

Annexe A – Full Council 27 September 2023 – Public Questions

Annexe A – Public Questions	
Name of person submitting	Question
Alan Debenham	<p>Studying Paper A Referred to in Agenda Item 5, Table 5 Requirements from Earmarked Reserves shows a Total of £51.9 m is required to satisfy present and future Budget Needs including £23 m adjustment for 2022/23 recovery and a further £26.9 m for 2023/24 forecasts.</p> <p>Is this now concluded by stating that necessary protection of Council's Reserves position entails finding cuts to spending to the order of £51.9 m and if so when will the public be made aware of these cuts and their likely content?</p> <p>Response from the Deputy Leader of Council and Lead Member for Resources and Performance: Cllr Liz Leyshon</p>
Full written response	<p>Thank you for your question Mr Debenham. The Executive of Somerset Council agreed the Medium Term Financial Strategy in July of this year. Within that strategy there are 17 points of action, including Review of Reserves and work on the Medium Term Finance Plan that will include savings within the Revenue Budget covering the services provided to the people of Somerset. I can assure you that the work is far from concluded by allocation of General Fund reserves, that is an important early stage in the work towards the MTFP but as we all know reserves can only be spent once.</p> <p>Officers have been working throughout the summer months to confirm the achievement of savings from the current year 2023-24 budget, to establish where savings have not been achievable, and to work on bringing forward new savings.</p> <p>As Members of this Council we understand that this task becomes more and more difficult every year, particularly in these last two years, post-Covid, when inflation and rising interest rates have had such an impact on local authorities.</p> <p>Members of the Executive will again have difficult decisions to make on which of the savings will be brought forward as part of the budget setting process.</p>

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	<p>Within the savings, there will also need to be reduction in cost of borrowing, and rationalisation of assets so that disposals can play their part in creating greater income streams, particularly for transformational activity such as Local Government Reorganisation.</p> <p>All that work has commenced and you will see important decision papers at Executive through the autumn months, starting on 4th October, and Members will be fully engaged throughout by attendance at monthly briefings, at Scrutiny and Audit between now and February.</p>
Mr JC Woods	<p>At the full council meeting of 23 Sep 2022 recording point 1 hours 35 mins Councillor Leyshon was content to group all landlords as a corporate body and able to claim the additional Council tax on their Corporation tax bill. She described the situation in London of empty properties gaining value with no occupants. What Councillor Leyshon failed to mention, as I indicated in my email below that no consultation was taken up with local Letting Agents and private landlords nor, the implication of small bills being raised with ongoing disputes between SCC, Tenants, Landlords and the cost to the Council. She commented that the Corporation Tax "was mentioned by one of her colleagues" it seems Council business is now conducted by throw away remarks of Councillor Layshon colleagues. Councillor Leyshon has been unable to provide any evidence of this suggestion of Corporation Tax and how it applies in Somerset when her reference was to London properties.</p> <p>Councillor Leyshon was tasked to rationalise what discounts the previous councils provided instead, she has with no or minimal consultation, she has grouped private landlords by the same " Demonised Brush " of property speculators based in London and holiday home owners</p> <p>My question is that Councillor Leyshon has allowed her personal views to cloud her view of private landlords like myself providing quality accommodation to young couples and their children who cannot afford to get on to the property market. That private landlords should have no recognition and that the previously, in place discounts, where not be rationalised across the County but removed entirely by Councillor Leyshon and her two colleagues.</p>

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	<p>I would ask the full council to reflect on these omissions and personal views of Councillor Leyshon and that a standard 3 month 100% discount be applied to empty properties to allow for renovation and repair during the period of change over of tenants.</p> <p>In my particular situation I was able to renovate the property as described below within 10 days to provide urgently needed accommodation this young couple and their children.</p> <p>This family were forced to leave their previous accommodation as the landlord sold up.</p> <p>Perhaps the actions of Councillor Leyshon and her "throw away comment" colleague demonstrates why their previous property was sold and why, I am now forced to raise my rent to cover any other periods when I change my tenants and the Council will come looking for Council Tax</p> <p>Response from the Deputy Leader of Council and Lead Member for Resources and Performance: Cllr Liz Leyshon</p>
Full written response	<p>The rationale for the decision to remove the existing Class D discounts, ranging from 75%-100% across the former district Council areas, is given in paragraphs 4.11 – 4.14 in the report to Full Council November 2022.</p> <p>In accepting that the change would mean increased costs for landlords, as Lead Member for Resources I was suggesting that to mitigate this, Council Tax charges for empty properties are an allowable expense when working out taxable rental profits (https://www.gov.uk/guidance/income-tax-when-you-rent-out-a-property-working-out-your-rental-income#allow-expense)</p> <p>Councillor colleagues and I recognise the importance the private rental sector plays in providing decent, affordable accommodation and in no way have I tried to ‘demonise’ landlords who play an important role in providing accommodation for many of Somerset’s residents including vulnerable people and families.</p>

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	<p>I apologise for any misunderstanding caused when I was also, separately, raising the issue of housing in some parts of the country where owners, often corporate landlords, are satisfied with capital gain without providing homes for people to rent at reasonable cost.</p>
<p>Sigurd Reimers</p>	<p>I was interested in reading the annual report on Public Health, Equalities and Diversity (agenda item 11 in the Reports pack). In particular, I found the section (5.1) on Air Quality and Climate Change (page 174) to be welcome. However, there was no mention of the effects of climate change itself and its impact on the County (eg sea level rise, drought and flooding) in the report.</p> <p>Following the declaration of a climate emergency by the five previous Somerset Councils in 2019, and the County Climate Emergency Strategy in 2020, Somerset West and Taunton Council, for one, decided to apply principles relating to climate change across all its activities.</p> <p>What evidence is there of such a broad awareness in this otherwise excellent Public Health report, given that the threat from climate collapse is already having public health implications, and with more to come? For example, climate change particularly affects the most vulnerable part of the population. The Healthcare Inequalities section of the report (section 6.4) could be a section where such an awareness could be better evidenced.</p> <p>Response from the Lead Member for Public Health, Equalities and Diversity: Cllr Adam Dance</p>
<p>Full written response</p>	<p>The Public Health team are working closely with the Climate and Place Directorate which is responsible for formulating the response to the Climate Emergency and the risks of Climate Change in the council and so we have not covered some of the wider impact on the county of Climate Change which is more appropriately considered under this Directorate. Public Health has a key influencing role in the response to the Climate Change Emergency, and one example is developing the Public Health Ambassador programme that will involve officers from across the council being supported to deliver ‘health in all policies’, reducing health inequalities through action on the social and environmental determinants of health.</p> <p>Sustainability will be a cross-cutting theme, for example by working with Ambassadors in Planning to promote healthy and climate change resilient developments, and with Transport to promote accessible low carbon travel options. The physical and mental wellbeing risks to individuals and communities due to climate change and climate anxiety is also included within this work.</p>

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**Catherine
Cannon**

For some time, I have been asking Council to take action to help normalise plant-based eating by prioritising plant-based choices wherever the Council has an opportunity and ensuring that food served within council is as climate friendly as possible.

Scientists say that cutting animal products out of our diet is the single biggest way for individuals to reduce their impact on the planet. A new Oxford University study published just two months ago showed that even just reducing meat consumption can make a huge difference, & could be the equivalent of taking 8 million cars off the road. The amount of research over the years reaching similar conclusions is now frankly overwhelming.

However what I'm asking is not about individual diet choices - it's about showing climate leadership. It's about local government stepping up to help flip the current norm in which menus are heavily biased towards meat & dairy. It's about demonstrating that meat does not have to be the centrepiece of every meal, & supporting people to make choices that are healthier & more sustainable.

Somerset has a large farming community. I come from a family of former beef & dairy farmers, & I understand the challenges farmers are facing with the weather, the supermarkets and the cost of inputs. Genuinely supporting farmers means looking honestly at the future and recognising where change is necessary. At the moment, farmers are forced to keep doing what they have always done because of subsidies, but continuing with the status quo is a betrayal of the future of farming. In order to ensure future food security & financial security for farmers, as well as increase biodiversity, we need to strengthen & expand our horticulture sector and shift our diets to match. This will allow us to rewild some of the 85% of UK farmland which is currently used for animal farming (despite providing just 37% of our calories - an unbelievably inefficient way to feed ourselves!) and allow nature to thrive again.

The UK central government is currently facing a legal challenge regarding its failure to introduce measures to reduce meat and dairy in its food strategy. It is ignoring the insistence of its own advisors that a move towards plant-based must be the future, & must be lead by the public sector.

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	<p>It is not always easy to find plant-based options in cafes, public buildings and schools. We urgently need to provide plenty of choice and availability of healthy, plant-based food. The Council has the opportunity – and I think, the duty – to simply prioritise plant-based food options wherever they can and treat the climate crisis with the urgency it requires.</p> <p>I would like to meet with councillors to address concerns over cost, inclusivity, choice and local impacts of such a direction, and for them to hear how it could be an enormous win for health, sustainability and budget. I ask council to please prioritise this issue & this meeting.</p> <p>Response from the Lead Member for Environment and Climate Change: Cllr Dixie Darch</p>
<p>Full written response</p>	
<p>Paul Partington</p>	<p>Circa 2013 I carried out statistical analyses of the thirty-four shires and found that the number of kilometres of public rights of way per square kilometres showed Somerset at 16th about average and is less than Wiltshire 13th, Gloucestershire 4th (what was Gloucestershire) and Dorset 12th. Somerset, Wiltshire, Gloucester and Dorset were all within the statistical standard deviation. Does Somerset County Council as a highway authority accept that the number of kilometres of public rights of way that it is responsible for is about average for a shire county?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. How many outstanding defects are there recorded for Somerset Public Rights of Way? 3. What measures are being taken by Somerset County Council to address in a timely manner the outstanding defects? 4. Does Somerset County Council accept that the definitive map (DM) is a legal document and what is shown on it is correct unless shown otherwise? 5. Does Somerset County Council accept that even if an application has been made to downgrade or delete it, the Highway Authority must assert and protect the right of the

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	<p>public to use and enjoy the highway at the status shown?</p> <p>6. Bridleway T 2/11 – Bickenhall has a record of complaints about obstruction dating back to 26 February 2007. When is Somerset County Council as the Highway Authority going to assert and protect the right of the public to use and enjoy the highway at the status shown?</p> <p>Response from Lead Member for Transport and Digital: Cllr Mike Rigby</p>
Full written response	<p>Circa 2013 I carried out statistical analyses of the thirty-four shires and found that the number of kilometres of public rights of way per square kilometres showed Somerset at 16th about average and is less than Wiltshire 13th, Gloucestershire 4th (what was Gloucestershire) and Dorset 12th. Somerset, Wiltshire, Gloucester and Dorset were all within the statistical standard deviation. Does Somerset County Council as a highway authority accept that the number of kilometres of public rights of way that it is responsible for is about average for a shire county? No recent analysis has been undertaken on this by the Council, therefore we are unable to comment.</p> <p>2. How many outstanding defects are there recorded for Somerset Public Rights of Way? As of 22/9/23, there were 3892 outstanding issues recorded. This includes the Somerset area of Exmoor National Park. Of the 3892 issues, 3340 are categorised as defects.</p> <p>3. What measures are being taken by Somerset County Council to address in a timely manner the outstanding defects? The number of outstanding issues has increased and remained high since the CoVID19 pandemic, which saw an increased use and interest in the path network. Area Warden resource increased from 6 to 7 FTE in 2022 to help address the level of outstanding issues. This increase in staff resource should see the number of outstanding issues start to reduce. Issues are prioritised in accordance with the Rights of Way Safety Inspection Manual, with the focus being on prioritising issues that pose the greatest risk to the safety of the public. The Council also has in excess of 400 volunteers and continue to recruit more, with their work continuing to complement the work of paid staff in resolving issues.</p>

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	<p>4. Does Somerset County Council accept that the definitive map (DM) is a legal document and what is shown on it is correct unless shown otherwise?</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>5. Does Somerset County Council accept that even if an application has been made to downgrade or delete it, the Highway Authority must assert and protect the right of the public to use and enjoy the highway at the status shown?</p> <p>Yes, the duty is to assert and protect the right to use and enjoy the highway, and reference is made to the Definitive Map & Statement with regard to the status of the highway. However, on occasion it is prudent to assess a situation on its individual circumstances, with consideration to the available evidence.</p> <p>6. Bridleway T 2/11 – Bickenhall has a record of complaints about obstruction dating back to 26 February 2007. When is Somerset County Council as the Highway Authority going to assert and protect the right of the public to use and enjoy the highway at the status shown?</p> <p>The Council is in receipt of a s130a Highways Act notice with regard to the current obstructions on this route, and thus will be considering how it responds to this notice in the coming weeks. RoW colleagues are happy to update Mr Partington in due course with the Council's latest position in response to the notice.</p>
<p>Andrew Strong</p>	<p>The draft Minutes of the Full Council meeting held on 26th July 2023 contain a reply to a Public Question (no. 2) on bus issues that includes the following sentences: <i>“You will be aware that the Council has access to fairly limited bus recovery funds from Government which are provided in the form of a ‘BSIP+’ grant for the current financial year. The Bus Advisory Board, which is a public meeting, will discuss these matters in detail and ensure transparency about use of funds to support services.”</i></p> <p>The BSIP Plus Grant had been awarded by Government on 17th May 2023 and it amounts to £737,079 for the current financial year.</p> <p>The Bus Advisory Board had met on 25th July 2023 - the day before the Full Council meeting. It had been reconvened from 18th July. Cllr Mike Rigby was unable to attend but the draft Minutes of that meeting record that the Chair spoke</p>

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	<p>about the BSIP Plus Grant in the following terms: <i>“He clarified that the Council has agreed in principle to provide some of its BSIP+ funding to offset the need for the bus operator to reduce the level of service on some routes which would otherwise be at risk.....”</i></p> <p>The Bus Advisory Board was unable to discuss this matter in detail and come to a consensus view because a decision had been made already.</p> <p>To rectify this oversight and to ensure transparency about the use of funds to support bus services, will the Council now publish a breakdown of spending from the BSIP Plus Grant on specific bus services, accompanied by the options analysis that informed the decision on which routes to subsidise?</p> <p>Furthermore, in view of recurring complaints from bus users about cancellation of timetabled journeys by the principal bus operator in Somerset, will the Council explain what measures have been put in place to ensure that the recipients of the BSIP Plus Grant operate in full the bus services which are now receiving financial support from that source?</p> <p>Response from Lead Member for Transport and Digital: Cllr Mike Rigby</p>
Full written response	<p>BSIP Plus Funding is being used to support the six services that were previously withdrawn by commercial operators during 2022 and replaced with subsidised routes funded through the Bus Recovery Grant (BRG). BSIP Plus has replaced BRG so we have continued to support those six services with BSIP Plus. At each point that a service was saved, an update has been provided by Officers at Bus Advisory Board meetings. Those services are:</p> <p>3 – Taunton Town Service</p> <p>30 – Frome Town Service</p> <p>68 – Yeovil Town Service serving the railway stations</p>

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81 – South Petherton to Yeovil

126 – Axbridge to Wells

D2 – Frome to Bath (evening services)

The remainder of the funding is being used for an interim period, until the end of March 2024 to support the four services recently announced as at risk. These services are:

25 – Dulverton to Taunton

28 – Minehead to Taunton

54 – Taunton to Yeovil

58 – Yeovil to Wincanton

Unfortunately, at the time of the Board meeting in July it was not clear at that point exactly what proposals were being put forward by Buses of Somerset in relation to the at-risk routes and therefore could not be discussed in detail. Once these became clearer, due to the tight timescales associated with the Department for Transport (DfT) deadlines and governance processes it was not possible to reconvene an extraordinary Board meeting to discuss these proposals in detail. However, following internal discussion with Members and Officers, the appropriate internal governance was followed, and approval sought and granted by the Department for Transport (DfT) for the use of the funds in this way. We are not able to publish specific details around contract prices as this is commercially sensitive information, but we have been clear on the 10 routes currently being supported by BSIP Plus.

Our conditions of contract require operators to advise us of any journeys which they fail to operate. Support for the four services provided by the principal bus operator under this grant, only commenced on 4th September 2023 and we have

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	<p>arranged monthly meetings to review performance. The first of these meetings is due to take place at the end of September.</p>
David Redgewell	<p>Question 1</p> <p>With the closure of the First Group Plc South Bus Depots in Somerset at Bridgwater and the proposal to close Yeovil Bus Depot at Reckleford with the provision of an outstation Bus Depot in Yeovil with provision for 12 buses and but is this enough to grow the bus network in Yeovil and District.</p> <p>With drivers facilities, cleaning bus washing and fuelling facilities, but only mobile bus maintenance van, with only one main fully operating centre in Taunton Depot with full maintenance facilities of jack pits and rolling road and stall maintenance Depot at Minehead with cleaning washing and fuelling facilities and a mobile maintenance van and a Bus Depot in Weymouth for the West Dorset and Somerset area and the Bus Depots under First Group Plc Wales and West Bus Division at Weston-Super-Mare, Scarle Crescent, Bath Spa, Weston Island, with a maintenance Depot at Wells, Priory Road but main maintenance being at Bath Western Island.</p> <p>Under the bus services improvement plans and the bus strategy of the Somerset local Transport plans, with the need to improve the county bus network in Yeovil and District Bridgwater, Taunton, Wellington and Minehead and the Mendip Towns of Frome, Shepton Mallet, Glastonbury, Street and Wells.</p> <p>Has Somerset Council protected it Bus and Coach Depot in Somerset locals along with the county bus and coach stations at Frome, Cork Street, Shepton Mallet interchange, Wells Bus and Coach Station, Bridgwater Bus and Coach Station, Taunton Transport Hub, Yeovil Bus and Coach station, Wincanton Bus and Coach station, Wellington Coach Park, Glastonbury Coach Parks, Street Coach Parks, Bus interchange at Chard and Minehead and Bus Depot site from Development in Bridgwater, Taunton, Yeovil, Wells and Minehead. First Group Plc sites and South West Coaches Depots at Yeovil and Wincanton, Hatch Green Coach Depot, Beauchamp Taunton Somerset, Berry Coach in Taunton, Axe Valley</p>

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Coach at Biddenham, Axbridge Somerset, Frome Bus Company, Bakers Coaches Yeovil, Libra Travel, and smaller bus operators from development and undertake a study of the needs of bus and depots in county of Somerset and held discussion with Vosa, the Traffic Commissioner Kevin Rooney and bus operators.

Similarly to the protection of bus and coach operating centres in the west of England mayoral combined Transport Authority and North Somerset Council.

Question 2.

What progress is being made?

For passengers on a recovery plan on bus services operated by First Group Plc South Buses to stop the cancellation of bus services in Taunton, Bridgwater, Minehead and Highbridge and Burnham on Sea and Chard

On services 21, 21a Taunton Bridgwater bus and coach station, North Petherton, Highbridge Town, Highbridge and Burnham on Sea station for service 20 Brean Berrow, Uphill Hospital Weston-Super-Mare railway station and bus and coach station, Taunton Town Centre, Taunton Railway Station, Bishop Lydeard Station, Watchet and Minehead Services 28, Services 22 Taunton to Wellington, Services 99 Taunton to Chard, Taunton Town services, Services 1, 6 and 7, Bridgwater Town service B1 and 14.

Whilst it may 1 to 2 % of passengers journeys it real lives of passengers unable to get to school college hospital the railway station for train connections from Minehead or watch on early morning journeys, nurses trying to get to work in Musgrove Park hospital when the early morning buses do not run on service 22, Passengers unable to work in the police office in Bridgwater from Burnham on Sea or a university student unable to get from Burnham on Sea to Highbridge and Burnham on Sea station to catch the First Group Plc Great Western Railway company train to Filton Abbey Wood station for UWE Bristol or pensioners unable to get home from Asda in Bridgwater by the bus station to Cannington on service 14 when the lunch time journeys fails to run.

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Or passengers stranded in Bridgwater bus and coach station with no supervisor any more unable to get home to North Petherton, Burnham on Sea for Berrow and Brean on service 21 21a and onto service 20 at Burnham on Sea for Berrow and Brean, the 99 bus service cancelled to Chard with a 2 hour wait for the next bus.

These are real passengers who have complained to the First Group Plc South Buses or the Traffic Commissioner Kevin Rooney.

So 1 to 2 % given out by First Group Plc South Buses to Somerset Council are real live not a council officer statics and what discussion are taking place about punctuality and reliability of the bus network.

Question 3 - So what action is Somerset Council taking to ask First Group Plc South for a recovery plan especially on service funded by the Somerset Council.

Question 4 - What progress is being made on the recruitment of bus drivers with help from Somerset economic development team.

Question 5 - And what fines have levied on First Group Plc South or Wales and West bus divisions or other operators for none delivery of Somerset bus network for not delivering the councils contracted bus network and could we have figures similar to the West of England Mayoral Combined Transport Authority and North Somerset Council transport area in the North of Somerset.

Question 6

What progress is being made on the reopening of historic Taunton Bus and Coach Station as new transport hub with passengers facilities waiting room changing places toilets and refreshments cycle hire and E. scooter hire, office for First Group Plc South Buses and facilities for National Express coaches.

Is there a date for a stakeholders and passenger consultation and when will NHS Somerset covid 19 medical centre leave the building for a High Street shop.

Question 7

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	<p>With the difficulties on operating first group plc South Bus service between Taunton Town Centre for connection with National Express Coaches and at Taunton Railway station for First Group GWR and Cross Country trains Arriva Germany State Railway Bishop Lydeard Station for the West Somerset Railway service to Minehead and the bus service to Watchet and Minehead for Butlins holiday camp and Bank Street.</p> <p>In view of the levels of passengers transferring to the First Group Plc South buses 28 to Minehead funded by Somerset Council and the need to improve bus shelter bus stops and waiting facilities at Taunton Station.</p> <p>What progress is now being made?</p> <p>On the reopening of the West Somerset Railway to through passengers trains to Minehead for the Butlins holiday camp and residents and Tourists of west Somerset.</p> <p>Working with the Department for Transport Network Rail western route First Group Plc Great Western Railway company the West Somerset Railway company Heart of the West Local Enterprise partnership and Peninsula Transport Board and Somerset Council to ease pressure of the A358 and A39 routes and on the bus service and help the West Somerset Railway company revenue stream at a loss of £216 317 Or £4000 a week .</p> <p>Response from Lead Member for Transport and Digital: Cllr Mike Rigby</p>
Full written response	<p>1. The Council does not have the ability to intervene in any bus companies' commercial management of their land holding and operational facilities. These are commercial decisions, which will be down to the bus operator to determine. The bus operator is required to agree with the Traffic Commissioner, what their maintenance and depot arrangements will be. Any facilities listed, that are under Council control following the move to the new unitary authority, are subject to the Council's decision-making process.</p> <p>2 & 3. In response to questions 2 and 3, we continue to monitor First South West's recovery plan to address reliability issues across their network. We receive weekly lost mileage data from the operator and officers are in constant contact with First South West regarding complaints and issues raised by members of the public. We have now introduced monthly</p>

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performance meetings with First South West and we will continue to press them at every opportunity to improve their reliability.

4. Recruitment and retention of staff is a challenge across the economy and clearly bus companies are no exception unfortunately. There are limits to the ability of Somerset Council to tackle this issue, but we will look at all opportunities to take positive action. As part of this we are looking to use the skills bootcamps programme which the Council manages locally on behalf of DfE to run a specific session addressing skills for bus drivers.

5. Our aim within the Enhanced Partnership arrangement has been to support operators rather than penalise them. Up until now, almost all of the instances of non-delivery of service that we are aware of have been on commercial journeys. There have been some instances of non-operation of contracted journeys and where we have been aware of these, we have reduced payments to the operator accordingly. Through our Conditions of Contract, operators are required to notify us when contracted journeys do not operate. We rely on operators advising us of lost journeys on contracted routes as we have very limited resources to monitor this. There is no provision through the Enhanced Partnership for operators to be penalised for the non-operation of commercial services and there is no scoring regime in place. The Traffic Commissioner regulates the provision of commercial bus services in their area and the Commissioner has powers to take action against operators who consistently fail to operate registered journeys/services. The powers of the Traffic Commissioner are wide ranging and can include fines, reductions in the number of vehicles the bus operator can operate, a block on new service registrations, a direction to the operator to reduce services to improve reliability or ultimately the removal of an operator's licence. However, the Commissioner would take into account the efforts being made by the operator to rectify the situation in any decision he/she might make.

6. Stage 2 feasibility is ending with our consultants. We now have a proposed site plan and accompanying artistic impressions. These will go through the relevant internal reviews and approvals before putting them out to public consultation. We anticipate this consultation taking place during the Autumn.

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	<p>The NHS are looking at other options in the town centre and at this time do not have definite plans for an alternative site. We will continue to work closely with them to minimise the impact to the service as and when the mobility hub begins construction.</p> <p>7. We are a member of the Working Group along with WSR, Network Rail, GWR and LEP, and are facilitating the drafting of an outline business case for the Taunton to Bishops Lydeard extension. The Council has also contributed financially to the research required to determine costings. The provision of a service along the route and any extension to Minehead is a commercial decision and for Network Rail and GWR to determine. We will continue to support the project as it progresses.</p>
Robbie Bentley	<p>Question 1</p> <p>With First Group Plc South buses and First Group property pulling out of Reckleford bus and coach Depot in Yeovil Somerset for a smaller bus depot site in the town as a outstation for its South Somerset and West Dorset Bus network and Yeovil Town service.</p> <p>The new Depot is planned to consist of a bus depot with drivers facilities supervisor office bus washing machine cleaning and fuelling facilities and limited maintenance overnight maintenance van.</p> <p>But with First Group Plc South moving their bus fleet to a new depot and bus service 77 ,55 Yeovil bus and coach station to Somerton Street Glastonbury and Wells bus and coach station to Wells Bus Depot.</p> <p>In its hay days Yeovil bus and coach depot had 43 buses and coaches keep at Neutilus works in Reckleford Yeovil for operations for the Southern Railways Southern National omnibus company and Royal Blue motor services, today first group plc South buses keep 12 to 15 buses at the Depot.</p> <p>So with plans to pull down the 19 12 / 1913 petters Engine's factory built Neutilus works with its Engineering and Aviation industry history building engines for Westlands before that firegrates and Engine's the works being connected by the first electric lights in Yeovil, the building is a major victorian building in Yeovil and from the 19 40 / 1950 was taken over by the</p>

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Southern Railway Southern National omnibus company limited and was the area operating office for Somerset and Dorset with major offices for the Regional Traffic Superintendent.

The Depot operated over 50 buses and coaches for Yeovil Town bus and bus routes across west and North Dorset and south Somerset and coach services for Royal Blue motor services Ltd Yeovil Town Railway station being a major bus coach and railway interchange,

With bus and coach service across London victoria Hampshire Somerset, Dorset, Devon and the Cornwall, with Western and Southern National omnibus company headquarters in Exeter Devon Western National omnibus company being owned by the Great Western Railway company and Southern National by the Southern Railway company, Yeovil was a major Transport hub and the Neutilus works and major bus and coach Depot and Engineering site.

The Depot past to the government owned national bus company and to Cawlett Holdings on bus privatisation a management buyout then to public transport company first group plc.

South buses but also run First group plc Great Western Railway company and south Western Railway company in Somerset and to and from London and South west England.

As the building is very important to the history of Somerset and South West England and under threat of demolition by First group plc property or a Developer.

What action is Somerset Council Planning Department taking to evaluate the conservation value of the building for the conservation office to visit and write a report and to advise Historic England and Secretary of State for Culture Media and Sport on the response to sport list the building.

And any planning permission for change of use for the site to hotel houses flats or a bus and transport museum, incorporating the Historical buildings should have a 106 agreement to funding a new bus and coach Depot for Yeovil.

Question 2.

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What Progress is being made in applying for Zebra 2 funding for zero Emissions bus regional area scheme with £129 million pounds and £ 25 million pounds targeted on Rural area such as Somerset with a need for electrification of Somerset bus network and especially with a modern mothballed bus and coach Depot in Bridgwater.

What proposal are being worked up for investment in a bid for Somerset and especially for Bridgwater and District important to the Town services links to Taunton 21 21a Service 21 to Highbridge and Burnham on Sea for Berrow, Brean and Weston-Super-Mare link to service 20

But as a through service, Service 75 Bridgwater bus and coach station to Woolavington, Purton, Walton Street, Glastonbury and Wells bus and coach station with service on Bristol Temple meads station and bus and coach station, Service 14 / 15 Bridgwater bus and coach station to Cannington Watchet and Minehead Service, Service 127 Bridgwater bus and coach station to cheddar Chew valley and Bristol, 126 Weston super mare bus and coach station locking Banwell ,Winscombe Axbridge, cheddar, Westbury sub Mendip Wells bus and coach station.

Question 3

If a bid was put in with Electricity de France First Group Plc South or Wales and West buses big lemon buses Bridgwater Town Council Highbridge and Burnham on Sea Town Council,

North Somerset Council and the West of England Mayoral Combined Transport Authority Mayor Dan Norris and Tata Battery factory.

A successful bid may be forthcoming for Bridgwater and District into the Cheddar Valley and Chew valley.

The expression of interest need to be their by 20 th October 2023 and full bid by 15 th December 2023.

Will the Council look at progressing a joint bid?

Given that a commercial battery factory has gone ahead not far from the First Bus Depot and that concerns exist about the safety issues surrounding its proposed closure, would it not be better to have such modern facilities which are coming on stream around Bridgwater and elsewhere in the county be concentrated and therefore easily accessible to each other?

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	Response from Lead Member for Transport and Digital: Cllr Mike Rigby
Full written response	<p>1. Yeovil Bus Depot was considered by English Heritage (prior to the name change to Historic England) for national designation in February 2014. It was not added to the List of Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest as it did not meet the requirements for listing. The building has now been put forward, through the legacy candidate route for the next Assessment Panel of the Local List, and a decision is expected shortly. Unless the building is located within a conservation area or is listed however the issues that either building control or the planning authority can consider are limited to the method of demolition and the restoration of the site. Given the building's local significance, in the meantime the LPA has contacted the owner to open discussions about the future of the building.</p> <p>2. We welcome the government's very recent announcement relating to the ZEBRA 2 funding opportunity. We are currently engaging with the local bus operators to determine whether there is an appetite for any of them to work with us on a potential bid for the funding available and asked them to confirm that they can commit to providing the remaining funding required to deliver vehicles and infrastructure.</p> <p>3. We understand that the Department for Transport (DfT) will accept joint bids from Local Transport Authorities, although the Local Authority can only be the lead on one bid, not multiple bids. We welcome proposals from operators and other Local Transport Authorities and will give due consideration to any proposals received.</p>
Ian Beckey	<p>Question 1</p> <p>With the difficulties on operating first group plc South Bus service between Taunton Town Centre for connection with National Express Coaches and at Taunton Railway station for First Group GWR and Cross Country trains Arriva Germany State Railway Bishop Lydeard Station for the West Somerset Railway service to Minehead and the bus service to Watchet and Minehead for Butlins holiday camp and Bank Street.</p>

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	<p>In view of the levels of passengers transferring to the First Group Plc South buses 28 to Minehead funded by Somerset Council and the need to improve bus shelter bus stops and waiting facilities at Taunton Station.</p> <p>What progress is now being made?</p> <p>On the reopening of the West Somerset Railway to through passengers trains to Minehead for the Butlins holiday camp and residents and Tourists of west Somerset.</p> <p>Working with the Department for Transport Network Rail western route First Group Plc Great Western Railway company the West Somerset Railway company Heart of the West Local Enterprise partnership and Peninsula Transport Board and Somerset Council to ease pressure of the A358 and A39 routes and on the bus service and help the West Somerset Railway company revenue stream at a loss of £216 317 Or £4000 a week .</p> <p>Response from Lead Member for Transport and Digital: Cllr Mike Rigby</p>
<p>Full written response</p>	<p>We are a member of the Working Group along with WSR, Network Rail, GWR and LEP, and are facilitating the drafting of an outline business case for the Taunton to Bishops Lydeard extension. The Council has also contributed financially to the research required to determine costings. The provision of a service along the route and any extension to Minehead is a commercial decision and for Network Rail and GWR to determine. We will continue to support the project as it progresses.</p>
<p>Eva Bryczkowsk i</p>	<p>THE ONGOING YEOVIL REFRESH SCHEME STOP KILLING THE HIGH STREET AND WRECKING LOCAL BUSINESSES</p> <p>I appreciate that there are a number of essential works needed to be done in the centre of Yeovil. However, aims to spend £24 million pounds and counting, on non - essential improvements, does NOT justify this amount of money being spent.</p> <p>AUSTERITY</p> <p>Along with many other councils, due to the catastrophic lack of funding since 2010, Somerset County Council is in huge debt, and councillors have done their best to save money by reluctantly cutting back on things that ARE essential.</p>

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IMPROVEMENTS THAT ARE NOT ESSENTIAL AT THIS STAGE IN TIME

Yeovil Refresh has been going on for three years or so, and will continue, despite residents and local businesses saying loud and clear,

ENOUGH IS ENOUGH.

Plans such as the installation of street furnishings and soft landscaping, like raised gardens, might make the town centre more attractive, but they are NOT essential at this stage. Certainly not at the expense of small businesses, who are struggling financially due to reduced footfall.

They have suffered enough already during the pandemic, and yet you, Somerset County councillors, have confirmed in the news today, that all of this scheme, including the lovely enhancements portfolio holder Mike Rigby has waxed lyrical about, will continue, ignoring what Yeovil residents and businesses are telling you.

They can be completed when the money is available, it is certainly NOT at the moment, and it is needs to be spent on more important things.

VALUE FOR MONEY

I want to see my council tax money being spent on more essential things, like social care, helping vulnerable residents, and many other necessities during this cost of living crisis.

THE TOWN IS A TOTAL MESS

I occasionally go by bus from Glastonbury to Yeovil for hospital appointments and shopping.

The last time I went I didn't realise that there was no longer a bus stop in the centre of town. I was early for my appointment, but instead of getting off at the soon to be gone bus station, I got off further away from the hospital, thus causing me to be late.

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The streets were difficult to navigate due to the town centre being in a total mess, and similar to a bomb site. I kept having to ask frustrated locals for directions. This often led me into dead ends, where I'd get to the end of a pavement and then had to turn back again.

After my appointment, I did some shopping. (All we have in Glastonbury are mainly hemp, psychic candles, and crystal shops).

In every shop I went into, local business people told me they were struggling financially, not just from rising energy costs, but from what formerly Somerset District councillors decided to do, which now Somerset council have voted to continue.

Frankly, councillors, you risk local residents not voting for you because you haven't properly listened to them, despite what councillor Rigby has said.

The portfolio holder cosying up to local businesses and promising to attend meetings to consult and reassure them just doesn't cut it.

You already k.n.o.w. how local business people feel, and what they want. Stop wasting time attending meetings, immediately start taking ACTION to restore the high street and save local businesses.

Yes, carry on doing essential repairs and improvements.

But stop wasting our money, to the tune of 24 million quid and rising, on what are follies dreamt up by councillor Rigby and the former South Somerset District Council.

This is the same person who refuses to put speed calming measures on the road into Dunstan Park estate, where children play on the roads and risk injury or worse from speeding vehicles.

He wrote to us residents saying that, because no injury or fatality had been reported yet, they do not consider this a priority.

Yet raised gardens and attractive enhancements in the centre of Yeovil are more of a priority than preventing serious harm or fatality occurring to young children.

QUESTION ONE

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	<p>Regarding representing the wishes of Somerset people you represent, are you going to continue spending 24 million pounds on those refurbishments that are non - essential? Yes, or No?</p> <p>QUESTION TWO Can you proceed immediately, to scrutinise the decisions made by the portfolio holder and the Highways department, in order to make it less expensive to do those repairs that are essential, thereby providing a timeline for delaying some of them wherever possible?</p> <p>QUESTION THREE Can you make a clear decision to recompense local businesses who have suffered for a long time due to reduced footfall, spending the money intended for unnecessary, at this stage, enhancements? (Which will make it more likely they will vote for you instead of someone else at the next County Council election. It'll come sooner than you think).</p> <p>Response from Lead Member for Transport and Digital: Cllr Mike Rigby and Lead Member for Economic Development, Planning and Assets: Cllr Ros Wyke</p>
Full written response	<p>The Yeovil Refresh budget of £24m included many elements, including transport, major development and complementary initiatives, not just the public realm upgrades in the town centre. The budget was made up from a number of different sources, including Community Infrastructure Levy, S106, Active Travel England and Future High Street Fund, as well as contributions from South Somerset District Council regeneration budgets and external developers.</p> <p>The capital budget for all projects in the new authority is under review and any savings that can be made will be reviewed by the Executive as part of the budget setting process that is underway.</p>

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	<p>The works to the town centre will continue to completion, but it is clear that communication with town centre business, commuters and shoppers could be clearer, therefore we have instigated actions with the contractor, working in partnership with the Town Council, Chamber of Commerce and crime reduction partnership, to improve signage, provide additional information on the programme and help movement through the town during the works.</p> <p>The team have commissioned Love Yeovil to engage with business and members of the public around their wishes for events in the town centre, to encourage footfall and bring increased vibrancy to the town centre after the works have completed.</p> <p>We will also be shortly publishing on the Refresh website, a standalone guide to the parking, taxi ranks, accessible parking and buses that will help town centre users to navigate the town during the works and afterwards.</p> <p>The team have commissioned Love Yeovil to engage with business and members of the public around their wishes for events in the town centre, to encourage footfall and bring increased vibrancy to the town centre after the works have completed. We have recently completed two separate engagement events, including at Super Saturday, that gave some excellent, positive feedback. As stated above, we are working closely with the Town Council, Chamber of Commerce and crime reduction partnership in the town to reduce disruption and improve communication about the project. Reduced footfall is seen across all town centres in the UK, big and small. The team are also working other initiatives in the town centre working with developers to bring forward residential development that will increase footfall in the heart of the town.</p>
Nick Hall	<p>Good afternoon. My name is Nick Hall. I live in Pilton, near Shepton Mallet. I am a Parish Councillor speaking in a personal capacity on the draft Statement of Licencing Policy – agenda item 8.</p> <p>I want to make two broad points today:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• I don't believe that the Licensing and Regulatory Committee has properly considered my views or those of fellow consultees.• There are significant gaps in this policy.

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Unresponsive consultation process:

In May the consultation period was suddenly reduced from eight to six weeks. Consultation responses were only published on 4 September. These responses did not address the substantive issues that were raised by me and others. Four days later I had to submit questions for the Licensing Committee to be able to answer them at their meeting on 14 Sept. Disappointingly there was no discussion of my questions or those of another participant. Moreover, no answers were forthcoming at the meeting. When I challenged this lack of response, I was told that I would be provided with written answers before the Full Council – I am still waiting.

Contrary to guidance (14.9 of the section 182 Guidance, Licensing Act 2003) I don't feel that the Licensing and Regulatory Committee has given any weight to my views.

Significant Policy Gaps

The nub of the problem is that this policy must cover 2500 to 3000 Licensed premises across the whole of Somerset, one of which is for the Glastonbury Festival with 210,000 people. There are unique issues associated with the Festival but this Licensing policy needs to address them to reduce the risk to public safety and reduce public nuisance.

With limited time I can only highlight three significant policy gaps:

1. Surely an 'Area of Concern' is overcrowding and crushing at large indoor and outdoor events? There are multiple recent examples of tragic outcomes – O2 Academy (Brixton Dec 2022) and Astroworld (Houston Nov 2021) being the most notable. Moreover, last year Mendip District Council's Scrutiny Board expressed concerns on this matter.
2. An applicant is not legally required to notify a Parish Council of a License application or variation. Hence the new policy of Somerset Council notifying affected Parish Councils is a good step forward - this should be written into this statement of policy.

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	<p>3. Alongside the main Festival there are 20 to 30 off-site events each individually regulated by a Temporary Event Notice (TEN). There needs to be a more effective policy mechanism to control the cumulative impact on our community from this situation. I welcome the commitment to introduce a searchable database for TENs but much more needs to be done to assess the situation and implement effective solutions.</p> <p>Conclusion</p> <p>I assert that the views of some consultees have not been properly considered and hence the policy cannot be determined. Moreover, significant gaps remain in this statement of Licensing Policy.</p> <p>Response from Lead Member for Communities, Housing and Culture: Cllr Federica Smith-Roberts</p>
Full written response	<p>Mr Hall was sent a written response to six points raised at the meeting of the Licensing and Regulatory Committee on the 14th of September, which addresses three of the points raised in Mr Hall’s question to Full Council. The response was as follows:</p> <p>1. Areas of Concern (2.3): Surely Somerset Council is concerned about overcrowding and crushing at large indoor and outdoor events? There are multiple recent examples of tragic outcomes - East London and Houston being the most notable. Moreover, MDC Scrutiny Board expressed their concerns on this matter last year.</p> <p>Overcrowding is of course a concern with regards to events. These matters in relation to individual events are not, however, addressed through the Council’s Licensing Policy. For example, capacities of premises will be relevant to the Fire Service as one of the Responsible Authorities (RAs) when considering the Fire Safety Risk Assessment. The section on large scale events makes reference to the importance of allowing RAs to make representations when necessary. With reference to your comment regarding the MDC Scrutiny Board, any concerns would be addressed during the planning process and through the working groups that are set up in advance of Glastonbury. Crowd Management concerns are included within that remit. Furthermore, the Multi Agency Partnership and Crowd</p>

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Management Working Group will also consider these matters. The Licensing Policy sets areas for consideration when granting licences rather than issues of concern at licensed events for which there are other remedies. In the recently published public decision of Lambeth Licensing Sub-Committee in relation to the fatalities at O2 Academy Brixton, we see there that the Licensing Authority’s concerns which included overcrowding and crush have been mitigated by the imposition of some 70 plus conditions to be endorsed on the varied Licence.

2. Partnership Working (3.1.1): It is not a legal requirement for an applicant to inform a Parish Council of a License application or variation. The lead officer’s response to this issue is to state that Parish Clerks are notified – presumably by the LA? This hasn’t routinely been happening in the Mendip area. So if this is the Council’s solution to this issue then this Licensing policy should explicitly state that the LA will write to the affected Parish Clerks - within say 3 days of validating any License application/variation.

As we are aligning our processes in the early stages of a Unitary Council, we as the Licensing Authority (LA) will be notifying Parish Clerks accordingly upon receipt of a new application or a full variation application. We, therefore, agree with this point but it is a procedural change rather than an issue for Policy.

3. Cumulative Impact Policy (3.3): In our community we have two major concerns:
 - a. Sequential licensed events at the same location;
 - b. Multiple large ‘events’ apparently only requiring Temporary Event Notices (TENs) with no LA control of the cumulative impact.

A Cumulative Impact Policy should now be developed to address these issues and doubtless other similar ones across Somerset.

The statutory Guidance issued in accordance with Section 182 of the Act, specifies that -

“Cumulative Impact is the potential impact on the promotion of the licensing objectives of a number of licensed premises concentrated in one area.”

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Furthermore, *“Cumulative Impact assessments (CIAs) relate to applications for new premises licences and club premises certificates (CPCs) and applications to vary existing premises licences and CPCs in a specified area”*.

CIAs do not, however, apply to TENs so it is not possible to use this to regulate the number of TENs in a locality. TENs can be controlled if complaints are made about the activities authorised by an individual TEN itself, allowing Environmental Health and/or the Police the option to object regarding further events. A CIP will not, therefore, be appropriate to the Glastonbury licences.

4. Enforcement (3.9): It has been custom and practice for MDC’s Scrutiny Board to review the regulation of the Festival License each year. This formal review, and others like it, should form part of this Licensing policy. Each application and/ or granted licence must be considered on its own merits and is, therefore, not a matter for Policy. The level of planning, supervision and monitoring that the Council and other RAs undertake in relation to Glastonbury is commensurate with its scale and nature, being significantly different from that of other licensed events and premises. RAs such as the Police & Fire Authority are familiar with their role and responsibilities in accordance with the Licensing Act and recognise that they can apply to review the premises licence if appropriate.
5. Safe capacities (4.1.4): This policy should not only require the applicant to specify safe capacities but also to specify their procedure to ensure control of safe capacities? The policy should also describe how the LA will audit the control of safe capacities. Home Office guidance states that

“Safe capacities should only be imposed where appropriate for the promotion of public safety or the prevention of disorder on the relevant premises”.

To state in our Policy that all applicants must specify a safe capacity will, therefore, be inconsistent with the guidance. Each licence can be dealt with on a case-by-case basis.

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	<p>6. Noise Nuisance: Our experience is that the design and monitoring of License conditions for noise nuisance are inadequate. Policy and implementation need to be tightened. Conditions are attached to each licence in accordance with the specific circumstances of each premises. RAs responsible for upholding the “prevention of public nuisance” and “prevention of crime and disorder” objectives (such as Environmental Health and the Police) are engaged during the legislatively driven consultation process in order for this to take place. This is, therefore, not a matter for Policy because this document sets out the general approach taken by Licensing and should not describe how other RAs feed into it.</p> <p>In relation to the consultation, this lasted from 2nd June to 17th July and was in accordance with the time periods specified in the Council’s Consultation and Engagement Standards. Furthermore, paragraph 14.6 of the Home Office guidance, published in accordance with section 182 of the Licensing Act 2003, states that <i>“Subject to the statutory requirements, it is for each licensing authority to determine the extent of the consultation it should undertake, and whether any particular person or body is representative of the groups described in the 2003 Act. While it is clearly good practice to consult widely, this may not always be necessary or appropriate (for example, where a licensing authority has recently carried out a comprehensive consultation in relation to a revision to its policy made within five years of a full revision to it). As such, it may decide on a simple consultation with those persons listed.”</i> The policy drafted largely represented a blend of policies previously adopted by four predecessor district councils. As there were no dramatic changes or significant new themes introduced, it was determined by Officers that six weeks would suffice. The period was not reduced, but it is true to say that some interested parties were unable to access the draft policy initially and that this was not identified and rectified until approximately two weeks into the process.</p>
Carolyn Griffiths	<p>I am here to raise concerns over the failings of the Council’s conduct of the so called consultation of the Licensing Policy and to caution you against approving the proposed new policy.</p> <p>I live in Pilton. I was motivated to respond to the consultation as I have seen at first hand the failings of the existing policy. The proposed new policy on today’s agenda is almost identical simply because your officers and the Licensing</p>

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Committee have failed to engage with proposals for change. In almost every case the changes proposed by consultees have been rejected; but worse still they were rejected with no credible explanation or on invalid grounds.

I asked the Licensing Committee to intervene. I alerted the committee to these failings. The chair in the face of evidence to the contrary refuted the allegation and stated at the meeting *the consultation responses were considered*. That's all he said; he gave, no explanation and no response to the issues I (and others) had raised.

So here I am today. The three minutes allowed for public contribution gives no opportunity to convince you of the extent and seriousness of the failings of the consultation. Yet I cannot see how you can approve the proposed policy. It is based on a failed consultation process and it fails those who are affected by the licenses you grant.

I can only give you some illustrations; just two examples. Please don't respond to just these as there are many other equally important issues that warrant the Council's proper attention.

a) Noise controls, monitoring and enforcement :

My consultation response described (using the Glastonbury Festival only as an example) the evident inadequacy of the existing policy to protect (a number of) communities from the repeated nuisance of noise. The problems of noise is a fact and was recognised by members of the public and Councillors at Mendip's Scrutiny Board. This seems to indicate that the existing policy, its application, monitoring and/ or enforcement provisions of the policy needs to be improved. Astonishingly your officers (who have prior involvement in the application of the existing policy) rejected any changes to the policy stating

'Any complaints received will be assessed and appropriate action taken'...

In other words they failed to understand the point and the opportunity for improvement of the policy was ignored.

b) Cumulative Impact Assessment

The current policy does not encourage the consideration of cumulative impact; yet events in parts of this County particularly merit this. The reasons given for the policy not including cumulative impact assessments is 'that Somerset

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	<p>Council has no immediate plans for this'. No explanation. Just a stark refusal. This is simply not a competent response to a proposal for change .</p> <p>In the light of the foregoing</p> <p>a) I would like the Council to explain how it can consider the proposal before it to be a real reflection of improvements that could <i>and should</i> be made to the policy . It represents a failure of due process and a failure to serve the public interest.</p> <p>b) If the Full Council refuses to accept the need for a fresh review (by councillors/officers persons who have no prior involvement in the consultation or the Council's operation of the existing policy) then I would like its advice as to where I must take this matter next.</p> <p>I am prepared to further elaborate the issues I have raised and which the Council has discounted without valid explanation. But there are many other consultees responses that similarly need to be reviewed. I had hoped the new Council would be a listening Council. This has so far proven not to be the case.</p> <p>Response from Lead Member for Communities, Housing and Culture: Cllr Federica Smith-Roberts</p>
Full written response	<p>Officers response is as follows:</p> <p>a) There is a legislatively driven process in place supported by mandatory guidance that provides a mechanism for licence holders to be held accountable, including the variation and review processes. In terms of both licensing applications and already granted licences, complaint or concern in each case must be dealt with on its own merits and circumstances, in accordance with the above. This is a matter for applying legislation and guidance rather than for inclusion in policy.</p> <p>b) The statutory Guidance issued in accordance with Section 182 of the Act, specifies that –</p>

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“Cumulative Impact is the potential impact on the promotion of the licensing objectives of a number of licensed premises concentrated in one area.”

Furthermore, *“Cumulative Impact assessments (CIAs) relate to applications for new premises licences and club premises certificates (CPCs) and applications to vary existing premises licences and CPCs in a specified area”*. CIAs do not, however, apply to Temporary Event Notices (TENs) so it is not possible to use this to regulate the number of TENs in a locality. TENs can be controlled if complaints are made about the activities authorised by an individual TEN itself, allowing Environmental Health and/or the Police the option to object regarding further events. A Cumulative Impact Policy (CIP) will not, for example, be appropriate to the Glastonbury licences. Furthermore, there is currently no evidence elsewhere in Somerset that a CIP should apply.

Officers had considered the consultation response and reasons were provided within the agenda pack. Many of the issues raised were relevant to an individual licence. The Council’s Licensing Policy document sets out the general approach by Licensing and should not refer to specific issues with licences, as mentioned above.

The consultation period lasted from 2nd June to 17th July and was in accordance with the time periods specified in the Council’s Consultation and Engagement Standards.

Furthermore, paragraph 14.6 of the Home Office guidance, published in accordance with section 182 of the Licensing Act 2003, states that *“Subject to the statutory requirements, it is for each licensing authority to determine the extent of the consultation it should undertake, and whether any particular person or body is representative of the groups described in the 2003 Act. While it is clearly good practice to consult widely, this may not always be necessary or appropriate (for example, where a licensing authority has recently carried out a comprehensive consultation in relation to a revision to its policy made within five years of a full revision to it). As such, it may decide on a simple consultation with those persons listed.”* The policy drafted largely represented a blend of policies previously adopted by four predecessor district councils.

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	<p>As there were no dramatic changes or significant new themes introduced, it was determined by Officers that six weeks would suffice.</p>
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