Alternative notional amount reports

19. To ensure capping decisions are taken as fairly as possible, alternative notional amounts (ANA) reports are produced for authorities where there have been significant changes in function, finance or structure. These are technical adjustments to ensure that year-on-year comparisons of local authorities' budget requirements are made on a like-for-like basis.

20. With the abolition of capping, the Government sees no further need for these reports. Under the proposals set out above, local authorities would be able to explain the impact of any functional, finance or structural changes in the material they produce to accompany the referendum – and local people would then be able to vote on the basis of that information.

21. Where the structural change involves the creation of an entirely new authority – for example if two or more existing authorities are merged, or where a new parish is established – it would be more difficult to judge how the council tax principle might be applied without an ANA report in the year in which the change occurred. In such circumstances, for local precepting authorities, the Government expects that the wider process which led to these sorts of structural changes would ensure they had democratic legitimacy and local support. For billing and major precepting authorities, the Government envisages putting in place bespoke arrangements where necessary to protect council taxpayers from sudden changes in their liability.

Calculation of budget requirements

22. The requirement for authorities to calculate a budget requirement, as set out in the Local Government Finance Act 1992 (and amended by the Local Government Act 1999), was introduced specifically for the purposes of limiting council tax increases through capping. The question therefore arises as to whether, with the abolition of capping, there is any need to retain those sections of the 1992 Act which require authorities to calculate a budget requirement – and whether the repeal of the budget requirement aspects of the legislation would lift a reporting burden on authorities (bearing in mind that local authorities will still be required to calculate a council tax requirement). The Government therefore invites authorities' views on whether or not the requirement in current legislation to calculate a budget requirement should remain in place, or whether this should be repealed alongside capping.

Questions for consultation

23. We welcome your views on the mechanics of the process outlined above – including whether there are any practical difficulties with the system proposed or any unforeseen implications. In particular we would welcome responses to the following questions:

- Question 1.** Do you agree that local precepting authorities, such as town and parish councils, should be included within the provisions for council tax referendums? If so,
- are there details about the budget setting process for local precepting authorities which need to be taken into account?
 - will the ‘double lock’ mechanism work to protect the majority of town and parish councils?
- Question 2.** Are the Local Authorities (Conduct of Referendums) (England) Regulations 2007 the right model for organising and administering council tax referendums?
- Question 3.** Are there any practical difficulties in requiring council tax referendums to take place no later than the first Thursday of May?
- Question 4.** What are the advantages and disadvantages of holding a council tax referendum on the same day as another local referendum, or jointly with a local and/or general election? Current regulations allow for higher expenses per elector in a referendum than in a local election – would this raise any concerns if both votes are held on the same day?
- Question 5.** What provision, if any, should be made for properties where the council tax payer is not a local elector?
- Question 6.** Does the timetable at Annex A provide sufficient stability and certainty for local authorities when planning their budgets? Does it provide sufficient time to organise and administer referendums?
- Question 7.** Is it right to give local authorities the discretion to issue new bills immediately, offer refunds at the end of the year or allow credits against liability in the following year?
- Question 8.** How should billing authorities treat bank interest earned on excessive increases that have been rejected in a referendum?
- Question 9.** What practical difficulties, if any, would there be for a billing authority seeking to recoup the cost of a referendum held on behalf of one or more precepting authorities?
- Question 10.** Are there any technical difficulties with the removal of alternative notional amount reports?
- Question 11.** With the abolition of capping, is there any reason why authorities should be required to calculate a budget requirement each year?

Annex A – Local referendums: illustrative timetable

Late November/ early December	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provisional Local Government Finance Report published for consultation. • Provisional council tax referendum principles announced.
December to March	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Precepting and billing authorities draw up budgets and proposed council tax levels in the usual way. • Authorities planning to set excessive council tax increases also draw up shadow budgets and prepare material informing residents about the forthcoming referendum (including how they will be able to vote), and billing authority calculates cost of referendum.
January	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provisional Local Government Finance settlement consultation ends. Ministerial decisions on Formula Grant and council tax referendum principles announced.
February	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parliament approves final Local Government Finance Settlement allocations and the report containing the council tax referendums principles. • 14 February – deadline for bodies that levy on local authorities to set their levy.
March	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 March – major precepting authorities set budgets, and shadow budgets where necessary. • 11 March - billing authorities set budgets and shadow budgets where necessary. • Billing authorities send out council tax bills and details of referendum and supporting material.
May	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Referendums to be held by the first Thursday in May at the latest. • Billing authority to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - inform relevant precepting authorities, council taxpayers and electors of result of referendums - send out details of new budget/refunds where necessary - charge relevant precepting authorities for cost of holding the referendum • If the rise in council tax is rejected, the relevant authority immediately adopts the shadow budget.
February/March of the following year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refunds paid to residents where necessary.

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8. **STREET NAMING**

At the last meeting of the Town Council, Members considered a request that had been received from South Somerset District Council for suggestions for an appropriate name for the new access road to the new development off Old Station Way (Foundry House Site).

The District Council were advised that the developers had no proposals. However, it was pointed out that the suggested name(s) must not be similar to any existing road names.

Bearing this in mind, and given its strong links with the leather/gloving industry, it was agreed that the name "Tanyard Terrace" be put forward.

The Town Council's suggestion was duly conveyed to the District Council who, in turn, passed it into the developer. However, the developer has now expressed a preference for a road name associated with gloves or railway related.

Council is **RECOMMENDED** to note this matter and to consider putting forward an alternative street name.

(Alan Tawse, Town Clerk – 01935 382424)

9. **NORTH DORSET DISTRICT COUNCIL PRESENTATION**

South Somerset District Council has invited the Town Council to appoint a maximum of three representatives to attend a forthcoming presentation/discussion on the 'North Dorset experience'.

Two years ago, North Dorset District Council (NDDC) dealt with a serious financial crisis that threatened even their core Council services. By all political groups working collaboratively, and in partnership with town and parish councils, they were, through some very bold decisions, able to minimise the impact. In many instances it involved the transfer of services and assets to the communities across North Dorset so that those things that the community felt to be invaluable were preserved.

The presentation/discussion will take place from 10am to 12 noon on Monday 13 September in the Council Chamber at Brympton Way and will be given jointly by the Leader, Leader of the Opposition and the Lead Officer from NDDC.

Council is **RECOMMENDED** to consider appointing representatives to attend this presentation.

(Alan Tawse, Town Clerk – 01935 382424)

YEOVIL TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of **Yeovil Youth Council** held in the Town House, 19 Union Street, Yeovil on **Monday 26 July 2010**.

(7.00pm – 8.45pm)

Present:

Thomas Sankey (Deputy Chairman - In the Chair)
Tamsin Eddey
Adam Coppard
Laura Coppard
Hannah Law

Also Present:

Alan Tawse Town Clerk
Zara Scott-Davies Senior Youth Worker SCC
Gill Tomlinson Committee Administrator

(1) Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Freddy Bevan, Magenta Cousins, Aaron Newbury and Roberta Burns.

Freddy Bevan had sent a message saying he was resigning as Chairman.

(2) Election of Chairman

It was noted that several of the voting Members of the Youth Council were absent from the meeting and in the circumstances it was agreed to fill the various offices, subject to confirmation at the next meeting.

RESOLVED

(1) that Thomas Sankey be elected as Chairman for the Municipal Year 2010/11 subject to confirmation at the next meeting of the Youth Council.

(3) Election of Deputy Chairman

RESOLVED

(1) that Tamsin Eddey be elected as Deputy Chairman for the Municipal Year 2010/11 subject to confirmation at the next meeting of the Youth Council.

(4) Appointment of Secretary

RESOLVED

(1) that Adam Coppard be elected as Secretary for the Municipal Year 2010/11 subject to confirmation at the next meeting of the Youth Council.

(5) Appointment of Treasurer

RESOLVED

(1) that Hannah Law be elected as Treasurer for the Municipal Year 2010/11 subject to confirmation at the next meeting of the Youth Council.

(6) Minutes

The Minutes of the previous meeting held on 19 April 2010, copies of which had been previously circulated, were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

(7) Skateparks

The planned meetings did not go ahead but Members would still like to continue with this project. It was agreed to ask Zara Case if she could arrange for Members to go out in the minibus to visit the existing skateparks and gather initial views of current users.

RESOLVED

(1) that the matter be noted;

(2) that Zara be requested to arrange the proposed visit and survey by Members;
and

(3) that the outcome of the survey be reported to at a future meeting of the Youth Council.

(8) Youth Council Website

Adam is still working on the website and said when it is up and running it will be owned by the Youth Council.

The hosting costs vary and Adam will search the major companies and bring details to the next meeting. The domain name costs £6.00 (excluding VAT) every two years. It was noted that these costs could be met from the Youth Council's annual budget.

When Adam steps down from the Youth Council, he would be happy to continue to maintain the site unless someone new to the Council would like to take over from him. As he developed the system he would retain the rights to the content management system code. However the intellectual rights to the website would be vested in the Town Council.

Youth Council Members will be able to add to the content of the site but the Town Council would have overall control.

Adam will write to the Town Council outlining the above.

RESOLVED

- (1) that the matter be noted;
- (2) that Adam will write to the Town Council outlining the above;
- (3) that Adam will bring the hosting costs with him at the next meeting; and
- (4) that the matter be further considered at the next meeting of the Youth Council.

(9) Grant Awareness Workshop

It was noted that this had not yet taken place.

RESOLVED

- (1) that the matter be noted; and
- (2) that the use of the £50 won at Avon Tyrell at the Workshop be further considered at the next meeting of the Youth Council.

(10) Yeovil Youth Council Leaflet

Members made some alterations to the draft leaflet.

It was mentioned that the leaflet incorporated a reference to the new web site on the back and therefore could not be distributed until the web site is up and running.

RESOLVED

- (1) that the matter be noted; and
- (2) that the matter be further considered at the next meeting of the Youth Council.

(11) Yeovil and Area Youth Opportunities Group

Tamsin said she could no longer continue as the Youth Council's Representative on the Group.

RESOLVED

- (1) that the matter be noted; and
- (2) that the appointment of a new representative be considered at the next meeting of the Youth Council.

(12) Any Other Business

a. Facebook Account

It was suggested that a Facebook Account could be set up to enable Members to share information with ease.

RESOLVED

- (1) that the matter be noted; and
- (2) that the matter be further considered at the next meeting of the Youth Council.

b. Constitution

It was suggested that Members look at the Constitution and if they have any suggested changes to e-mail Alan.

Zara indicated that there was no specific provision in the Constitution about representation of young people with disabilities and that Fairmead School could be invited to be represented on the Council. Alan drew attention to the provisions allowing persons to be co-opted onto the Youth Council and undertook to write to the Head Teacher concerning this.

RESOLVED

- (1) that the matter be noted; and
- (2) that Alan would write to the Head Teacher of Fairmead School; and
- (3) that the matter be further considered at the next meeting of the Youth Council.

c. Parliamentary Visit

It was agreed that Alan would contact David Laws MP with a suggested date of Wednesday 13 October 2010.

RESOLVED

- (1) that the matter be noted; and
- (2) that the matter be further considered at the next meeting of the Youth Council.

d. Former Ski Centre

Alan gave an update on the current situation regarding the future use of the site.

RESOLVED

- (1) that the matter be noted.

(13) Date of Next Meeting

IT WAS NOTED

that the next meeting of the Youth Council would take place at 7.00pm on Monday 20 September 2010.

Chairman

YEOVIL TWINNING ASSOCIATION
Minutes of the Committee Meeting held on Thursday 10th June 2010

Present : Jan Aldridge, John Attwood (Chair), Roger Baker, Bridget Dollard, Andrew Kendall, Theresa Mahoney, Norma Northcott, David Recardo, Barbara Stimpson (Sec), Graham Voizey, Chris West

Apologies : Suzanne Biddiscombe, Diana Gray (Hosting), Barrie Smallcalder (Treasurer), Kathy Smyth

Minutes : The minutes of May's meeting were agreed and signed and there were no matters arising.

Correspondence : A renewal letter had been received from Cooperative Insurance and Barrie had paid the premium for the coming year.

Yeovil Town Council had written to advise us that Andrew and David would continue to be our representatives on the Council.

Treasurer's Report : Barrie had been delayed owing to computer problems at work, and therefore there was no treasurer's report.

Samarate visit : Norma praised the wonderful trips and said that the guests enjoyed every minute. She proposed a vote of thanks to Theresa and Bridget for all their work planning and organizing, and everyone agreed.

Theresa had prepared rough figures to pass to the treasurer showing expenditure of £3681 (not including visitors' lunches) and income of £1199 (costs £2481). Barrie would reimburse hosts for their guests' lunches (against presentation of receipts). (Action Theresa/Barrie)

There was a general discussion about the coach trips.

At the time of the visit Maila Celotto (daughter of Antonella) had written asking if Yeovil would be interested in exchanging with the Music Academy of Samarate. Barbara had forwarded the email to Westfield and Preston Schools and was awaiting replies. Bridget took a copy of the email from Maila in order to speak to Jill Lock, music department at Preston School. (Action: Bridget)

Barbara was asked to write to Julie Pilbeam at AgustaWestlands with a resume of the visit and to again thank them for their donation which was used to fund the trips and meals for the Italians; Palmers Fish & Chips Restaurant to thank them for the excellent service; and the Manor Hotel where we enjoyed cream teas and an evening dinner. The committee also wanted to thank Mayor Phil Chandler for his involvement during the visit. (Action: Barbara)

Future Visits:

Herblay 2010 : Thursday 23 - Monday 27 September.

Francoise had again requested arrival and departure details and Barbara had advised her that arrival would be around 6 pm and departure around 9 am, to be confirmed after booking coach. There was a discussion regarding transport and SW Coaches appeared to be the best option at £1875 + £385 for the Dover Sea France crossing amounting to £2260. Roger proposed this and everyone agreed. (Action: Barbara to confirm times to Francoise)

Departure from Yeovil will be 5.15 am to arrive in time for 11.25 sailing from Dover, with arrival at Herblay around 6 pm. On the return journey we will leave Herblay 8-8.30 am with a lunch stop en route to Calais for a 1.30 pm sailing.

Barbara was asked to remind members to book this visit (with £25 per head deposit) by the end June and advise them of an accurate price. (Action: Barbara)

Graham suggested advertising spare seats to keep the cost down – this could be done on our website.

Taunusstein 25-30th November 2010 : Flights were discussed : Lufthansa Heathrow to Frankfurt £89 return. Members need to be reminded to provisionally book by the end of June. (Action: Barbara)

Website : Donald had already uploaded over 100 photographs of the Samarate visit including some taken by David Recardo.

Socials/Fundraising :

The last coffee morning had raised a disappointing £36. Barrie had sent a £10 donation to the Baptist Church. The earliest booking for another would be November or December as the church were only allocating one charity coffee morning per month. Norma suggested thinking about where else we could hold a similar event.

Barrie and Tricia's barbecue to be held at Yetminster on 10th July needs advertising in a newsletter (Action: Barbara). David suggested offering tickets for the barbecue to councilors and Andrew said he would need to do this at the council meeting on 6th July.

Any other business : John had received correspondence from Berrys Coaches offering to provide our trip for £2000 plus £350 ferry from Dover.

Chris had been talking to Angelica from Samarate and she had suggested that an English language course would encourage younger people to visit. There was a discussion regarding the nature and possible provision of language tuition for 18-30 year olds. David suggested that he would speak to Julie Pilbeam at AgustaWestland about this. (Action: David).

The committee then discussed how else to attract younger members to twinning and Chris suggested asking our website visitors what they would like from YTA. Andrew thought we should advertise in some of the empty noticeboards in Yeovil town centre, and David felt that we should make more use of the twinning logos etc.

Barbara read out an email from the Gowers (ex-members) describing how the twinning association in their new town works on less formal lines, but it was felt that this would not suit YTA.

Next meeting :

Yeovil College Board Room, Hollands House (Ilchester Rd side) **7 pm Thursday 8th July**