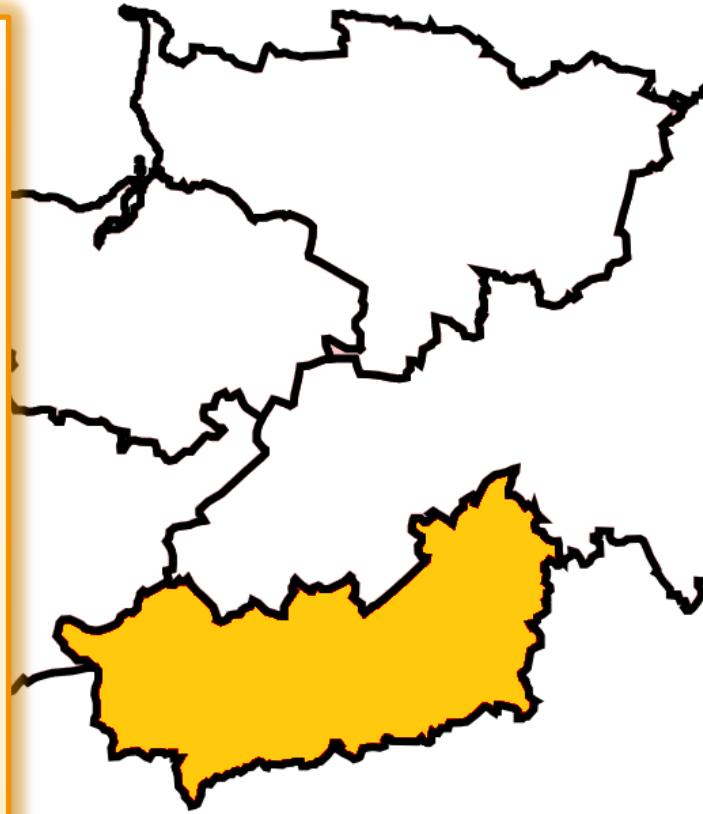

Annual General Meeting



October 2022

**The Yeovil
Liberal Democrats**

**Liberal
Democrats** 

Annual General Meeting

The Yeovil Liberal Democrats

© 2022 Yeovil Constituency Liberal Democrats

Revised: 2022

Version: 2

Amendment: 1

Correction:

Contents

Your Invitation	v
Constituency Arrangements	vii
1 Agenda	1
2 Nomination Form	3
3 Donation Standing Order Form	5
4 Minutes: AGM 22 nd October 2021	7
5 Officer Reports	10
5.1 Chair	10
5.2 Treasurer	12
5.3 Branch Liaison and Membership Secretary	14
5.4 Events and Fundraising Sub-Committee Chair	14
5.5 Campaigns Sub-Committee Chair	15
6 Political Reports	16
6.1 South Somerset District Council	16
6.2 Somerset County Council	16
6.3 Westminster	19
7 Motion Proposal: Adoption of 2022 LD Constitution	22
8 Yeovil Office presentation by Working Group	23
9 Yeovil Constituency Meeting Calendar	25

“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

In accordance with the published programme and on behalf of the Chair and Executive of the Yeovil Constituency Liberal Democrats (YCLD), I would like to extend an invite to you to attend this year's Annual General Meeting (AGM).

When: 7pm Friday the 28th October 2022

Where: The Henhayes Centre, South St., Crewkerne TA18 8DA

2022 has seen another challenging year for us as a local party, as well as nationally. However, some rays of Liberal Democrat sunshine have pushed through the gloom. There was a small election in May that saw the Liberal Democrats across Somerset triumph and wrest control of Somerset County Council from the Conservatives, for the first time in over 12 years. We saw an historic win in the neighbouring parliamentary seat of Tiverton & Honiton.

In South Somerset, earlier in the year, Ray Buckler won an historic by-election for the Liberal Democrats in Neroche, replacing the one-time Conservative Group Leader, who had held the seat for many years. In Yeovil, Brympton, Barbara Appleby held one of our seats on SSDC, in a by-election after the sad passing of Cllr Alan Smith, who had served for nearly twenty years as a Liberal Democrat on SSDC.

So, what will 2023 bring? Certainly, there will be change, in the form the demise of four District Councils and a County Council and the birth of a new Somerset Council. It may turn out to be a more interesting year than 2022, although we haven't yet ended this year.

Contained within your AGM Pack is a copy of this year's Agenda, a nomination form for membership of the Executive Committee (please note the closing date for submission), your Officer and Political Reports and a donation form.

The AGM Pack also contains the YCLD forward meeting plan for 2022-24 for your diaries. The Minutes of your 2021 AGM will be sent separately as is a copy of the new LD Constitution proposed at item 7. 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 2022.

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 ideally to be received by the Secretary no later than 7pm on the 25th October 2022. Forms may be submitted at the meeting at the discretion of the Chair.

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

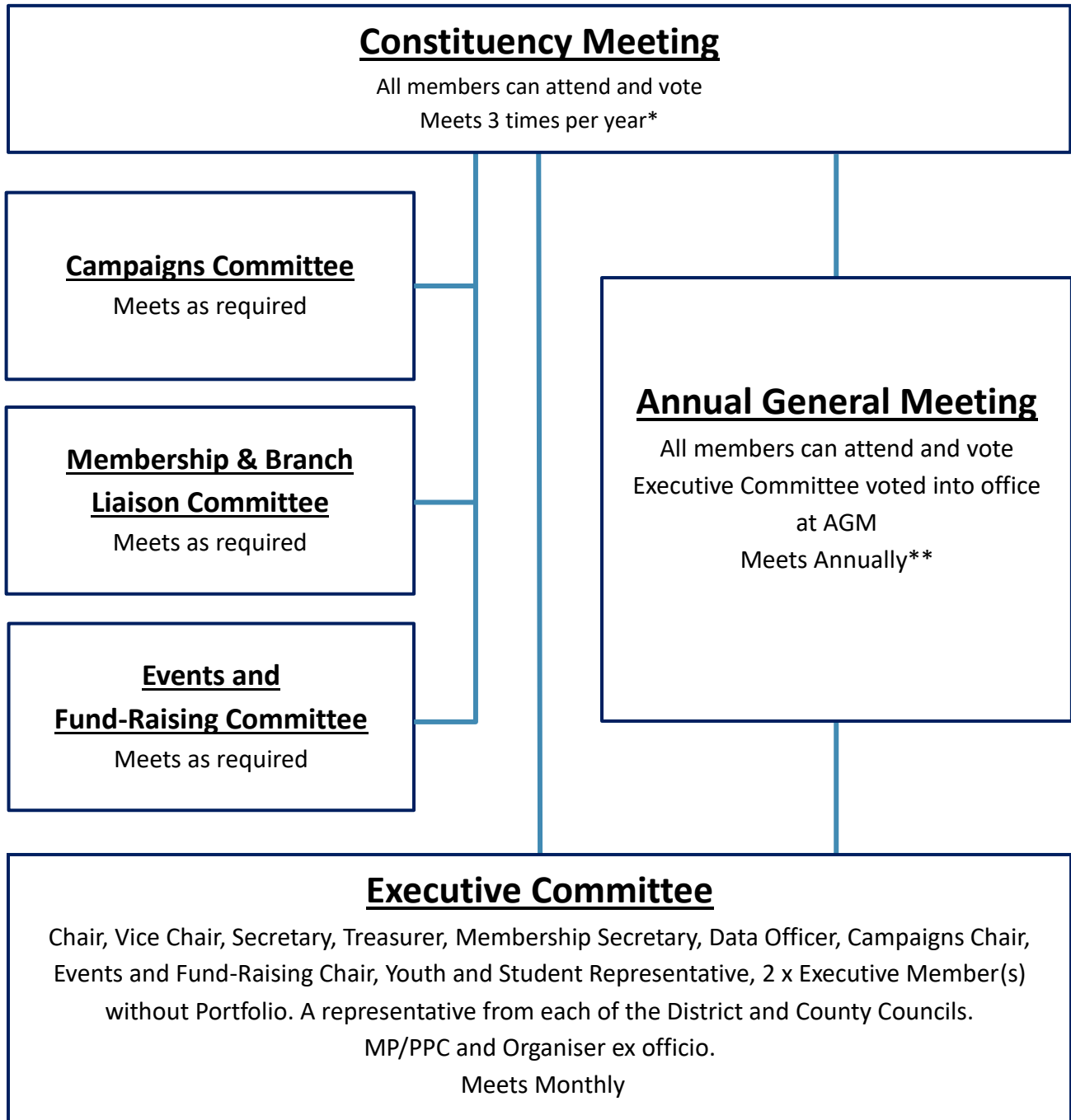
Secretary | Yeovil Constituency Liberal Democrats

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

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

P.S. You will note from the Agenda, that there will be a raffle held at the end of the meeting to help raise funds for the Branch. If you can donate prizes, buy tickets and generally support the raffle, every little will help. Thank you.

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 AGM held on 22nd October 2021
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 – Position currently vacant.
 - d. Events and fundraising Committee Chair – Judith Morris
 - e. Campaigns – Adam Dance
6. Political Reports
 - a. South Somerset District Council – Cllr Val Keitch (Leader SSDC)
 - b. Somerset County Council – Adam Dance & Jo Roundell Greene
 - c. Westminster Report – tbc
7. Motions to the AGM
 - a. 2022 Revised Constitution adoption.
8. Topical briefing/any other urgent business.
 - a. Yeovil Office presentation by Working Group.
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. 2 x Members Without Portfolio
 - l. Youth and Student representative
 - m. Diversity Officer
10. YCLD Forward Plan
 - a. Next YCLD Executive Meeting: **10th November 2022 – on-line**
 - b. Next YCLD Constituency Meeting: **27th January 2023 – Stoke-sub-Hamdon**
 - c. Next YCLD Annual General Meeting: **27th October 2023 - tbc**
11. Draws/Raffle





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

Customer's signature(s)





4. AGM Minutes: 22nd October 2021



Yeovil Constituency Liberal Democrats
 2021 Annual General Meeting - Minutes - DRAFT
 Held: 22nd October 2021 @ 7pm
 Venue: Via Zoom teleconference software

The minutes noted below follow the published agenda for the Yeovil Constituency Liberal Democrats (YCLD) Annual General Meeting with additional items inserted and noted where relevant.

Present: Officers: **Mike Best** (MB) Constituency Treasurer, **Brian Hamilton** (BH) Constituency Secretary, **Nicola Clark** (NC) Constituency Membership Secretary, **Paul Maxwell** (PM) Member without Portfolio, **Val Keitch** (VK) SSDC Leader, **Thomas Gravatt** (TG) Constituency Organiser.

Apologies received from the following officers: **Mike Hewitson** (MH) Constituency Chair (delayed), **Martin Carnell** (MCa) Constituency Vice-Chair, **Cathy Bakewell** (CB) Constituency President.

Apologies received from members via email: Wes Read, Judith Morris, Iris Coton, James Draper, Lucy Patrick, Jane Pearce, Roger and Mavis Iredale, Sally McConnell, Peter Gubbins, Alison Suter, Jo Roundell Greene, Miles Wickstead, Samantha Hobbs, Stephanie Bailey, Roger Gilson

- 1) **Chair's Welcome and introduction.** Val Keitch, in the absence of the Chair opened the meeting and welcomed those in attendance. VK apologised for calling the virtual meeting at such short notice. She explained that the rapidly rising number of COVID cases, particularly in the local area, meant that holding the planned meeting in Chard would have presented some challenges.
- 2) **Apologies:** See above.
- 3) **Minutes:** Annual General Meeting held 27th November 2020.
 - a) The minutes were noted by those in attendance and will be signed by the Chair at the earliest convenience.
 - b) Matters Arising – there were no matters arising.
- 4) **Absent Friends:** A pause for reflection led by VK, particularly Joan Raikes, Geoff Clark and Daphne Blake.
- 5) **Officer's Reports:**
 - a) **Chair – Mike Hewitson:** See AGM Pack for submitted report.
 - i) **Comments:** No questions were raised.
 - ii) **Treasurer – Mike Best:** See AGM Pack for submitted report. The Treasurer shared his report and gave a commentary about it, including furlough for Thomas and election expenditure.
Comments: A question was asked about election expenses. The Treasurer deferred this question to TG for a response. TG informed the members that a minimum of £30k would be expected, with between £40k and £50k being ideal.
 - b) **Membership and Branch Liaison Committee Chair – Oliver Patrick:** See AGM Pack for submitted report. OP referred to his submitted report reproduced in the AGM Pack.
 - i) **Comments:** OP expanded on his report, that across the party, membership had dropped by 27 percent, however in Yeovil our membership had only dropped by about 9 percent.
 A question was asked about your engagement, particularly with colleges and universities, there was a need to bring in young blood. OP responded that it was ongoing but challenging.
 - c) **Events and Fundraising Committee Chair – Nic Clark:** See AGM Pack for submitted report.
 - i) **Comments:** NC, now standing down from the role, emphasised that we needed someone to be able to commit to it. NC had been working with TG to raise equipment monies and that grants were available for BAME & LGBTQ+ for example.
 NC was thanked for everything she had done while in the role.
 - d) **Campaigns – Adam Dance:** See AGM Pack for submitted report



- i) **Comment:** AD added to his report that Lloyds Bank were closing in Crewkerne. A petition was being started. AD informed the AGM that approval papers were arriving next week and mentioned the 6th of November training event.
OP asked about out delivery network and what was happening about the tabloid? AD responded that the tabloid was an ideal opportunity to get our delivery networks up and running again.
Rob Stickland informed the AGM that he had been attending a convener brief. He had carried on from where Gareth had started. Quite a lengthy process to get it sorted. Ended up approval papers going up to HQ and ALDC, so result should withstand the test of time. Get approvals paperwork out to members. Approvals panels will take place during November.

6) **Political Reports:**

- a) **South Somerset District Council Report – Val Keitch:** See AGM Pack for submitted report.
 - i) **Comments:** VK added that she expected to see the Structural Change Order next week, but it has been delayed. But with new Secretary of State, Michael Gove, everything has been held up. Chard leisure centre was due to open in November at a cost of £20m, a great investment in Chard. A question was asked about County Leader asking for elections to be delayed until 2023. VK responded that he did ask, but districts said no because they didn't think it was right. Another question was asked about the likely number of new County Councillors being 90 for the new council. VK responded that they pushed back on the government's preferred 70 and asked for over 100, but maybe end up with between 85-90.
- b) **Somerset County Council Report: Jane Lock stood down from the Executive Committee during 2021, therefore no report was submitted prior to the AGM.**
 - i) **Comments:** A question was asked about the possibility of County elections being delayed until September. VK responded that elections had already been delayed as they should have happened in 2021.
- c) **Westminster Report – Cathy Bakewell:** See AGM Pack for submitted report.
 - i) **Comments:** Cathy has moved out of the constituency. VK wanted to thank Cathy for all of the work she had done for the county, as well as the constituency and the local party in particular. As the person who recruited her, she will miss her greatly.

7) **Motions to AGM:**

- a) Creation of role Diversity Offer on Executive. See AGM Pack for full details of the proposal.
 - i) **Comments:** The motion was proposed by VK and Seconded by AD.
A short discussion was held by members about the role.
The motion was passed unanimously.

The Chair arrived at this point and conducted the meeting thereon.

8) **Topical briefing/any other urgent business:**

- a) Yeovil Office.
 - i) **Comments:** A short discussion was held about the future commitment to the Yeovil office. Members were asked to consider the future provision of an office in Yeovil. TG explained the reasoning and importance of holding on to the office. A member supported keeping the office until after the elections at least and then review.
The Chair surmised that the consensus was to keep the office.

9) **Election of Officers to the Executive Committee of the Constituency for 2022:** There were no contested positions and therefore the following people were duly elected to their positions without the need of a vote. Due to the nature of the COVID restrictions, nominations were accepted without Nominator or Secunder signatures (in absentia). Nominees were asked to ensure that those members named as Nominator and Secunder were happy to do so prior to the AGM.

- a) **President – Paul Maxwell.** Proposed by AD, Seconded by MH.
- b) **Honourable Vice-President(s) – Vacant.** No applications were received for this position.
- c) **Chair – Mike Hewitson.**
- d) **Vice-Chair – Oliver Patrick.**
- e) **Secretary – Brian Hamilton.**



- f) **Treasurer – Mike Best.**
- g) **Data Officer – Vacant.** No applications were received for this position.
- h) **Membership and Branch Liaison sub-committee Chair – Gareth Thomas.**
- i) **Campaigns sub-committee Chair – Adam Dance.**
- j) **Events and Fundraising sub-committee Chair – Vacant.** No applications were received for this position.
- k) **Youth and Student representative – Vacant.** No applications were received for this position.
- l) **Diversity Officer – Vacant.** No applications were received for this position.
The following elected positions were omitted from the published agenda but included in the AGM by consensus.
- m) **Executive Members without Portfolio:**
 - i) **Vacant.** No applications were received for this position.
 - ii) **Vacant.** No applications were received for this position.

10) **Yeovil Constituency Liberal Democrats Forward Plan:**

- a) **Next YCLD Executive Meeting:** 11th November 2021
- b) **Next YCLD Constituency Meeting:** 28th January 2022
- c) **Next YCLD Annual General Meeting:** 28th October 2022

The Chair thanked those for attending and emphasises that the next few months were going to be critical to not only our future, but the future of Somerset. Please encourage everyone and anyone to get involved. We can win these elections we have a great set of policies and candidates. Please get out and knock-on doors and dig deep.

11) **Draws:**

- a) **No Draws were held at this time.**

The Chair thanked those for attending and the meeting was closed by him at: 9.45pm.



5. Officer Reports

5.1 Chair's Report.



As we entered this year we had a single clear and crucial goal: to win the Unitary Election. The party has had a strong base in local government since 1983, maintaining control by the thinnest of margins (1 vote) in the 2015 District Elections. So it was absolutely vital for us to do well in these elections.

After our historic win in the Neroche (District) by-election I happened to find myself driving Sir Ed Davey to our campaign launch event in Norton Sub Hamdon, he asked me if we could replicate the by-election result in the Unitary election, I told him that not only could we do, but that we were going to do it. To win 61 out of 110 seats was at the upper end of expectations, but could only have happened with the hard work and dedication of the whole team, from the part time leafleteer to the exhausted candidates we showed that Lib Dems can not only win, but win in places where we've never won such as unseating the Head of Tory HQ's 'Anti Lib Dem Unit'.

Although we have elected a brilliant slate of hardworking local Councillors, I would like to take a minute to thank all of the unsuccessful candidates - your time will come. We want to embed a Lib Dem majority for many elections to come, so it is important to identify potential candidates for the next election early, to help train and expose them to community politics.

The new Lib Dem Council, under the leadership of Cllr Bill Revans will seek to demonstrate Lib Dem values, and will put people at the centre of our decision making. Already we have seen Children's Services rated as 'Good' by Ofsted, for the first time in many years. There will be challenges, not least the smooth integration of five Authorities into a single functioning organisation, balancing the budget, and ensuring that the new Council is not seen as remote from local communities.

Our next challenge is to capitalise on the failure of Somerset Conservatives, to ensure that we return a Lib Dem MP to Westminster for the first time since 2015. This is absolutely possible as we demonstrated when we won the Tiverton and Honiton by-election in June. Teams from Yeovil Constituency played a pivotal role in canvassing, delivering leaflets and on polling day. We are desperate to get the Selection process for the next PPC underway as soon as possible to give them as much time to establish themselves as the clear and undisputed challenger to the Conservatives. Sadly getting this contest underway has proven challenging due to both a lack of approved Returning Officers in the party, and organisational issues at Western Counties. We continue to raise this issue at the highest levels within the



party. We have already prepared the documents we will need to commence the selection, and have done all that we can to ensure that we are ready as soon as the RO is appointed.

My aims for Yeovil Liberal Democrats in the coming year are:

1. To complete the PPC selection process.
2. To ensure that we are financially sustainable going in to the next General Election.
3. To reorganise the Party's internal structures to ensure that campaigning is happening regularly.

Finally, I would like to thank all members of the 2022 Yeovil Constituency Executive who have given countless hours to try and move the Constituency forward, often under difficult circumstances. Without their dedication and hard work there is no way that we could have delivered such a fantastic result in May. I believe our best days as a local party lie ahead of us, with the opportunity to elect a Liberal Democrat MP who will fight for the people of Yeovil Constituency, and help to throw the Conservatives out of office for a generation.

Yours sincerely,

Mike Hewitson
Chair, Yeovil Liberal Democrats
October 2022



5.2 Treasurer's Report.



A verbal report will be delivered at the meeting.

Please see accompanying cashflow report for January – September 2022.

Mike Best
Treasurer, Yeovil Liberal Democrats
October 2022



Cash Flow Report 2022 January – September

Receipts In		%
Membership subscriptions	90.00	.13
Councillors' Contributions	24770.68	35.26
Grants and donations	11245.16	16.01
Fundraising -Zero 36/250 Club	1073.50	1.53
Branch/Constituency Income	32738.37	46.60
Fundraising	0.00	0.00
Payments from HQ	336.35	0.48
Total	70,254.06	100.00

Payments Out

Fundraising	1.60	0.00
Membership subs to HQ	0.00	0.00
Rent	6300.00	7.39
Energy costs	693.29	0.81
Telecom costs	479.76	0.56
Office Costs, copying etc	9777.56	11.46
Postage	852.00	1.00
Meeting Expenses	291.00	0.34
Agent Election payments	7202.14	8.44
Organiser	22595.34	26.49
Campaigning	36810.92	43.16
Fees to Lib Dem HQ	288.00	0.34
Total	85,291.61	100.00

Opening Balance £ 30,493.82

Receipts less Payments **-£ 15,037.55**

Closing Balance **£ 15,456.27**



5.3 Branch Liaison and Membership Secretary



This position is currently vacant.

A verbal report may be given at the AGM.

Position Vacant

Branch Liaison and Membership Sub-Committee Chair

October 2022

5.4 Events and Fundraising Sub-Committee Chair Report



Opening remarks to be inserted.

Main body to be inserted.

Judith Morris

Events and Fundraising Sub-Committee Chair

October 2022

5.5 Campaigns Sub-Committee Chair Report



Opening remarks to be inserted.

Main body to be inserted.

Adam Dance
Campaigns Sub-Committee Chair
October 2022



6. Political Reports

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



Opening remarks to be inserted.

Main body to be inserted.

Cllr Val Keitch
Leader South Somerset District Council
October 2022

6.2. Somerset County Council – Cllrs Adam Dance & Jo Roundell Greene



As you may imagine, it has been a very busy year for the Liberal Democrats across Local Government here in Somerset, not least of all taking over Somerset County Council after more than a dozen years of Conservative mismanagement.

We are still picking over the debris and working hard to deliver a Somerset Council worthy of the name and fit for the people of Somerset. Below are some of the recent highlights.

Children and Young People’s Services celebrates ‘Good’ Ofsted rang

Somerset’s Children and Young People’s Services have been rated as “Good” across the board, in a review by the national regulator Ofsted. They looked in detail at the services provided to those in care, care leavers and children and families with a social worker.

Ofsted were particularly impressed with the Council’s commitment to listening to children and families to improve services.



Finance Update

The County Council's budget is under considerable pressure due to a number of factors:

- national picture of inflation, soaring energy costs, contract costs and pay awards. The County Council's energy bill, before increases, was £4.2million and is expected to increase by up to £5million per annum
- lasting effects of the pandemic on adults and children who now need more support from Social Care, but councils will not receive any further Covid grants from Government
- a 'hot' labour market with difficulties recruiting in key areas of council statutory responsibilities, including social care, legal services and planning
- Local Government Reorganisation – the move to a single Somerset Council – with considerable pressure on staff to reduce projected overspends at this time of additional work preparing the structure of the new Council.

Somerset saved more than 130,000 tonnes of carbon last year

Somerset recycled and reused 149,980 tonnes of waste, pushing its recycling rate up from 52.4% to 56.2%. This is the highest it has ever been, showing how the Recycle More programme is bearing fruit.

This equates to 133,000 tonnes of carbon saved – the same as taking 51,409 cars off the road for a year – and is up 10,000 tonnes on the previous year's figures. Tonnages of plastics have soared to 5,771, up from 4,359, mostly due to the introduction of plastic pots, tubs and trays in the Recycle More kerbside collections.

An impressive 97.2% of material stayed in the UK to be turned into new products and packaging, including 99.4% of plastics.

Insight and collaboration at Somerset Climate Business Summit 2022

More than 60 local businesses joined the Somerset Business Climate Summit 2022 held at Queens College in Taunton on Wednesday 21st September.

Over the course of the morning, delegates heard from Somerset businesses how they have successfully reduced their carbon footprints, while deriving other benefits and reducing costs in their business. The speakers provided insights on a wide range of topics, demonstrating how businesses can reach carbon net-zero and the steps taken to be more sustainable and environmentally friendly.



Guest speakers came from businesses large and small including Thatcher's Cider, My Carbon Coach, The Field Works, South West Manufacturing Advisory Service, Trees for Good Causes, and New Leaf Design. Topics discussed included, the easiest ways for businesses to cut carbon, what Net Zero means, the journey to B Corp, where a company puts sustainable practice first, and sustainable agriculture and manufacturing.

Somerset's Public Health Nursing Team celebrate 'Good' inspection from CQC

Somerset County Council's Public Health Nursing (Health Visiting and School Nursing) team has been rated as 'Good' across all sections in a recent review of the service by inspectors at the Care Quality Commission (CQC).

The service provides community care, delivered by health visitors and school nurses across the county of Somerset. This inspection marks their first since its transfer from the NHS to Somerset County Council's Public Health in 2019.

Inspectors observed staff demonstrating a caring and responsive approach with parents and young people. The report also recognised the efforts of the workforce to maintain high quality care and safeguarding, commenting on their ability to understand how to protect children and young people from abuse.

HAVE YOUR SAY

Local Community Networks (LCNs) - A consultation regarding the development of the much-anticipated Local Community Networks is running until 17th October. Somerset Council will cover a very large geographical area and needs local committees of the council where voices can be heard, partners brought together, and decisions taken with the benefit of local knowledge and experience.

The consultation will seek the views of parish, town & city councils, partner organisations and individuals, on the function, form and name for these committees. The responses will form an important part of the recommendations for the Somerset County Council Executive and Full Council.

SEND provision in Somerset - Somerset County Council, NHS Somerset and Somerset Parent Carer Forum are inviting families, as well as school leads and education and health professionals, to join a webinar this October to help shape the future of Special Educational Needs and/or Disability (SEND) in Somerset.

The partnership is in the process of developing a Somerset SEND strategy for the next three years. This will outline the focus areas and action points that will inform the development of our services.



Have Your Say on Somerset’s Economic Future - Residents, businesses and other groups are being asked to have their say on what the economic future holds for Somerset.

The Somerset Economic Futures project has been commissioned by Somerset County Council, Mendip District Council, Sedgemoor District Council, Somerset West and Taunton Council and South Somerset District Council. From April 2023, the five councils will be replaced by the new unitary Somerset Council. This consultation will help develop evidence and insight into our economic future, in advance of preparing an economic strategy for the new organisation.

Somerset’s Future Landscapes (ends 21st October) - Opinions are being sought from experts and nonexperts alike. From people who work with trees every day, to those who enjoy walking in woodland occasionally and everyone else in between!

The consultation will inform a long-term Tree Strategy for Somerset to ensure planting and woodland management is fit for the future and supports the area’s ecology, landscape and its people.

Cllrs Adam Dance & Jo Roundell Greene
Liberal Democrat Group Somerset County Council
October 2022

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



I am not sure there is much I can tell you about what is happening at Westminster that you cannot all see and hear for yourselves on the television and radio - you could not make it up. The accepted wisdom in politics is “if you are in a hole, stop digging”. The current Tory leadership does not seem to know this and certainly the shortest incumbent in recent history as Prime Minister does not appear to understand what Leadership is all about. It is not about dictatorship and stamping your foot to get your own way. It is about collaboration, team building and patience – skills sadly lacking from both her and her Cabinet.

We are where we are, and the damage done to the reputation of the country on the international stage is devastating. The UK is the laughingstock of the world. Internally the Tory Party is on self-destruct and are unlikely to be able to recover for some time to come. As my teenage hero, Bob Dylan sang “to everything there is a season”. Now is not the Tories, but it could well be the Lib Dems. Campaigners around the country report when



door-knocking people want to talk to them; they want to know what we stand for; our views on the Government; they are looking to see whether we could be a better alternative. We should be positive and ambitious in all our campaigning. There is a great deal to play for. Opposition Parties do not win elections alone - Administrations lose them. In the coming months it will be a combination of which could see us making considerable gains in Parliamentary seats.

Outside of the chaos around the Government Cabinet, Bills are still being introduced (some very delayed) which are restrictive, right wing and move the country more towards an authoritarian autocracy than a democracy. Current Bills being debated or shortly to come forward with the Member of our Party leading on them, are:-

- The Energy Prices Bill (not to be confused with the Energy Bill) – Robin Teverson
- The Northern Ireland Protocol Bill – Alison Suttie
- Universal Credit (Removal of Two Child Limit) Bill – Barbara Janke
- Seafarers Wages Bill – Ros Scott and Jenny Randerson
- Procurement Bill – Chris Fox
- Social Housing (Regulation) Bill – Kath Pinnock
- Product Security and Telecommunications Infrastructure Bill – Tim Clement Jones
- Health and Social Care Levy (Repeal) Bill – Sal Brinton and Susan Kramer

The Public Order Bill has been through the Commons and now comes to the Lords. This is an offshoot of the Police, Crime and Public Order Bill which Government tried to amend in its passage, gave up and are now bringing in a new Bill. Brian Paddick is our Home Affairs Spokesperson and will be taking this dire piece of legislation through. I attach an extract from the Minister's briefing letter, which demonstrates that freedom of speech is about to become a thing of the past. Yes, it is inconvenient when people hold us up when they protest. But we should be protecting our and their right to protest at all costs.

The Bill includes the following key measures:

1. A new criminal offence of locking-on and going equipped to lock-on, criminalising the tactic of individuals intentionally causing pandemonium by locking themselves on to busy roads, buildings, or scaffolding.
2. A new criminal offence of tunnelling, being present in a tunnel, and going equipped to tunnel, criminalising the dangerous and reckless protest tactic we have seen being deployed.
3. A new criminal offence of obstructing major transport works. This will cover any behaviours which obstruct or interfere with the construction or maintenance of significant transport projects such as HS2.



4. A new criminal offence for interfering with key national infrastructure. This covers any behaviour which prevents or significantly delays the operation of key national infrastructure, such as airports, railways, oil refineries, and printing presses.
5. Extended stop and search powers (both suspicion-led and suspicion-less) for police to search for and seize articles related to protest-related offences.
6. A new preventative court order – the Serious Disruption Prevention Order – targeting protesters who are determined to repeatedly inflict disruption on the public
7. A power for a Secretary of State to bring proceedings in relation to protest activity which may cause serious disruption or have a serious adverse impact on public safety

There is a mood in Parliament, especially on our Lords benches of deep depression at the general tenure of the legislation we are asked to debate and pass. We, along with others, bring forward amendments to limit the harm caused. We call votes and votes with others to get amendments passed. If our tactics are right, we are successful. These amendments then go to the Commons where the Government Whip means there is no debate at all on the subject matter, the amendments are rejected and we are no further forward.

A new Prime Minister is essential, as is a General Election. But the likelihood of the present administration calling one when they know they will suffer very heavy losses, is unlikely to happen unless they are absolutely forced into it.

Keep up the good work on the ground. Work closely together with your colleagues in the other constituencies and we could well see a clean sweep in Yeovil and neighbouring seats when the GE does eventually arrive. Start working for it now and we will be victorious.

Baroness Cathy Bakewell

House of Lords

October 2022



7. Item 7: Motion Proposal – To adopt the new ‘Model Constitution for Local Parties’ (2022), with effect from the 1st of January 2023.

- 6.1. **Propose:** That this Annual General Meeting 2022 (AGM 2022) agrees to adopt the new ‘Model Constitution for Local Parties’ as proposed by the English Council in August 2022 and to come into force from the 1st of January 2023.
- 6.2. In August 2022, the Chair was notified by David Allworthy, Administrator for the Liberal Democrats in England, that a new ‘Model Constitution for Local Parties’ had been drawn up by the last English Council.
- 6.3. This new Model Constitution was necessarily produced to account for changes the Federal Party had made to its Constitution and changes to the legal and electoral law since the last Model Constitution was published.
- 6.4. Any changes or adjustments we wish to make to account for local circumstances will need to be approved by our Region. Otherwise, this version of the ‘Local Party Model Constitution’ will come into force as the default constitution for our Local Party on the 1st of January 2023.



8. Item 8: Yeovil Office Presentation by Working Group

- 7.1. **Propose:** At the 3rd Quarter Constituency meeting, a Working Group was established to look into the and evaluate the continued running of the Yeovil Office at Church Street Yeovil.
- 7.2. This report has been prepared for presentation at the AGM for debate and consideration by this Annual General Meeting.
- 7.3. **Report to the Yeovil LD exec relating to the T&F group set up earlier this year with the following remit:**

'A short life Task and Finish Group (TFG) to look at Communications Strategy, particularly membership communications, office management and having permanent presence in the Yeovil office. The TFG to report back to the Executive in September with a view to making a presentation to the AGM in October.'

In base terms:

(Cost of building PA + staffing) must be less than (Annual VALUE to Yeovil LibDems)

The group attended the Yeovil office on two occasions in September 2022 to assess the state of:

- The building structure.
- Computer hardware.
- Communications systems.
- Office furniture.

The telephones, internet access and core systems are operational. Three of the four rooms are tidy and can be used successfully by members, Councillors, and supporters. With the ability to open to the public on set days.

Phase 1. The first objective of the T&F group was to identify the overall costs for the premises and the baseline costs per annum of operating the Yeovil office. This will be followed by refreshing the protocols of the office management and attendance roster. Finally, we would propose to the executive committee a practical process for initial and ongoing two-way communications with the membership.

Based on the current year to date figures we have arrived at an annual cost of operating the building. Providing this is a manageable expense for the constituency membership, we can move on to the management and volunteer staffing of the premises for the foreseeable future.



*** The annual cost for the premises is between £10,000 and £12,000 per annum – which does not include any campaigning and administration costs. ***

The executive regularly reviews the viability based on the above annual cost and membership engagement, to continue keeping this office in Yeovil

Over the last few years, the Yeovil Constituency office has become increasingly unused, although utilised for campaign literature and production it is currently a little unloved and now in need of being brought back to life, to be the vibrant hub for the Yeovil Liberal Democrats.

To achieve phase one, we need the following help which must be an ongoing process:

- Set up a sub-committee of members to assist with running the premises
- Clear redundant campaign materials from outbuilding for recycling collection
- Repair and renew outbuilding
- Clear, tidy, organise and rejuvenate the Raikes room for meetings and the visiting public.

The above tasks would be a good opportunity for a team of volunteers to come together and revitalise the office ready for the inevitable and crucial General Election to return a Yeovil Lib Dem MP.

Cllrs Ray Buckler & Emily Pearlstone
Task & Finish Working Group
October 2022



9. Meeting Calendar

10 Nov	<i>Executive Committee Meeting – via Zoom UFN*</i>
08 Dec	<i>Executive Committee Meeting – via Zoom UFN*</i>
2023	
12 Jan	<i>Executive Committee Meeting – via Zoom UFN*</i>
27 Jan	Yeovil Constituency Liberal Democrats Q1 Constituency Meeting Time: 7pm Venue: Stoke-sub-Hamdon
09 Feb	<i>Executive Committee Meeting – via Zoom UFN*</i>
09 Mar	<i>Executive Committee Meeting – via Zoom UFN*</i>
13 Apr	<i>Executive Committee Meeting – via Zoom UFN*</i>
28 Apr	Yeovil Constituency Liberal Democrats Q2 Constituency Meeting Time: 7pm Venue: tbc
11 May	<i>Executive Committee Meeting – via Zoom UFN*</i>
08 Jun	<i>Executive Committee Meeting – via Zoom UFN*</i>
13 Jul	<i>Executive Committee Meeting – via Zoom UFN*</i>
28 Jul	Yeovil Constituency Liberal Democrats Q3 Constituency Meeting Time: 7pm Venue: tbc
10 Aug	<i>Executive Committee Meeting – via Zoom UFN*</i>
14 Sep	<i>Executive Committee Meeting – via Zoom UFN*</i>
12 Oct	<i>Executive Committee Meeting – via Zoom UFN*</i>
27 Oct	Yeovil Constituency Liberal Democrats Annual General Meeting Time: 7pm Venue: tbc
09 Nov	<i>Executive Committee Meeting – via Zoom UFN*</i>
14 Dec	<i>Executive Committee Meeting – via Zoom UFN*</i>
2024	
11 Jan	<i>Executive Committee Meeting – via Zoom UFN*</i>
26 Jan	Yeovil Constituency Liberal Democrats Q1 Constituency Meeting Time: 7pm Venue: tbc

*** Please note:** Executive Committee meeting dates and venues are for indicative purposes only and may be subject to change by the Executive Committee due to availability and external commitments. Dates and venues will be kept up to date as the situation dictates. Members will be informed of any alteration as and when these occur.





LIBERAL DEMOCRATS