

District Councillor Report to Glastonbury Town Council – March 2021

Cllr. Jon Cousins, Mendip District Councillor for Glastonbury St. John's Ward.
Member of Standards Committee and Audit Committee.
A District appointee to the Joint Scrutiny Panel of the Somerset Rivers.

Due to falling ill with Covid-19 just before January's Town Council meeting, and being unwell for a month – this is my first District Councillor report since Tuesday, 8th December 2020.

New appointment:

I am delighted and honoured to be one of the two District Councillors newly appointed to serve on the Joint Scrutiny Panel of the Somerset Rivers Authority.

Universal Basic Income:

At the Mendip District Council meeting on Monday, 22nd February, councillors passed a motion overwhelmingly to support a trial of Universal Basic Income in Mendip.

The motion was proposed by Cllr. Shane Collins, leader of the Green Party Group, and seconded by Cllr. Ros Wyke, LibDem leader of Mendip – and passed with cross party support.

Speaking after the meeting, Cllr. Collins said: "Tonight the council voted overwhelmingly to support our motion for a UBI trial in Mendip. Many thanks to the 29 Green and LibDem councillors who voted in favour. Our next step is to write to the government asking for a trial. Mendip is now one of many councils who have asked for a trial. This is progressive pressure to make sure UBI is debated at (and before) the next election."

"In a time of COVID, Brexit, Artificial Intelligence, the 'gig economy', and Climate Emergency, the amount of paid jobs are shrinking and with 5.8 million people on Universal Credit and often falling through the net, now is the time for a UBI trial in Mendip."

"UBI would simplify and replace benefits such as Universal Credit and Working Tax Credits and work alongside housing benefit and carers allowance, with additional UBI payments for groups of people who experience barriers to working, including disabled people, single parents and people of pension age – offering basic financial security for all people at a time when it is needed more than ever."