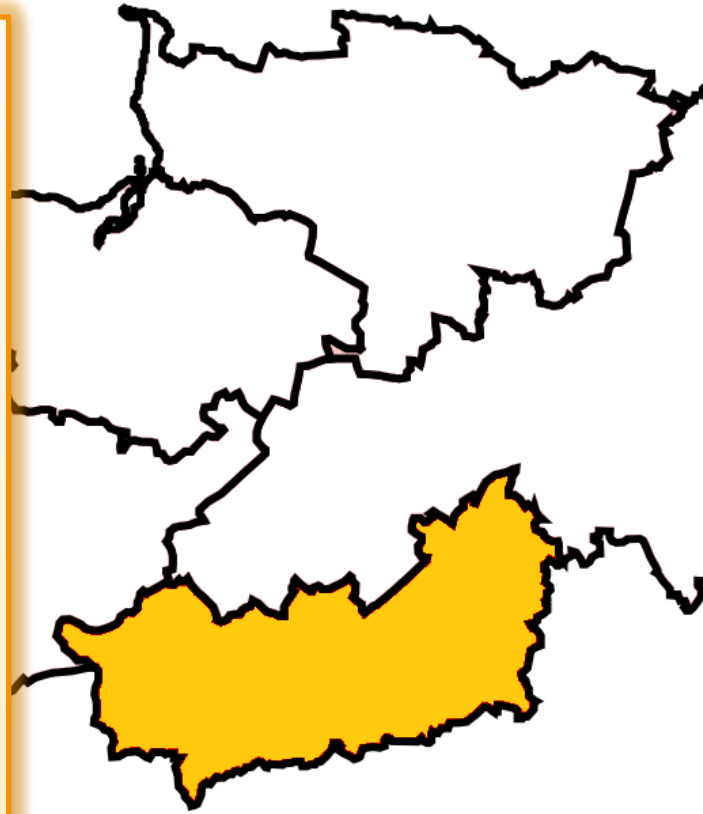

Annual General Meeting



November 2020

The Yeovil
Liberal Democrats

Liberal
Democrats 

Annual General Meeting

The Yeovil Liberal Democrats

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Revised: 2020

Amendment 1: October 2020

Correction 1: 5 November 2020

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“We exist to build and safeguard a fair, free and open society in which we seek to balance the fundamental values of liberty, equality and community, and in which no-one shall be enslaved by poverty, ignorance or conformity.”

Your Invitation

Dear Members

Yeovil Constituency Liberal Democrats: Annual General Meeting

On behalf of the Chair and Executive of the Yeovil Constituency Liberal Democrats (YCLD), I would like to extend our invite to you to attend this year's Annual General Meeting (AGM).

When: 7pm Friday the 27th November 2020

Where: Via Zoom virtual conference software

2020 has certainly been a year we are unlikely to forget in a hurry and all too quickly we find ourselves in the month of November, the month traditionally set aside for branches/constituencies to hold their AGMs.

As you will appreciate, due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, sadly we are unable to hold a physical meeting this year. Therefore, our meeting will take place utilizing the Zoom virtual conference meeting software. Although we would like to see every member there, it is unfortunate that our Zoom license will only provide enough spaces for 100 members and therefore it will be on a first-come-first-served basis. **However, you can pre-book a place by RSVPing to this letter via the e-mail address below.**

We realise that this is not the ideal situation in which we would like to conduct our AGM, but we hope you understand.

Please find attached a preliminary copy of the AGM Agenda, as well as the nomination papers if you wish to stand for any position on the Executive. Accompanying this invitation are the Minutes for the delayed 2019 AGM held in February, the annual reports submitted by your officers, Councillors and our member of the Lords, together with the list of branches and officers and the YCLD forward meeting plan.

Please note, some items may be removed or added to the agenda up to five working days prior to the AGM as agreed by the Chair and Executive.

The AGM gives all members the opportunity to receive the annual reports from your Executive and pose questions. However, one of the main business functions of the AGM is to elect your Officers for the following year, with effect from the 1st January 2021.

Please take the time and consider if you wish to stand for one of the many posts listed in the Agenda. All roles are up for re-election not just those that are vacant. These positions are vital in maintaining the life of our branch. Without them being filled, the sustainability of our branch is likely to falter. Therefore, if there is a role you wish to apply for and are unsure, please enquire for further details.

Please complete the nomination form attached and post it to the secretary Brian Hamilton at the address below. Alternatively, you may e-mail a scanned copy to the e-mail address below.

All nomination forms must be received by the Secretary no later than 7pm on the 25th November 2020. Forms submitted after this time may not be considered.

Your AGM is a wonderful opportunity to meet fellow Liberal Democrat members in our constituency and enables you to bring up any issues that you think the branch in particular, or the Party in general, should be looking at.

Please come along and be an active member of our democracy, it will be a pleasure to see you there.

If you have any questions, queries, or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me using the details below.

With kind regards

Brian

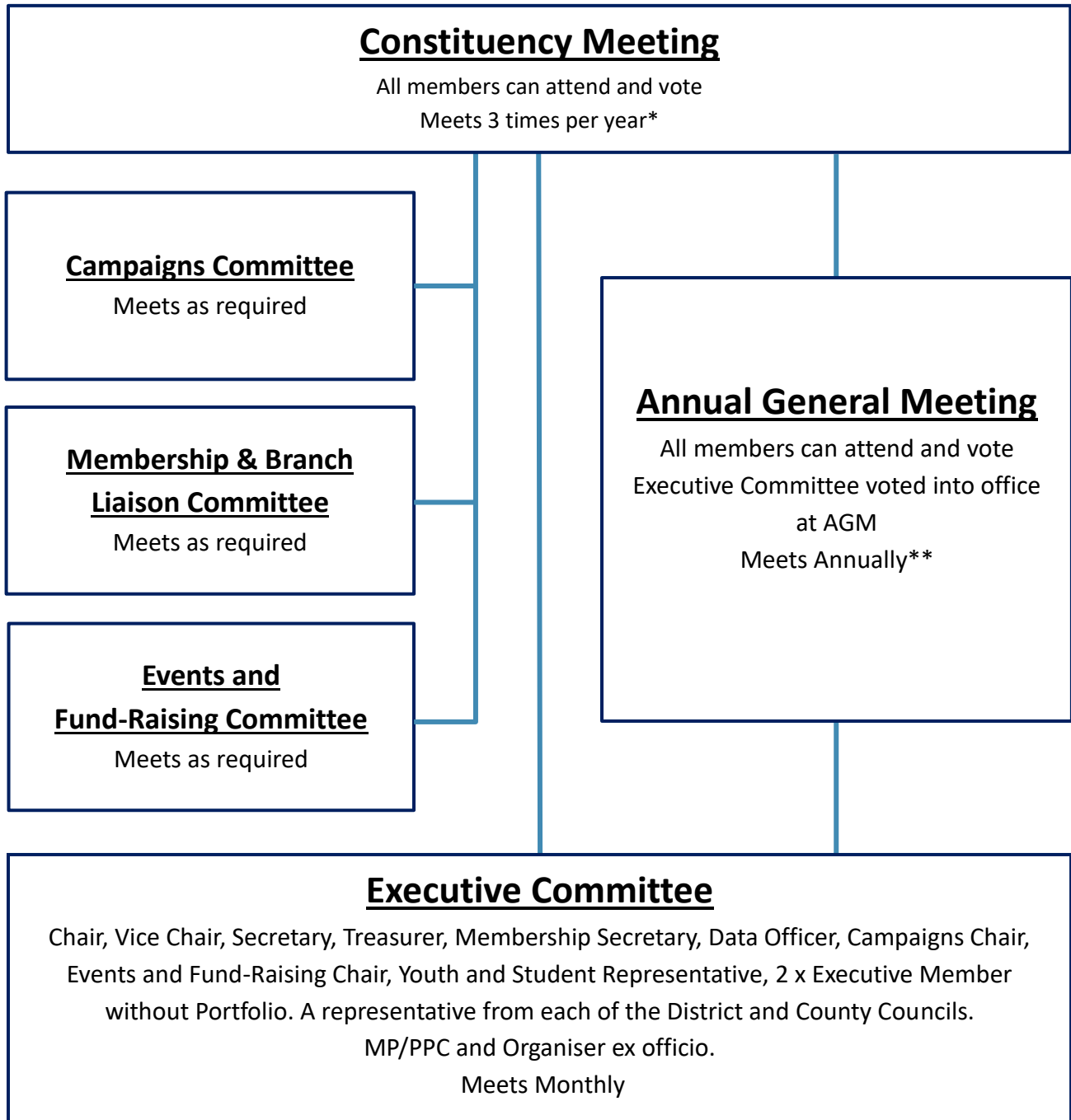
Brian Hamilton

Secretary | Yeovil Constituency Liberal Democrats

RSVP: 9 Greenfylde Close, Ilminster, Somerset, TA19 9FJ

Tel: 01460 53918 | **E-mail:** secretary@yeovil-libdems.org.uk

Constituency Arrangements



*Special Constituency Meetings may be called (Chapter 11 refers)

** Between 1st October and 30th November. Maybe postponed due to Parliamentary Elections or other urgent reasons (Chapter 11 refers).





1. Agenda

Preliminary Agenda

1. Chair's Welcome and introduction.
2. Apologies for absence.
3. Minutes of the delayed 2019 YCLD AGM held on 31st January 2020
4. Absent friends: A pause for reflection led by the Chair
5. Officer's Reports
 - a. Chair – Michael Hewitson
 - b. Treasurer's report – Mike Best
 - c. Membership & Branch Liaison Chair – Nicola Clark
 - d. Events and fundraising Committee Chair - Vacant
 - e. Campaigns – Michael Clark
6. Political Reports
 - a. South Somerset District Council – Cllr Val Keitch (Leader SSDC)
 - b. Somerset County Council – Cllr Jane Lock (Leader LD Group)
 - c. Westminster Report – Cathy Bakewell
7. Motions to the AGM
 - a. No motions have been brought for this AGM's consideration.
8. Topical briefing/any other urgent business.
 - a. CIF – Presentation by Cllr Peter Seib
9. Election of Officers
 - a. Hon President
 - b. Vice-President(s)
 - c. Chair
 - d. Vice-Chair
 - e. Secretary
 - f. Treasurer
 - g. Data Officer
 - h. Membership and Branch Liaison sub-committee Chair
 - i. Campaigns sub-committee Chair
 - j. Events & Fundraising sub-committee Chair
 - k. Youth and Student representative.
 - l. Executive Member without Portfolio x 2
10. YCLD Forward Plan
 - a. Next YCLD Executive Meeting: **7th December 2020**
 - b. Next YCLD Constituency Meeting: **29th January 2021**
 - c. Next YCLD Annual General Meeting: **22nd October 2021**
11. Draws





2. Nomination Form

Yeovil Constituency Liberal Democrats

Annual General Meeting Nomination of Individual to Executive Committee

ONLY ONE POSITION PER NOMINATION SLIP

For all enquires please contact the Constituency Secretary on 01460 53918 or via the e-mail below.

Position you wish to stand for (Please see a copy of the Agenda for the Annual General Meeting for a full list of positions)	
Name of Nominee (PRINT):	
Full Address:	Home telephone:
	Mobile telephone:
E-mail address:	
I agree to be nominated for the above post (Signature):	
NOMINATED AND SECONDED BY (Candidates must be nominated and seconded by two members of the Yeovil Constituency Liberal Democrats)	
Nominator Name (PRINT):	Signature:
Seconder Name (PRINT):	Signature:

Please send or e-mail nomination forms to arrive **NO LATER** than 48hrs prior to meeting start to:
 E-mail: secretary@yeovil-libdems.org.uk
 Address: The Constituency Secretary, 9 Greenfylde Close, Ilminster, Somerset, TA19 9FJ





3. Donation Standing Order Form

New Standing Order Instruction

Please complete this form in **BLOCK CAPITALS** and in **black ink**.

To _____ Bank or Building Society

Please set up the following Standing Order and debit my/our account accordingly

1. Account details

Account name	
Account holding branch	
Sort code	
Account number	

2. Payee Details

Name of organisation you are paying	Yeovil Liberal Democrats		
Payment reference			
Sort code	60-24-37		
Account number	68825250		

3. About the payment

Please make these payments monthly			
Date of first payment	DD	MM	YYYY
Amount of first and subsequent payments			
Please pay this until further notice			

4. Confirmation

Customers signature(s)





4. Officer Reports

4.1 Chair's Report to Yeovil Liberal Democrats AGM 2020



Since assuming the role of Chair on 1st February the Constituency has faced a series of unprecedented challenges.

Beginning with the most obvious: the impact of COVID19 which resulted in virtually all campaigning activities being suspended until May, with a phased reintroduction of literature delivery, but as of yet not canvassing. We have followed the Health & Safety advice from the Party HQ to make sure we keep volunteers and the public safe, I recognise that this has been frustrating for some Councillors who have been keen to contact their residents. Thomas

Gravatt our Organiser has been furloughed from April to August, with a part time-phased return in the autumn as restrictions have eased. We have now written to all District & County Councillors to offer literature if they wish to take up this opportunity please contact organiser@yeovil-libdems.org.uk. My thanks to everyone who has been involved in the community response to COVID which has seen our villages and towns pull together to help our most vulnerable neighbours. Many Lib Dems have been integral to these efforts, there are too many to name but I would like to specifically recognise Cllr Karl Gill and Cllr Jason Baker who have been highly active in Yeovil and Chard volunteer groups. Under the leadership of Cllr Val Keitch our District Council has performed magnificently to mobilise its resources to protect vulnerable people, and support business & community groups who have all been negatively impacted by the virus and its economic impacts.

In the midst of the pandemic, County Council Conservatives have been pushing an aggressive timetable for the reorganisation of Local Government in Somerset. The 'One Somerset' proposals would see all four Districts and the County Council dissolved and replaced with a new single Unitary Authority based on the current County boundaries. It is suggested that these proposals would save money and would lead to more efficient local Government. However the overwhelming consensus appears to be that these proposals would be less democratic, with decision making distant to local communities. The four District Councils have worked together to produce an alternative vision for Local Government, the "Stronger Somerset" proposals look to dissolve the five existing Councils and replace them with two new Unitary Councils, one for West Somerset, based on the footprint of the existing Somerset West & Taunton, plus Bridgwater District Councils, and an East Somerset Council which will operate on the current Mendip and South Somerset Council areas. Stronger Somerset will provide a fresh start for Children's Services, more local decision making and democratic accountability. Both Business Cases have been submitted to Government and will be assessed by the Secretary of State, a decision is expected in early 2021. Should the



Secretary of State decide to opt for reorganisation a Shadow Authority will be established to decide how the new Council(s) will work. It is expected that the new Council(s) would then come into existence in either 2022 or 2023 with elections in the May of those years.

One potential casualty of Local Government reorganisation is the scheduled 2021 County Council election. As it currently stands these elections will still go ahead, but it is possible that the County Council administration could seek license to postpone these elections. We currently have candidates Selected for 10 out of 11 Divisions in Yeovil Constituency - thanks to the hard work of Mick Clark in acting as Convener for the Approvals and Selection processes. In an ideal world we would be promoting these candidates heavily right now, however we trying to balance the competing challenges of running an election campaign during a pandemic, willingness of volunteers, along with available resources and the likely public appetite for local politics.

The current environment presents a major challenge to fundraising to support our campaigning activities. Not only have we been without a Fundraising Lead for the last 8 months, but we cannot hold events - large or small. Although we have made judicious use of Government funding schemes to support our continued employment of an organiser we rely on the generosity of our members to keep our campaigns running. This is more true now than ever. The first election of the new Unitary Councils will be a major test for the Party and the Yeovil Constituency: our ambition will be to win control of the new Council(s) which will require a huge team effort from candidates through to volunteers. I am establishing a Victory Fund and invite all Yeovil Members to consider making a contribution. We cannot be certain that the County Council Elections in May will be cancelled, and as such we would ask you to consider making a regular Standing Order contribution. Tell us when you think the next election will happen by donating £20.21, £20.22, £20.23, etc: either monthly, quarterly or annually! A Standing Order Mandate will be distributed along with the AGM papers.

At our last AGM, I was given a very strong mandate from members to ensure that all Elected Councillors were paying their agreed tithe to the Constituency. This was a situation that had persisted for many years. The Executive worked together to agree new processes to manage financial hardship and escalation of non-payers ultimately towards the Party's Disciplinary Process. I am happy to report through a tremendous amount of hard work and persistence we have now resolved this situation. As of **today** every Councillor in the Yeovil Constituency is either fully paid up, has an agreement with the Constituency to clear arrears or a hardship adjustment has been made. My thanks to Mike Best, Val Keitch, Cathy Bakewell, and Nicola Clark for their assistance in resolving this issue.

As I bring this mammoth report to a close I want to spend a moment to look towards the future. At the last AGM I spoke about the need for us to develop a long term strategy for the



Constituency, and to look at reforming our structures and processes to get us fit for to fight in the forthcoming Unitary elections. Due to COVID we haven't been able to make the progress that I would like towards this goal, but I am determined to begin a process as soon as possible to involve members, branches and where possible, supporters to help us build a winning team.

I would sincerely like newer members to get involved in our Executive Committee, and to get stuck in to running community campaigns, if you are interested in observing, or joining the Exec, please get in touch with me: chair@yeovillibdems.org.uk. I would like to thank each and every member of the 2020 Executive Committee for their time, support and diligence in dealing with a number of substantial issues. I would also like to thank members for their support over these last 8 months, without you there would be no Yeovil Lib Dems. We have made progress, although hampered by the unique set of circumstances this year, I sincerely believe that we have a bright future ahead for the Liberal Democrats here in South Somerset.

Mike Hewitson
Chair, Yeovil Liberal Democrats
November 2020



4.2 Treasurer's Report

Finance Report AGM November 2020.



Summary.

This is my third year in post as treasurer and I am glad to say our financial position has changed from when I started in 2018 where our balance had dropped to its lowest point of around 5K.

Last year saw a succession of elections needing a significant amount of funding which I am glad to say was more than covered through the efforts of our fundraising events through the year and the generosity of our supporters so we ended the year with a balance of 21K.

2020 has been a very challenging year because of the Covid pandemic, lockdown and the continued restrictions mean that we cannot continue to operate in a normal way with the net result of having to pay our bills with a much reduced income stream which still is the case today, but with the continued payments from our Councillors plus the government lifeline of the Furlough scheme and a 10K business grant obtained through SSDC the funds we have been able to get has allowed us to retain our organizer and office also build our reserve as well as paying other reduced expenditure.

With the Furlough scheme and grants at an end we now face the challenge of continuing to support our existing costs and prepare for County Council elections next May (if held) with still a reduced ability to hold any of our usual fund raising events, but we start this as you will see from the enclosed Cash flow report with a balance of over 36K.

If anyone has questions I will take these at the meeting or I am available on email or through my mobile.

Mike Best
Treasurer, Yeovil Liberal Democrats
November 2020



Cash Flow Report January – September 2020

Receipts In

Membership subscriptions	147.00
Councillors' Contributions	21874.61
Grants and donations	2257.60
Fundraising -Zero 36/250 Club	1064.50
Government Furlough/Grant Income	16478.78
Payments from HQ	343.30
Total	<u>£42165.79</u>

Payments Out

Fundraising	-4.05
Rent	-6300.00
Energy costs	-735.87
Telecom costs	-489.12
Office Costs, copying etc	-1198.03
Meeting expenses	-177.00
Organiser	-15491.57
Campaigning	-1846.15
Fees to Lib Dem HQ	-288.00
Money Passed to Agent for Election	-248.19
Total	<u>-£26777.98</u>

Opening Balance	£21006.51
Receipts less Payments	£15387.81
Closing Balance	<u>£36394.32</u>



4.3 Branch Liaison and Membership Secretary

Yeovil Constituency – 2020



Number of members – 409

Number of supporters – 53

We started 2020 with 439 members and 45 supporters, so we have gained some and lost some, but this is very much in line with the federal party's membership retention statistics.

HQ know that although relatively little membership income comes direct to local parties, it does pay for much of our national infrastructure, including our media presence, our support on compliance and technology, and our campaigns teams.

It also means that additional income we raise nationally can be put directly into local campaigns through the G8 and other processes.

HQ already have a number of national mechanisms for encouraging people to stay as members.

These include a series of automated emails (which they're reviewing) and targeted direct mail.

In this crucial period HQ are proposing some additional steps. These will only take place for parties where we do not have an existing MP, as those parties retention efforts are being led directly by their MPs.

As part of this HQ have thought hard about how to give local parties a greater financial share of membership income they retain, and of members they recruit to Direct Debit.

They are planning to:

Introduce a new financial 'retention incentive' for local parties to retain members who are not on Direct Debit and who haven't renewed. This will see local parties keep 100% of the first years' membership fee for any member we retain and put onto a direct debit, and 50% of the fee for members we retain through card payment. (We can do this by asking members to renew using this dedicated URL: www.libdems.org.uk/renew-local).

Call every single member at risk using a national phone bank. HQ are currently testing three scripts for these calls: one focused on getting Johnson's Conservatives out in 2024, one



focused on Europe, and one focused on our values as a party. They will let membership officers and local chairs know which of these is working best, so we can factor this into our local work.

Offer exclusive zoom calls to every member at risk with an elected MP to hear their concerns and hopes. These will be chaired by regional campaigns officers.

More widely they are also going to:

Make the member recruitment incentive more financially generous, so local parties keep more income from members we recruit to Direct Debit. From now on, local parties will retain 100% of membership income for the first year if members sign up to Direct Debit, 50% for the second year, and 25% for the third year. (We can do this by asking members to sign up using a dedicated URL, above).

Start testing national fundraising calls to non-member prospect lists. HQ will fund a pilot to see whether they can generate new regular givers to the party by asking them to back specific campaigns, without trying to recruit them as members. This will follow best practice in the non-profit fundraising sector. They'll test a number of different techniques and scripts and share what works with local membership officers. Where they recruit people as regular givers, they'll make this information available to the relevant local parties in Lighthouse so we can contact them for local, specific fundraising appeals. HQ hope this grows prospect lists for all parts of the party.

More widely, this shows us how important it is to recruit members and donors onto Direct Debit payments, rather than card payments (which expire after three years at best as banks refresh cards).

Nicola Clark

Branch Liaison and Membership Sub-Committee Chair

November 2020

4.4 Events and Fundraising Sub-Committee Chair Report

This position is currently vacant. A brief report may be given by the Chair at this stage on the present status of fundraising and any future fundraising activities and/or events going forward for the branch.



4.5 Campaigns Sub-Committee Chair Report



In spite of the emergence of Covid, the period since our last AGM has not been without it's excitement.

The pandemic has posed challenges for delivery, canvassing, and campaigning. However, it has given Councilors and activists the chance to demonstrate how effective Lib Dems are in local government, during a time of crisis.

- **GE**

While failing to win a seat is always disappointing – we were able to mobilise a broad team at minimal notice, in the middle of winter, who delivered/canvassed/knocked up at all hours and in all weathers. However we may feel about the (then) national campaign, our organizer produced timely, high quality literature, that accurately promoted our core values and played a huge part in increasing the number of voters who turned out to vote Lib Dem on the day.

- **Parrett Ward (SSDC) by Election**

Our first big test, since the General Election, came in the form of a by-election triggered by a resigning Lib Dem District Councilor. Ollie Patrick ran a strong, community focused campaign, supported by our local organizer and a committed team of volunteer, and went on to secure 52% of the vote (Con 22% Ind 22% Grn 5%). This served as a fantastic reminder of the strength of support, both for Ollie and Lib Dems in local government.

- **Town Council By Elections and Co-Opted members**

With Covid lockdown bringing a halt to by elections, there have been considerable delays to by elections (not exclusively our constituency). I have been disappointed to see that, where a position becomes vacant and there is no call for a by election, Lib Dem controlled Town Councils have co-opted Councilors from opposing parties to replace resigning (Lib Dem) members, even when Liberal Democrat members have applied for the vacancy. Where-ever an opportunity exists we should seek to elect Lib Dem candidates, rather than hand a victory to Labour, Conservatives, or Greens in what can only be described as creating an open goal, only to score an own goal yourself.

- **Unitary or County Elections?**

Prior to the pandemic, we began the process of selecting candidates for the 2021 Somerset County Council Elections. This process is almost complete, but before launching our



candidates we wait to learn if the county elections will proceed or will be called off for a Unitary election (likely May 2022). In conclusion, I would like to thank everyone who has contributed to our campaigns over the last year, whether you have knocked doors with us or used your social media presence to promote our values. Every contribution helps to get our message out and more Lib Dems elected

Mick Clark
Campaigns Committee Chair
November 2020

5. Political Reports

5.1. South Somerset District Council – Cllr Val Keitch, Leader South Somerset District Council



This has been a strange year for all of us. The District Council staff have mainly been working from home since March in common with many other people, this has worked well and support is in place for any staff finding it difficult.

The Council response to the Pandemic has been amazing, within 7 days our distribution was up and running at Westlands. The initial supplies from Government were supplemented by us to provide more balance . Oscar Myer at Chard supplied us with 6000 ready meals which could be used to support the homeless in Hotels. The Housing team worked very hard to get people off

the street and into temporary accommodation. Some of those have now gone into permanent accommodation thanks to the work done to get them Tenancy ready.

Business grants were sent out very quickly and extra help provided where needed. Staff across the council were redeployed to assist in areas of most need. I am rightly proud of the response from SSDC, which of course continues.

We declared a Climate emergency and are working with the other councils in Somerset to move the work forward. Full details can be found on the SSDC website

As many of you will know there is a Planning White paper out for consultation the council have responded and a motion was put to Full Council deploring the lack of local input in that paper.

The main topic we are dealing with at the moment is the Unitary debate. All four District Councils have worked together to produce a business case called Stronger Somerset .The letter from Robert Jenrick MHCLG has now been received and the submission date is 9



December .Engagement is going on and we have experts assisting us with areas we have little experience in . There is a website called Stronger Somerset where you can find lots of information on our bid. Despite the Government seemingly pulling back from full scale reorganisation it has been made clear that Somerset and two other authorities are still on the table. I met with council leaders in those other authorities last week by Zoom to discuss the way forward .It was clear that there is no real consensus among them .We are fortunate to have agreement from all four District Councils in Somerset .

I would like to congratulate Cllr Oliver Patrick for his outstanding win in the Parrett by-election.

Cllr Dean Ruddle has joined us from the Independents and Louise Clark has rejoined the group.

4 Councillors have or are attending the LGA Leadership Academy at Warwick funded by the District council.

Cllr Val Keitch
Leader South Somerset District Council
November 2020

5.2. Somerset County Council – Cllr Jane Lock, Liberal Democrat Group Leader, Somerset County Council



This time last year none of us could have foreseen what 2020 had in store - a pandemic, the increasing likelihood of a no deal Brexit, a bumbling buffoon for a PM and more locally the inevitability of local government reorganisation. Yet the Liberal Democrat’s continue to work hard for communities and for Somerset.

Our team at a virtual County Hall has expanded by one when Dean Ruddle decided to join us. He has proved be a valuable member of our Group with his extensive knowledge of finance, audit and his enthusiasm for all things Somerton. He has made a real impact being able to ask all the questions he was unable to as a Tory and not feeling able to as an Independent.

I remain as Leader of the Opposition and it is a privilege to lead our County Group, for councillors from right across Somerset to come together with one voice bodes well for whatever model Whitehall imposes on us. We will make it work for the benefit of Somerset residents.



We have been fortunate to have had relatively few cases of Covid in the County compared to other areas with 206 very sad deaths contributed to by the virus. As councillors we have had weekly updates through the height of the first wave and many staff were redeployed across various services. Meetings ceased in mid-March and began again (virtually) in May. I have only been to County Hall once since then for a Full Council meeting which gave me the opportunity to ‘admire’ the £10 million refurbishment of A Block. The new meeting room which has been created would not hold all the councillors proposed in Stronger Somerset, so another pointless exercise by the Tories.

The game of financial Jenga continues with it becoming clear that the Tories have internally borrowed some £80 million, money not invested or taken from schemes postponed or behind schedule. This will all have to be paid back at some point by borrowing on the open market at whatever the interest rate is at the time. Some of that will have been used to build new schools which then are immediately handed over to academy trusts leaving the debt with Somerset residents. In the past ten years they have also sold £90 million worth of taxpayers’ assets with little or nothing to show for it. This will all have to be dealt with by the new authority, not a great start. The Government grants for Covid are not ring fenced for that purpose and SCC have put over £10 million into reserves. We believe that this money should be spent on helping residents and businesses recover from the effects of the pandemic.

Children’s services had an appalling Ofsted inspection for SEND (Special Educational Need and Disability) services, although it will not change the overall rating of requires improvement which in itself is an improvement on the previous inadequate rating. It is worth remembering the overall service was rated excellent under the Lib Dems.

After a great deal of pressure we welcomed the Tories turning their backs on the Government over provision of free school meals through the holidays and although half term has been rather a mess, I hope that Christmas will be better organised and that no child will go hungry. We will continue to influence, nudge,

cajole and shout loudly when they get it wrong. I know officers are working above and beyond to simplify the system and make it work.

Who knows what 2021 will bring. We must assume that the County elections will take place unless we are told otherwise but there is talk of a one or even two year extension. Covid is likely to be with us for the foreseeable future, numbers are rising here too and it will be a tough winter for all local authorities trying to support communities and help individuals. I hope you all stay safe and look forward to the new normal..... whatever that looks like.

Cllr Jane Lock



Leader Liberal Democrat Group Leader Somerset County Council
November 2020

5.3. Westminster Report – Cathy Bakewell, House of Lords, Liberal Democrat Spokesperson for DEFRA



Since the General Election last December there has been a total change in the way of life for the whole of the country, not all of it can be laid at Boris's door. I will try and deal with the legislation which has been piling through the House of Lords.

After the initial lockdown and Parliament began to return to deal with legislation it seemed very strange to be debating Bills which would deal with the how the country would be run after Brexit.

The Agriculture Bill began its long and tortuous process, first with Second Reading, then Committee Stage which lasted for 7 days, often finishing at midnight, then moving into Report for 3 days, again sitting extremely late. In the end the Lords send 6 amendments to the Commons on use of pesticides, agricultures effect on climate change, the need for a national food strategy, and two closely related to setting up a Trade and Agriculture Commission. The Commons rejected them all and we then had Ping Pong in which we sent back the two related to the Trade and Agriculture Commission. The Government had given reassurances on the national food strategy, waiting for Henry Dimbleby's final report which will then produce a Government consultation. We wait to see what the Commons makes of our second lot of amendments next week. It is amazing that since the NFU had gathered a petition in favour of the Trace and Agriculture Commission of over 1 million signatures, that the Government still resists.

The Immigration Bill, like Agriculture, also had a long process sitting to midnight. This has now become a bit of theme in the Lords. Peers are so incensed from all sides of the House that they are putting down an enormous number of amendments. Sally Hamwee led for us on this Bill where the main issues on Immigration was the Government's refusal to allow anyone to have paper confirmation of their right to stay in the country, relying only on digital confirmation. This despite over 60% of businesses and landlords saying they would request a paper copy. The second big issue, of course, was the right of migrant and refugee children to be reunited with their parents who were already living in the UK. Again, the Government resisted. We wait for the amendments to be returned from the Commons when doubtless we will send them back and ask the Commons to 'think again'.



We have two Bills currently in Committee Stage – the Trade Bill which Jeremy Purvis is leading on and the Medicines and Medical Devices Bill which Judith Jolly is leading on having stepped into the breach as Sal Brinton, who is our Health Spokesperson, is currently ill. Food standards and animal welfare which featured heavily in Agriculture are again a big issue in the Trade Bill. The Government just do not understand that we don't trust them. It is useless them saying we will protect our current animal and food standards, unless it is written on the face of the Bill, it can all blow away in the wind of political change.

The last Bill about to go into Committee is the famous Internal Markets Bill. Ministers with integrity have already resigned and Peers on all sides have voted for attempting to stop this Bill which breaks internal law and the agreement which our Prime Minister so excitedly signed up for to speed the process of Brexit up. Did he not notice that it left Northern Ireland still within the EU and an invisible border down the Irish Sea? So far 39 Conservative Peers have voted to try and derail the Bill. We are waiting to vote at Report Stage. It will be interesting to see just how many Tory Peers are still determined to bring the Bill down.

There have, of course, been other smaller Bills – The Fire Safety Bill and the Parliamentary Constituencies Bill. We have been busy on all fronts since September, without the benefit of the Recess which the MPs enjoy.

Other political issues which have captured the public imagination is the appalling record on the Track and Trace system, which is the subject of questions at least once a week. Then there are the free school meals for vulnerable children in the school holidays, which Government is refusing to give way on. So, we reach a situation where the country is totally divided with children in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland being fed in school holidays, but those in England will be dependent on volunteers and charities to provide them with a hot meal during the winter holidays. Hopefully there will be a change of heart as the new MPs realise they have signed up to a preposterous agenda which is not going to get them re-elected, even in 4 years' time.

We have a raft of Statutory Instruments coming through in order to move the last bits of what was EU law onto the UK statute books so that everything does not grind to halt. This week I was given the list of DEFRA SIs to be debated before the end of December. There are 30 of them.

Despite all the legislation and chaos around Covid and Brexit, the Government is still trying to push through other legislation including reform the Planning System, blaming local authorities for the lack of sufficient housing being built and moving to enforcing Local Government Reorganisation.



On the personal front, sadly Diana Maddock lost her battle with cancer over the summer. Some may remember her stunning victory in being elected as an MP in the Southampton By-election many years ago. On a more positive note this week we heard that Jim Wallace, who was the Chief Whip when Paddy was Leader, has been appointed to be the Moderator of the Kirk of Scotland and will take up his post in January. This will mean that he will have to resign the Liberal Democrat Whip and sit on the Cross benches. This is a tremendous achievement for Jim and we are all delighted for him. It has been a traumatic year in lots of ways. I will be glad when it is over, but do not envisage that 2021 will be much better.

Baroness Cathy Bakewell
House of Lords
November 2020



6. Capital Investment Fund Background Papers

6.1. Treasurer's Report – 29th September 2017

The balances of the National Westminster Constituency Accounts as at 29th September at 12 noon are:-

Main Account **£20,009.90 credit**

Imprest Account **£2,009.84 credit**

As reported to the last Constituency Council meeting, I still have to make the refund to IPSA via David Laws for business rates claimed from Westminster in past years from April 2010 until the election in 2015, I have calculated the figure to be **£12,343.70**. The refund to IPSA reflects slightly less than 80% of the total cost for the whole period from 1st April 2010 to July 2015, less the periods when IPSA money was not claimed for elections etc. The figure of £12,343.70 was shown as a creditor in the 2016 Accounts. I shall now be making this payment during October.

I will also repay in October the sum of £5,000.00 to the CIF Trustees from the main account, which is part of the grant given to the Constituency at the start of the GE Campaign in May, please see below. This will leave a working capital balance **of £4,676.04 credit**.

The balance of the Barclays Campaign Account is:-

Current Account **£5,746.55 credit** – this is the up-to-date balance after all cheques have been paid, as I visited Barclays Bank yesterday and the statements are now back to being produced monthly.

Unfortunately on the 11th August, I received an unexpected invoice dated 28th May 2017 from Acanthus Press for £7,625.23, via Richard Pinnock by email. This was an invoice for cards sent to electors before the GE Expenses started. I negotiated the amount down to £6,354.36, which was then paid from the Campaign account on 18th September. The original invoice was sent to Lib Dem HQ, but was not sent onwards to us from Lib Dem HQ. **This means that only a further £5,000 can be repaid to the CIF Fund instead of £10,000 from this account.** Plus the £5,000 above from the Nat West current account, this means that only £10,000 from the original grant of £15,000 can be made.

The Chair wished to contact the CIF Trustees to explain the position to them. They are Mick Clarke, Peter Seib, Sarah Frapple and myself. No meeting of the Trustees has yet been set. The remaining balance will be only £746.55 credit. We urgently need to fundraise for the elections due in 2019.

I am advised by Mike Hewitson that the balance of the PayPal Account was at 1st September:- Current Account **£734.88 credit**. I have spotted a regular monthly debit for Adobe Systems on the last printout that Mike sent to me. Mike is investigating.

The monthly PPERA Returns are fully up-to-date and I am working on a National Return required to be posted to HQ by tomorrow. I had a useful meeting last night with Cathy and Mike regarding this National return and the Office costs.

Sam Crabb

Treasurer 29th September 2017.



6.2. Ex-Treasurer's Report for Constituency Council – 2nd February 2018

The balances of the National Westminster Accounts as at 31st January at 9 am are:-

Main Account **£4,043.36 credit** (after payment of cheque for £9,874.00 – see below)
Imprest Account **£699.63 credit**

As reported in July, I have now made a refund to IPSA for business rates claimed from Westminster in past years from April 2010 until the election in 2015, I re-calculated the figure to be £9,874.00. The refund to IPSA reflected less than 80% of the total cost for the whole period from 1st April 2010 to July 2015, less the periods when IPSA money was not claimed for elections etc. I also deducted 80% of the Business Rates due to be paid by IPSA and paid over that period by the Constituency. The figure of £12,343.70 was shown as a creditor in the 2016 Accounts, and £9,874.00 will be shown as a creditor in the 2017 accounts. The difference is a saving for the Constituency.

The balance of the Barclays Campaign Account is:-

Current Account **£2,056.55 credit** – this is from a copy statement only dated 28th December 2017. The statement is now produced once a month. This includes £1,200 received from the Agent's account.

I am advised by Chris Booth that the balance of the PayPal Account is:-

Current Account **£734.88 credit**

I am very pleased that Mike Best is taking over the role as the Constituency Treasurer as from 1st January 2018. He is going to be assisted by Iris Coton, who will look after paying-in and bank statement reconciliation as from this month. I have had a meeting with Mike and Iris to explain the role and I am carrying on to complete the 2017 accounts.

The 2017 Accounts process is going well, but I am waiting for the final few Branch Account returns to come back to me. I very much hope that the accounts will be finalised by mid-February, so that they may be submitted by end March.

I confirm that the CIF (Capital Investment Fund Trust) has received a repayment of £10,000 of the £15,000 grant made during the General Election Campaign.

Sam Crabb

Treasurer 31st January 2018



7. Meeting Calendar

2020

27 Nov **Yeovil Constituency Liberal Democrats Annual General Meeting**
Venue: On-line iaw Federal Party Guidance in response to Covid-19¹
Time: 7-9pm

07 Dec Executive Committee Meeting – via Zoom UFN

2021

04 Jan Executive Committee Meeting – via Zoom UFN

29 Jan² **Yeovil Constituency Liberal Democrats Q1 Constituency Meeting**
Venue: South Petherton TBC
Time: 7-9pm

01 Feb Executive Committee Meeting – via Zoom UFN

01 Mar Executive Committee Meeting – via Zoom UFN

05 Apr Executive Committee Meeting – via Zoom UFN

23 Apr **Yeovil Constituency Liberal Democrats Q2 Constituency Meeting**
Venue: TBC
Time: 7-9pm

03 May Executive Committee Meeting – via Zoom UFN

07 Jun Executive Committee Meeting – via Zoom UFN

05 Jul Executive Committee Meeting – via Zoom UFN

23 Jul **Yeovil Constituency Liberal Democrats Q3 Constituency Meeting**
Venue: TBC

02 Aug Executive Committee Meeting – via Zoom UFN

06 Sep Executive Committee Meeting – via Zoom UFN

04 Oct Executive Committee Meeting – via Zoom UFN

22 Oct **Yeovil Constituency Liberal Democrats Annual General Meeting**
Venue: TBC
Time: 7-9pm

01 Nov Executive Committee Meeting – via Zoom UFN

06 Dec Executive Committee Meeting – via Zoom UFN

2022

03 Jan Executive Committee Meeting – via Zoom UFN

28 Jan **Yeovil Constituency Liberal Democrats Q1 Constituency Meeting**

¹ Note change of venue to on-line Zoom conference application due to on-going Covid-19 response.

² Note change of date for Q1 Constituency meeting iaw YLD Constitution to be held within 1 month of taking office.





LIBERAL DEMOCRATS