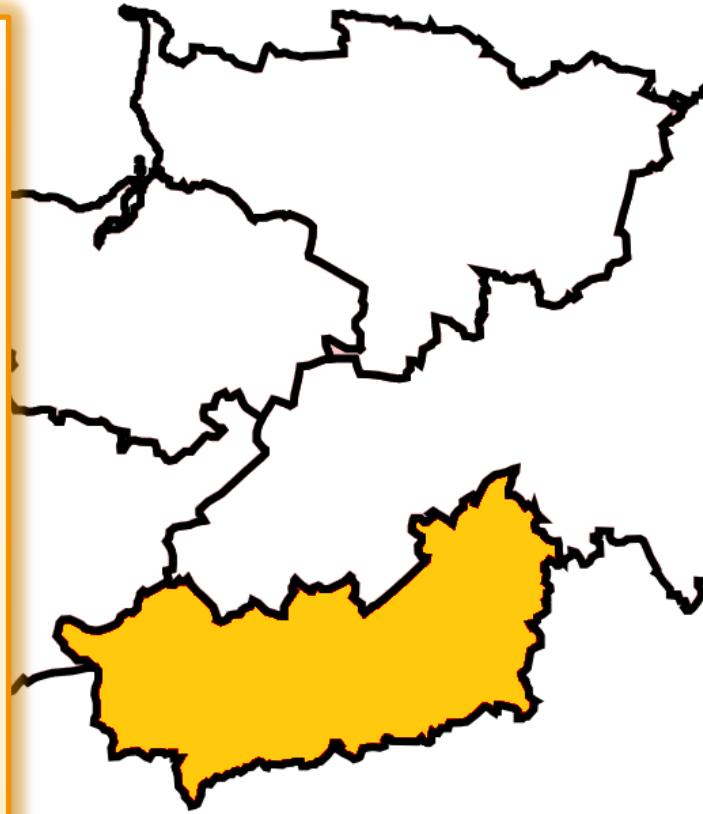


# Q1 Constituency Meeting

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January 2023

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The Yeovil  
Liberal Democrats

Liberal  
Democrats 



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# Quarter 1 Constituency Meeting 2023

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# The Yeovil Liberal Democrats

© 2023 Yeovil Constituency Liberal Democrats

Revised: 2021

Version: 1.1 – Treasurer Report added

Future meeting dates on July meeting



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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.”***

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# Your Invitation

Dear Member

## Yeovil Constituency Liberal Democrats: Quarter 1 Constituency 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 your First Quarterly Constituency Meeting (Q1CM) of 2023.

**When: 7pm Friday the 27<sup>th</sup> January 2023**

**Where: Stoke Sub Hamdon Memorial Hall, West St, Stoke-sub-Hamdon, TA14 6PZ**

Accompanying this invitation is your agenda pack, containing your officer's reports, political reports, as well as the minutes of the previous Constituency Meeting.

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

The Constituency Meeting gives all members the opportunity to receive the quarterly reports from your Executive and pose questions. Your Constituency Meeting is a wonderful opportunity to meet fellow Liberal Democrats 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.

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

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

With kind regards



Rob

Rob Stickland

Secretary | Yeovil Constituency Liberal Democrats

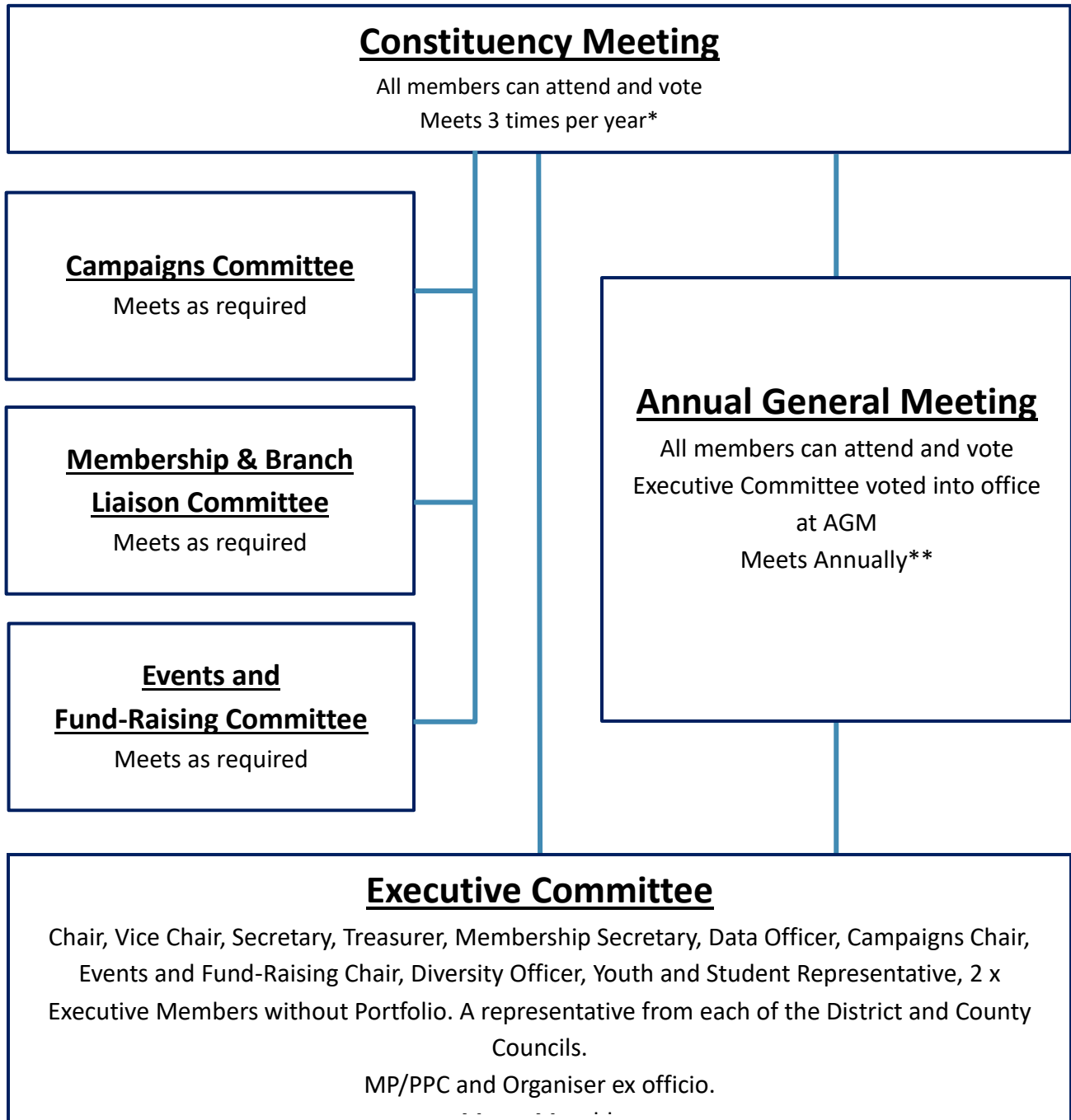
**RSVP:** 33 Eastville, Yeovil, Somerset, BA21 4JD

**Tel:** 07850 264406 | **E-mail:** secretary@yeovil-libdems.org.uk



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# Constituency Arrangements



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

\*\* Between 1<sup>st</sup> October and 30<sup>th</sup> 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 relating to Constituency Meeting held: 22<sup>nd</sup> July 2022 (Section 2).
4. Officer's Reports (Section 3):
  - a. Chair – Mike Hewitson.
  - b. Treasurer – Mike Best
  - c. Membership and Branch Liaison Committee Chair – Emily Pearlstone
  - d. Events and fundraising Committee Chair – Officer Vacancy
  - e. Campaign Committee Chair – Adam Dance
5. Political Reports (Section 4):
  - a. SSDC/SCC Report – Cllr Val Keitch
  - b. Westminster Report – tbc
6. Motions (Section 5) – None have been proposed.
7. Topical Briefing/Any Other Urgent Business – Parliamentary Spokesperson and Prospective Parliamentary Candidate (PPC) - Chair
8. YCLD Forward Plan (Section 6):
  - a. Next YCLD Executive Meeting: **8<sup>th</sup> February 2023 – Zoom**
  - b. Next YCLD Constituency Meeting: **28<sup>th</sup> April 2023 – venue tbc.**
  - c. Next YCLD Annual General Meeting: **27<sup>th</sup> October 2023 – venue tbc.**
9. The draws.



## 2. Minutes: 22<sup>nd</sup> July 2022



Yeovil Constituency Liberal Democrats  
Constituency Meeting - Minutes - DRAFT  
Held: 22<sup>nd</sup> July 2022  
Venue: Seavington Millennium Hall

**The below minutes are in accordance with the published agenda for the Yeovil Constituency Liberal Democrats (YCLD) Constituency Meeting with additional items inserted and noted where relevant.**

### Attendance

**Officers Present:** Mike Hewitson (MH) Constituency Chair, Oliver Patrick (OP) Constituency Vice-Chair, Brian Hamilton (BH) Constituency Secretary, Adam Dance (AD) Campaigns Committee Chair, Judith Morris (JM) Fundraising Committee Chair, David Woan (DW) Honorary Vice-President.

**Officers Apologies:** Paul Maxwell (PM) Constituency President, Mike Best (MB) Constituency Treasurer, Karl Gill (KG) Member Without Portfolio, Thomas Gravatt (TG) Constituency Organiser, Val Keitch (VK) SSDC Leader, Emily Pearlstone (EP) Member Without Portfolio, Rob Stickland (RS) Honorary Vice-President

**Member attendees:** Jason Baker, John Bowman, Ray Buckler, Gale Coleshill, Penny Dawson, Jo Dawson, James Draper, Lawrence Doye, Di Frost, Carol Hamilton, Jenny Kenton, Elaine Morris, Martin Roundell Greene, Peter Seib, Chris Smith, Mike Stanton, Gareth Thomas.

**Member apologies were received from:** Barbara Appleby, Stephanie Bailey, David Bourn, Jill Denham, Peter Gubbins, Nora Hutson, Chris James, Tony Lock, Claire Margetts, Roy Margetts, Sally McConnell, Christopher Panton, Jane Pearce, Liz Pike, Jo Roundell Greene, Jeny Snell, Nick Speakman Sue Weeks, Myles Wickstead.

- 1) The Chair called the meeting to order at 7pm and thanked those present for attending the meeting.
- 2) **Apologies:** The above apologies were received and given (Note: The meeting was quorate (minimum number of members to be present is 21 (or 20% of membership). 23 (7 officers) were recorded as present)).
- 3) **Minutes:** Quarter 1 Virtual Constituency Meeting held: 28<sup>th</sup> January 2022  
**Comment:**  
No comments were made, nor matters arising.
  - a) The minutes were noted and signed by the Chair.
- 4) **Officer's Reports:**
  - a) **Chair – Mike Hewitson:** See agenda pack for submitted report.  
**Comment:** The Chair introduced his report by emphasizing the good results achieved at the County/Unitary Council elections held in May. The Chair thanked Thomas Gravatt for all his work as organiser to keep the momentum going and achieve the success we deserved. This was an excellent opportunity and a great platform from which to build and show what LibDems can do. The Chair moved on to the issue of PPC selection and what we need to do. The important thing is that we need a Returning Officer (RO) from outside the constituency. There is a shortage of ROs and 'e-administrators' and ROs can only run one selection at a time. Guy Adams (Regional Administrator) is the person charged with appointing ROs.



The Chair and others have prepared all the necessary documents and they are prepared to go out as soon as an RO is appointed.

Questions were taken from the floor:

A suggestion was made about other documents that could be produced ready for the PPC selection.

Comments were made about regional priorities regarding PPC selections, getting out and recruiting/talking to people – Tiverton and Honiton was a great example of what can be done – we will need to do the same, with fewer resources. A comment was also made about resident's surveys with no prohibition and plenty of templates to call on, this was no problem if people wanted to do them.

Questions were asked about the availability of the RISO and a Newsletter for members.

Other comments from the floor included Postal Votes, communication with members, especially new members, employing an office person to look after the office.

The position of Organiser was clarified by the Chair in response to a question, with the Chair explaining that we now shared Thomas, and his costs, with S&F.

A constituency strategy re local comms was suggested.

A proposal was put forward to look at office communication and office management, to report back in September. The proposal was made by Adam Dance and Seconded by Gail Coleshill.

Proposal:

**'To establish a short-life Task and Finish Group (TFG) to look at Communications Strategy, particularly membership communications, office management and having a 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.'**

The Constituency Meeting voted in favour of the proposal.

The following members indicated their willingness to form the TFG – Ray Buckler, Elaine Morris, Brian Hamilton and Gail Coleshill. Meetings to be arranged.

- b) **Treasurer:** The Treasurer was not present at the meeting. See agenda pack for submitted report and annual cashflow summary.

**Comment:** From the floor a member expressed concern about a red figure, another member commented about the lack of fund raising due to Covid. The Chair pointed out that as a constituency looking for a PPC, we need to have an annual target of £100k.

A short discussion was held about various fundraising initiatives.

- c) **Membership & Branch Liaison Committee Chair: Position Vacant:** See agenda pack for submitted report from Gareth Thomas.

**Comment:** GT gave a statement to the meeting explaining why he had chosen to step down as Membership Secretary. In the statement he named a member of the Executive.

The member of the Executive responded to the statement.

The Chair reminded the meeting that we need to focus on winning the constituency back for the Liberal Democrats and come together. In doing this we need to find new members.

- d) **Events and Fundraising Committee Chair:** Judith Morris (JM): See agenda pack for submitted report.

**Comment:** A short discussion was held about various fund-raising activities that can be initiated now we are beginning to emerge from Covid.

- e) **Campaigns Committee Chair: Adam Dance (AD):** See agenda pack for submitted report.

**Comment:** AD introduced his report and drew attention to the fact that, in some areas, if it hadn't been for the Green Party, we could have won. He went on to thank all the deliverers, door knockers and volunteers who helped in the campaign and the candidates for standing.

AD talked briefly about the successful Brympton by-election which saw Barbara Appleby returned, replacing the late Alan Smith. A good candidate and where people from all over Somerset came to help.

AD told the meeting that there was a by-election happening in Mendip, all help welcomed.

AD also thanked all those who got involved in the Tiverton & Honiton by-election. It showed what Liberal Democrats can do when they put their mind to it. What seemed impossible, became possible because of everyone's efforts.



A short discussion was held about campaigning in general, including constituent communication, thankyou leaflets, boundary review, opposition parties, literature campaign.

5) Political Reports

- a) **SSDC Report – Val Keitch:** No report was submitted prior to the meeting.

**Comment:** VK was unable to attend the meeting and had asked Peter Seib, as deputy leader of SSDC to present on her behalf.

Peter explained to the meeting how busy it was now becoming at SSDC now the elections were out of the way and preparations were being made for the new Unitary Council in April next year. Things will only get worse and the officers were working hard to achieve success in the new Council.

The regenerations of Chard, Yeovil and Wincanton were touched on, as were 'Yeovil in Bloom'. The Street Scene teams were struggling due to Covid and illness throughout the authority and were being redeployed to help other areas.

Covid relief was available to businesses and details were on the website.

The Octagon theatre upgrade had reached another milestone and was ongoing.

Somerset Waste Partnership had received an award for their services.

A comment from the floor welcomed the Octagon upgrade but was concerned about the parking in the area.

- b) **SCC Report – Adam Dance:** See agenda pack for submitted report.

**Comment:** AD opened the discussion by providing the meeting with brief overview of where the unitary preparations were, including LCNs, financial pressures (£44m shortfall in budget due to inflation and energy costs), Adult Social Care, Ofsted reports, phosphates, cost of living, public transport.

OP updated on scrutiny for Children's Services and pointed out that Schools in Somerset were among the lowest funded in the country.

- c) **Westminster Report:** No report was submitted for this meeting.

**Comment:** A question was asked about the possibility of a by-election in Somerton and Frome. At the time of the meeting, this was not known.

- 6) **Motions:** No motions were brought to this meeting for consideration.

- 7) **Topical Briefings: Parliamentary Spokesperson and Prospective Parliamentary Candidate (PPC) – Chair.**

**Comment:** This subject was covered by the chair earlier in the meeting, see above.

- 8) **YCLD Forward Plan was noted including:**

- |                                      |  |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| a) Next YCLD Executive Meeting:      | <b>11<sup>th</sup> August 2022 – via Zoom</b>    |
| b) Next YCLD Constituency Meeting:   | <b>27<sup>th</sup> January 2023 – venue tbc.</b> |
| c) Next YCLD Annual General Meeting: | <b>28<sup>th</sup> October 2022 – venue tbc.</b> |

- 9) **Draws**

- a) No draws were conducted at this meeting. If people wanted to get involved they can do so through the office.
- b) OP thanked the chair for everything he had done over the last few months.

**The Chair thanked those for attending and the meeting was closed by him at 8.45pm**



## 3. Officer Reports

### 3.1 Chair's Report



I would like to take this opportunity to wish you a safe and happy 2023. We start this year with a greater degree of certainty than we have had for the last few years, we have elected 19 Unitary Councillors who will provide a strong Liberal Democrat voice for the next 4 years. With this stability and success comes some financial certainty for the Constituency about our income until 2027. This will allow the Constituency to plan and to build towards the next General Election.

We sadly said goodbye to our excellent organiser, Thomas Gravatt in December. Thomas has been involved in the 2019 District, 2019 General and 2022 Unitary Election campaigns as well as countless town by-elections, and has helped us to secure stunning success in Local Government. He may have single-handedly cut down a forest with a mountain of literature, but he has really helped us to deliver a strong and distinct local message. We would like to wish Thomas every success in the future as he and his fiancée Amy have just bought their first home together and have relocated to Southampton. We are about to commence the search for a new organiser, but there is no-one quite like Thomas. We have set up an online collection for Thomas, if you would like to contribute you can via: <https://www.giftround.co.uk/page/6392470a3bf0b>

The Boundary Commission has published its 2nd draft of the 2023 Parliamentary Boundary Review, which will see Yeovil Constituency escape largely unchanged. Hamdon ward (Norton and Stoke) is the only ward which will move into the new Constituency of Glastonbury and Somerton. Further details on this change will be communicated by the central party as the year goes on. There is no need for any member to do anything as the party has systems and processes in place to manage these changes. The outcome of this process is a good result for Yeovil, and most Somerset constituency parties are happy that the changes overall give the party the best possible platform for the next General Election. The Conservatives are not happy with these changes, but the Electoral Commission are unlikely to make any further substantive changes, although the names of Constituencies may change, it would be highly unlikely for wards to change at this stage.

The Parliamentary Selection process is underway (again) with a new Returning Officer, David Hollingsworth appointed in December to pick up the process. David has met with



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the Shortlisting Committee and has set out a timetable to the Candidates. This will take substantially longer than any of us would like but we have to follow the timetable to reduce the risk of an Appeal which could potentially put us back to the start all over again. You can be forgiven for likening this process to Snakes and Ladders, it is proving to be a major headache, but with the prospect of an early election now remote, it is more important to get the right candidate than to get a candidate right now. I've been working on this for over a year now, and I absolutely understand the frustration from members. I will be sending a separate note out to members on the subject of the Selection shortly.

Finally, please help us. We will be defending a Chard Town Council by-election in the next couple of months. It is vital that we defend solidly yellow territory against the Green Party. We will need to get regular canvassing and delivery sessions set up in the coming weeks. Please lend us a few hours to support our hard working Chard Town Council Group

Mike Hewitson  
Chair, Yeovil Liberal Democrats  
January 2023



### 3.2 Treasurer's Report



My apologies for not attending the meeting but I will be involved in a show that evening.

The figures below cover the last financial year (2022)

We started the year with an opening balance of £30493.80 and finished with a balance of £20732.42 which is an excellent result considering that we had a major election for the new Unitary Council during the year.

To go through the details, firstly on income

We still received £90.00 membership fees which the members had sent also to HQ but had not canceled their direct Debits which ended up as donations.

Councilor contributions £35737.54 represented 42.2% of the total income.

Grants and donations at £11682.81 (13.8%) were boosted by payments towards the election and contributions towards the new RISO machine.

Fundraising figure was a disappointing £1259.50 (1.49%).

Branch and Constituency income £35374.80 (41.77%) was made up of payments against printing/leaflets for other areas, part payment of our organiser with Somerton and Frome and a transfer of a wound up branch fund.

We received £539.64 (0.64%) from HQ against membership payments  
Totaling £84684.29.

Moving to our expenditure

The £1.60 was an account charge against a donation.

Rent on our Yeovil Office was £8400.00

Telecom cost were £718.46 covering the land line and wi-fi.

Energy Costs for Water gas and electricity were £992.87.

Office Costs were £10439.69 but this included 6K for the new RISO machine.

Postage costs were £1179.96

Meeting expenses of £291.00 (hall hires)

I passed £7202.14 to Brian our Agent for the election expenses.

We paid £28025.05 to our organizer but as I said earlier we split the cost for part of the year with Somerton and Frome.

Campaigning costs were £36810.92 but a large part of that was covered back to us by other constituencies especially as we ordered a Somerset wide leaflet which we distributed it via our Royal mail account.

Finally, we paid £384.00 in Fees to HQ

Totaling £94445.69





Moving forward we will benefit from not having an organiser in place at the moment and when we recruit a new one, we still hope to continue the part share of payment with S&F.

Councilor payments until March will include both SSDC and County but will make a significant drop when we move to a single Council from April.

With no large local elections for the next 4 years except bi-elections we must now focus on building funds towards the next General Election

<b>Cash Flow Report January - December 2022</b>		
	<b>Totals</b>	
		<b>%</b>
<b>Receipts In</b>		
<b>Membership subscriptions</b>	<b>90.00</b>	<b>0.11</b>
<b>Councillors' Contributions</b>	<b>35737.54</b>	<b>42.20</b>
<b>Grants and donations</b>	<b>11682.81</b>	<b>13.80</b>
<b>Fundraising -Zero 36 / 250 Club</b>	<b>1259.50</b>	<b>1.49</b>
<b>Branch/Constituency Income</b>	<b>35374.80</b>	<b>41.77</b>
<b>Payments from HQ</b>	<b>539.64</b>	<b>0.64</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>84684.29</b>	<b>100.00</b>
<b>Payments Out</b>		
<b>Fundraising/Donations</b>	<b>1.60</b>	<b>0.00</b>
<b>Rent</b>	<b>8400.00</b>	<b>8.89</b>
<b>Telecom costs</b>	<b>718.46</b>	<b>0.76</b>
<b>Energy Costs</b>	<b>992.87</b>	<b>1.05</b>
<b>Office Costs, copying etc</b>	<b>10439.69</b>	<b>11.05</b>
<b>Postage</b>	<b>1179.96</b>	<b>1.25</b>
<b>Meeting Expenses</b>	<b>291.00</b>	<b>0.31</b>
<b>Agent Election payments</b>	<b>7202.14</b>	<b>7.63</b>
<b>Organiser</b>	<b>28025.05</b>	<b>29.67</b>
<b>Campaigning</b>	<b>36810.92</b>	<b>38.98</b>
<b>Fees to Lib Dem HQ</b>	<b>384.00</b>	<b>0.41</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>94445.69</b>	<b>100.00</b>
<b>Opening Balance</b>	<b>30493.82</b>	
<b>Receipts less Payments</b>	<b>- 9,761.40</b>	
<b>Closing Balance</b>	<b>20,732.42</b>	

Mike Best  
 Treasurer, Yeovil Liberal Democrats  
 January 2023



### 3.3 Branch Liaison and Membership Secretary



Currently the constituency has 345 members and 61 supporters.

Work will continue on progressing the reorganisation of constituency branches to reinvigorate active branch executive committees allowing for better joint working and reducing the multiple unnecessary and unmanageable structures.

The need to increase the local membership and active networks across all branches is imperative as we move forward to the next general election. We cannot keep expecting to rely on people who have already committed a huge amount of time and energy over many years. The constituency continues to be extremely grateful for their high level of support. Finding and acquiring new helpers and members is a challenge and it will take all current members and their valuable knowledge to help in seeking them out within their own friend and social groups, family and even neighbours as well as looking to street stalls and door knocking as methods to encourage the growth of the constituencies active membership and delivery networks.

Over the next few months, I will be increasing the email contact with members and hope, with your help and passion to implement events that will begin to galvanise more engagement within the party membership along with the wider community.

**Emily Pearlstone**

**Branch Liaison and Membership Sub-Committee Chair**

**January 2023**



### 3.4 Events and Fundraising Sub-Committee Chair Report



Position Vacant – If you are interested in filling this position, please contact the Constituency Secretary.

### Campaigns Sub-Committee Chair Report



A verbal report may be given during the meeting.

Adam Dance  
Campaigns Committee Chair  
January 2023



## 4. Political Reports

### 4.1. South Somerset District Council/Somerset County Council – Cllr Val Keitch, Leader South Somerset District Council



A verbal report may be given during the meeting.

Cllr Val Keitch  
Leader South Somerset District Council  
January 2023

### 4.2. Westminster Report –



There is no planned Westminster Report for this meeting.

July 2022



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## 5. Motions

No motions submitted

**Update on motion from Annual General Meeting in October 2022:**

This was proposed by Jo Roundell Green and seconded by Gareth Thomas and supported by the AGM. The following people volunteered for the Working Group: Emily Pearlstone, Brian Hamilton, Jo Roundell Greene, Gareth Thomas and Sue Weeks.

Subsequent to the AGM, the following remit was provided to the group:

**The motion read:**

'To review the 2023 LP Model Constitution, as issued by the English Party, which takes effect from the 1st of January 2023, with the aim to recommend any amendments pertinent to the Yeovil Constituency Liberal Democrats to the New Executive Committee at its first meeting in January 2023 (currently scheduled for the 12th January 2023). Thereafter, for presentation at the next Constituency Meeting to be held on the 27<sup>th</sup> January 2023, with a view to applying to the Western Counties and English Party for approval.'

**Due to circumstances the working party has been unable to meet so will now present to the next constituency meeting in April.**



## 6. YCLD Meeting Calendar

### 2023

- 21 Jan            **1<sup>st</sup> Quarterly Yeovil Constituency Liberal Democrats Constituency Meeting**  
**Venue: Stoke Sub Hamdon Memorial Hall,**  
**Time: 7-9pm**
- 09 Feb            *Executive Committee Meeting – via Zoom UFN<sup>1</sup>*
- 09 Mar            *Executive Committee Meeting – via Zoom UFN*
- 13 Apr            *Executive Committee Meeting – via Zoom UFN*
- 28 Apr            **2<sup>nd</sup> Quarterly Yeovil Constituency Liberal Democrats Constituency Meeting**  
**Venue: tbc**  
**Time: 7-9pm**
- 11 or 25 May    *Executive Committee Meeting – via Zoom UFN*
- 08 or 22 Jun    *Executive Committee Meeting – via Zoom UFN*
- 13 or 27 Jul    *Executive Committee Meeting – via Zoom UFN*
- 28 Jul            **3<sup>rd</sup> Quarterly Yeovil Constituency Liberal Democrats Constituency Meeting**
- 10 or 24 Aug    *Executive Committee Meeting – via Zoom UFN*
- 14 or 28 Sep    *Executive Committee Meeting – via Zoom UFN*
- 12 Oct            *Executive Committee Meeting – via Zoom UFN*
- 27 Oct            **Yeovil Constituency Liberal Democrats Constituency Annual General Meeting**  
**Venue: tbc**  
**Time: 7pm**
- 09 or 23 Nov    *Executive Committee Meeting – via Zoom UFN*
- 14 or 28 Dec    *Executive Committee Meeting – via Zoom UFN*

### 2024

- 11 or 25 Jan    *Executive Committee Meeting – via Zoom UFN*
- 26 Jan            **1<sup>st</sup> Quarterly Yeovil Constituency Liberal Democrats Constituency Meeting**  
**Venue: tbc**  
**Time: 7-9pm**
- 08 or 22 Feb    *Executive Committee Meeting – via Zoom UFN*
- 14 or 28 Mar    *Executive Committee Meeting – via Zoom UFN*
- 11 or 25 Apr    *Executive Committee Meeting – via Zoom UFN*

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<sup>1</sup> Meeting dates in italics are provisional dates pending an updated decision by the Executive Committee.





**LIBERAL DEMOCRATS**