

WECA Joint Committee meeting on Friday, 1 2022

Statements received from the public

1. James Carpenter, Parish Clerk, Falfield – Thornbury High Street
2. Jean Churchill – Thornbury High Street
3. David Redgewell – Transport
4. Paul Morrish – Thornbury High Street
5. John Reynolds – Thornbury High Street
6. Tracey Gardiner – Thornbury High Street
7. Ian Gauld – Thornbury High Street
8. Janet Mann – Thornbury High Street
9. Peter Mannion – Thornbury High Street
10. Hilary Legg – Thornbury High Street
11. Gil Gilroy – Thornbury High Street
12. Bernard Crocombe – Thornbury High Street
13. Val Ricketts – Thornbury High Street
14. Clive Washbourne – Thornbury High Street
15. Stacey Kensley – Thornbury High Street
16. Graham Shipp – Thornbury High Street
17. Nat Bennett – Thornbury High Street
18. Stella Chick – Thornbury High Street
19. Christopher Griggs-Trevarthen – Thornbury High Street
20. Jacqueline and David Howard – Thornbury High Street
21. Richard Williams – Thornbury High Street
22. Lindsey Hall – Thornbury High Street
23. Brian Cason – Thornbury High Street
24. Tony England – Thornbury High Street
25. Frank Brady – Thornbury High Street
26. Angela Green – Thornbury High Street
27. Chris Tippetts – Thornbury High Street
28. Julie Burrell – Thornbury High Street
29. Michael Pownall – Thornbury High Street
30. Gil Gilroy – Thornbury High Street
31. Jenny Goddard – Thornbury High Street
32. Ann Smith – Thornbury High Street
33. Keith Parr – Thornbury High Street
34. Ian Parker – Thornbury High Street
35. David Redgewell/Brendon Taylor – Transport
36. David Redgewell – support for Portishead Railway
37. Gill Dunkley – Thornbury High Street
38. Ross Howard – Thornbury High Street
39. Tim Weekes, Friends of Suburban Bristol Railways – Portishead Branch Line
40. Thornbury Chamber of Commerce – Thornbury High Street
41. JD Cason – Thornbury High Street
42. Mr K Woosnam – Thornbury High Street

1. James Carpenter, Falfield Parish Council re Thornbury High Street

Please find below the comment of Falfield Parish Council in relation to Thornbury High Street Business Case study which was discussed at its meeting held on 21st June 2022 which the Parish Council wish to be brought to the attention of the WECA Joint Committee at their meeting on 1st July when discussing this item.

As a rural parish relying on the services in Thornbury the Parish Council response to this business case is that it singularly fails to meet the needs for everyone who is traveling in from outside the centre of Thornbury.

2. Jean Churchill re Thornbury High Street

Statement to the WECA Joint Committee, for the meeting **Friday 1 July** to decide finally on the funding application by SGC for changes to Thornbury High Street.

Please take this into consideration.

I object against the changes South Gloucestershire Council have made to Thornbury High Street for the following reasons;-

1. Toby Savage and SGC have not consulted in a fair and honourable way with the residents of Thornbury and District on what we would prefer for OUR High St.
2. The developers/designers WS Atkins they employed, at a great deal of expense, failed to do proper research into the restrictions to fully pedestrianise the High Street, where vehicle access is needed for many of the residences and businesses on the High Street.
3. The High Street is now almost in-accessible and excludes many people who have health issues, but are not bad enough for Blue Badges, as there no reasonably time limited parking. Even Blue Badge parking is restricted and un-workable. There is also quite a steep gradient on the High St. from the Castle Street end which makes it impossible for people to walk up the street.
4. Due to the very badly sign posted notices the High Street has now become dangerous with traffic in chaos, and bicycles going in all directions.
5. As the one way system supposedly runs up the High Street from Castle St., the traffic coming into Thornbury from Thornbury Hill are now causing traffic jams on Midland Way and Rock St. This is causing a build up of vehicle exhaust fumes exposing all people living on Rock Street, and especially the elderly living in the retirement homes on Rock Street.to poisonous carbon monoxide (CO) gas.
6. Many people who live on the Thornbury Hill, Alveston side of the town are no longer visiting the High Street, (unless un-avoidable for appointments, etc.) as it's too problematic and depressing to get there. In my case I also gave up working as an invigilator at Castle Street for GCSEs as that was my most direct route to school.
7. In a recent Parish Poll "Do you want Thornbury High Street returned to its pre-pandemic status of through traffic for all vehicles and timed parking bays on both sides of the carriageway?"

2567 residents voted. 1852 voted YES. 707 voted NO"

Recommendation. SGC should stop what they are doing, re-open the High Street and then do a fair and honest consultation with the residents of Thornbury and District, and the affected businesses, so working together we can make our High Street into a vibrant market town that we are proud of.

Jean Churchill, Rudgeway Resident BS35 3RT

3. David Redgewell, South West Transport Network Railfuture Severnside; Ian Beckey, Gloucestershire Catch The Bus Campaign; Peter Travis Somerset Bus Partnership and Catch The Bus re Transport

We are concerned that statements on the west of England mayoral combined transport Authority and North Somerset council Public Transport Facebook site suggest that it could take 3 year to bring public transport interchanges and infrastructure up to a safe maintenance standard.

Passenger in North Somerset council and the west of England mayoral combined transport Authority need these repairs to bus shelters in Weston super mare, Ellenborough park both side of the park Atworth road Weston super mare.

Graffiti removal on the A370 From Bristol bus and coach station to Weston super mare via Hotwells, Backwell, Cleeve , Congesbury, Worle and Weston super mare bus and coach.

A369 Bristol bus and coach station city centre Hotwells road Bower Ashton, pill , Portishead.

Shelters damaged at the suspension bridge and Graffiti on shelters in Portishead, Portbury , Gordano and pill .

A4 Bristol bus and coach station Bristol Temple meads station, Arnos vale Bristlington ,keynsham, Salford Newbridge, Weston and Bath spa bus and coach

Part of South Gloucestershire around kingswood

Realtime information displays not working in key locations including west on super mare town centre.

This is giving a very poor impression of public transport and is a maintenance issue is the metro mayor Dan Norris and his team raising the issue with The city and county of Bristol mayor , Banes leader Kevin guy council leader of South Gloucestershire council Toby savage leader and North Somerset council leader .councillor steve Bridger.

We need a van type services to maintain public transport interchanges and infrastructure.

But can not wait 3 years for basic public transport interchanges and infrastructure maintenance.

Bath spa bus and coach station need seats repaired and Tourist information point in the Travel centre as Does Bristol.

Bristol bus and coach station has broken Doors at the Entrance panel missing on the Glass roof at the Taxis stand entrance.

and No cleaning machines working.

The question of bus station maintenance is some think that should be addressed by the west of England mayoral combined transport Authority and especially with North Somerset council joining the combined Authority with the local Enterprises partnership.

The Bristol Temple meads Temple quay leveling up money also needs to look at Ferry interchanges and infrastructure at the Railway station and disabled access.

The ferry boats also need disabled lifts fittings.

The company is keen to work with Bristol city council west of England mayoral combined transport Authority and metro mayor Dan Norris on a services from the city centre to Bristol Temple meads to Netham for st Anne's and to Hotwells.

In Bath from the city centre to Weston riverside.

Ferry service can play a key role in journey to Net zero along with bus services and metro west railway services.

But for this we need a clear delivery team of co production of the city regional transport plan.

With the city and county of Bristol.

North Somerset council, Banes and South Gloucestershire council

And west of England mayoral combined transport Authority and North Somerset council.

The metro mayor Dan Norris should chair a Transport Board with Members and officers from North Somerset council councillor Steve Bridger, councillor Don Alexander city and county of Bristol Sarah Warren Banes council.

Councillor Steven reade South Gloucestershire council.

On marketing we still need a campaign for more bus drivers, cleaners and Engineers, inspectors for the bus service's

And a marketing campaign to get passenger back on public transport in Greater Bristol, Bath Somerset, Wiltshire Gloucestershire and South west England this summer.

We have a working party looking at both bus service marketing and recruitment

And one for interchanges facilities and hubs

At Bristol city council.

And at Banes the journeys to net zero forum

In South Gloucestershire council a working party on Thornbury high street.

And Rock street which we need to progress for public transport interchanges facilities.

Public transport Network forum for yate and chipping sodbury.

and equalities groups

With the bus service changes to support bus service Network and bus service improvements plan Networks

We need a meeting of the bus users forum.

On region bus services with the Bristol bus and coach station to Bristol Temple meads, Hengrove

Whitchurch, pensford Clutton Farrington Gurney chewton mendip wells bus and coach station
Glastonbury and street.

376 is failing now to connections.

At Glastonbury town hall 77 to street and yeovil bus and coach station.

29 Street and Taunton Town centre.

75 To Bridgwater hospital and Bridgwater bus and coach station.

Can this be raised with Somerset county council and First group.

DAVID REDGEWELL SOUTH WEST TRANSPORT NETWORK RAILFUTURE SEVERNSIDE.

IAN BECKEY GLOUCESTERSHIRE CATCH THE BUS CAMPAIGN.

PETER TRAVIS SOMERSET BUS PARTNERSHIP AND CATCH THE BUS CAMPAIGN.

4. Paul Morrish re Thornbury High Street

In spite of South Gloucestershire Council claiming that consultations have been carried out in the past with retail businesses in the Thornbury High Street, two premises that I have approached, one large and the other small have never been consulted on any of the proposed changes which SGC say is their vision for the future.

SGC should have consulted every single retail outlet in the High Street and recorded those results for publication.

Only then could they have claimed that a full consultation process had been carried out.

As with many other discussions between various parties, there does not appear be an official record.

There is far too much secrecy within SGC.

None of the Cabinet Members who agreed the changes to the High Street, live in

Thornbury and have no real interest in the historical features of the Town.

I agree with our MP Luke Hall, that some major changes must be made to the present plan, for the High Street to succeed.

This includes the return of Buses (ASAP), more timed parking (like there was originally) and a proper Bus layby with a raised kerb for easy access by the disabled.

5. John Reynolds re Thornbury High Street

I wish to give this presentation in person

I will not waste time in going over the numerous wrongdoings of South Gloucestershire Council in imposing their unwanted and unworkable vision on Thornbury High Street. If you have read any of the statements presented at the 28 January 2022 WECA Committee meeting, which I doubt, then

you must already be aware of these and of the fragility of the error-filled Business Case which was put forward for funding.

I shall concentrate instead on the way in which you, Councillor Savage, and your fellow South Gloucestershire councillors have failed in their democratic duty to serve the community.

Consultation, Councillor Savage, is something carried out before action is taken. You do not consult with your surgeon whilst he is operating on you. You do not consult with your builder about the layout of your house after he has already laid the foundations. Similarly, you did not attempt to consult about the future of Thornbury High Street until after you had already crippled its trading economy and caused traffic congestion with a road closure.

Did you, however, carry out engagement with the public over your plans? You claim to have held meetings with focus and stakeholder groups, but where are the published minutes of those meetings? Where are the noted concerns of the participants and the reports back to Council, for action, for reconsideration, for amendment? Where are the documented efforts by Council to find a solution and an acceptable way forward? As we all know, Councillor Savage, your engagement meetings were a sham, a tick-box veneer, and that you never had any intention of coming together in an accord with the public.

You instituted a so-called consultation, held necessarily mainly online because of Covid, but chose to ignore the majority calling for the High Street to be returned to its original form when Covid was past. Even after your consultants had massaged the statistics, you were still left with rejection by a majority. Again, you ignored this, because it did not fit with your vision. By so doing, you denied the existence of a democratically expressed opposition to your plans. You did the same with the responses to the Traffic Regulation Orders. Despite four of the five Orders being rejected by the public, your Councillors passed them all.

On the eve of a Parish Poll, you finally sent one of your Councillors to Thornbury to answer previously-submitted questions from the Town Council and the public and what a disaster that was. No spontaneity, with the Councillor just repeating the same words off his laptop that we had all read before. Why did you not come instead, Councillor Savage? Scared?

The democratically called, ordered and counted Parish Poll showed a 72% majority rejection of your High Street plan. What was your response, Councillor Savage? Total silence.

You have been called upon numerous times to come to Thornbury and explain yourself. Your disgraceful, continuous silence convinces everyone that you have no answers. And of all the South Glos Councillors, you are the only one who insists that his home address is "sensitive information". Why would that be? What are you hiding from?

If you do intend to say anything prior to the vote on funding, Councillor, please stick to the point. We have already heard how you were born in and went to school in Thornbury, but that is history and totally irrelevant. Explain, instead why you have throughout refused to talk to the public of Thornbury and have treated them like dirt. Explain why you have brought down the reputation of South Gloucestershire Council to the level of a support act for a petty dictator.

6. Tracey Gardiner

In reference to Thornbury High Street, I would like to comment both as a resident and a business owner.

The closure to through traffic and parking on the High Street has caused a great deal of anger and division amongst the community.

However, as a business owner on the High Street, I have the opportunity to observe the High Street every day. I have found that footfall is no less than pre-covid, but maybe different, in that many more families are visiting the High Street as well as the majority of previous customers, of all ages and abilities.

I can honestly say that 99% of people that use my shop all much prefer this, they feel safer, more relaxed, more inclined to spend more time here and are looking forward with enthusiasm to the changes and developments planned by sgc. This said, most would prefer not to voice this opinion out loud for fear of repercussions from groups and individuals who are against the road closed to through traffic. I have heard terrible stories of people being bullied via social media, and even in their own homes for daring to voice a positive view of the road closure.

I understand that some businesses are recording a loss in trade, but I stress some, not all. This I know is a national trend, not just Thornbury. I don't need to elaborate here, everyone knows why bricks and mortar retail has changed and needs to change further to keep up with the way people now spend both their time and money. I believe that the vision sgc has for Thornbury will bring it up to date and give it the best chance of survival whilst preserving its charm and history.

It has been reported that businesses have closed due to the road closure, I don't know of one that has closed just because of this, but I do know of at least two that are planning to open in the near future.

I would like to question the issue of the bus returning to the High Street, as to return home, passengers would need to walk through to Rock Street, and every bus user I have spoken to much prefer it where it has been moved and even say they feel safer! The four counties community bus has access to the High Street and the driver is so agreeable, even stopping outside the shops his passengers wish to go to, and collecting parcels for the less abled. Delivery drivers all report that Thornbury is now so much better for deliveries, and that it used to be the NO GO route that no one wanted to take on because of the chaotic parking and traffic levels on the High Street, the same can probably be said of service vehicles.

A huge benefit from the reduced traffic is the air quality for residents, shoppers and workers, the environment is so much cleaner and peaceful to spend time in, it's great to see people stopping for a chat with friends and neighbours in a safe environment.

With the planned development, Thornbury will have a better opportunity to host events that will attract higher footfall, and I know there are many ideas and plans for some great days on the High Street.

I would like to mention the damage caused by the media. I have watched and listened to nearly every radio, newspaper and tv interview being held here (my shop is in a great spot!) There have been an equal number of people expressing a positive view of what has

happened as those that oppose it, and guess what?? these are never put forward, after all good news doesn't sell or attract viewers!

All the media want to portray is a town full of grumpy shop keepers and pissed off pensioners, and there they have succeeded, but completely failed to get the true picture or story.

Thornbury is a growing Town, thousands of new homes have been built in the last 10 years, and the people need a town that is a destination, somewhere to shop, eat, drink and socialise. I am in agreement that people of all ages and abilities need to have access and from what I have seen so far, this has been accommodated, please correct me if I am wrong, as this seems to be the main objection to the road being closed to traffic. It is after all only a short piece of road, but can make all the difference to the future of the Town if it can be made into a safe, healthier and more attractive destination. Thornbury is looking a bit tired and sad, a face lift will do this old lady of a town the world of good, so please, stop talking about and just do it! It's been left untidy and ugly now for over two years which I am sure if making people miserable and angry.

So, as a resident, when I first moved to Thornbury 8 years ago I rarely visited the High Street, and only when an event was being held such as the food or craft market. Now, not only do I own and work in a shop situated on the High Street, I can see that as a resident I would visit more frequently and for a longer period of time than I would have before. I would even go as far as to think about moving my shop to a town that was pedestrianised now that I have got used to the more pleasant working conditions, if the road were to re-open!

With regard to the recent opinion poll held by a group of protesters, I am aware that the majority of residents had no idea that it was happening, and those that did found it incredibly difficult to vote due to the short times and hour long queues at the polling stations. I don't believe the result was a true reflection of the whole of the population. Also those who like it, didn't think they needed to vote as the wording on the advertising looked like you only had to vote if you were against the road closure. As a resident and business owner I have had ample opportunity to consult with scg about the plans, and yes it was a bit of a shock to start with, but within a few weeks I realised this could be great for Thornbury and decided to go with the positive outlook, and yes, it has worked for me.

Thank you for taking time to read my opinion.

7. Ian Gauld - Thornbury High Street

The closure of Thornbury High Street was imposed during lockdown to allegedly increase capacity for social distancing.

SGC did not consult with Thornbury residents before putting the High Street closure in place and they have continuously refused to discuss any significantly beneficial changes to their scheme.

Their “engagement” sessions were just another box-ticking exercise with no intention of registering the level of opposition. They have refused to comment on the outcome of the Parish Poll, which rejected their scheme.

Pollution and traffic congestion have increased on Rock Street, Midland Way and surrounding streets

SGC cannot justify what they are doing and are ignoring the will of the residents.

I wish for WECA to be aware of my opposition to the closure and to NOT provide the funds to make this closure permanent until full and open consultation with the residents and High Street businesses has been undertaken.

8. Janet Mann – Thornbury High Street

I do not agree with the closing of Thornbury High Street.

I am writing to you as I live in the thornbury North east ward Thornbury South Gloucestershire.

I feel despite consultations by SGC and referendums by Thornbury town Council the concerns and wishes of the people of Thornbury are being ignored. The closure of the High street has been thrust upon us by South Gloucestershire Council. In the changes to the use of Thornbury’s High Street. The majority of residents wish the High Street to be completely reopened.

The majority of residents of Thornbury are not being listened to and their opinions are not being taken into consideration.

Mostly, Thornbury High street shopkeepers do not want this. The closure of the High Street will not help their businesses to recover now most COVID 19 restrictions are lifted.

We already have a large pedestrian area in St Mary’s Way. I cannot understand why there is a need for our beautiful High Street to also be used in this way (apart from deliveries).

I have great concerns for the elderly and disabled population of Thornbury. They have now a long way to go to reach the shops, bank, charity shops, and town hall coffee mornings etc. The few disabled spaces are situated in difficult areas for them to be of help.

I feel particularly concerned for the residents of Grace Lodge who have to cross two roads to reach St. Mary’s Way.

The beauty of Thornbury High Street is now not seen by visitors to the town who are diverted behind the shopping area. The High Street before closure was our unique attraction and brought extra trade to this historic town.

Passing trade is now not encouraged.

Not enough research has been done about the traffic flow and accessibility through Thornbury and the effects on the neighbourhoods of this town

Air quality especially in Midland way and Rock Street is now poor due to all the increased traffic all converging on these streets.

Car parking is now even more of a disaster ie lack of spaces and I understand it is going to be reduced further in the future.

There has been a referendum asking all residents if they wish the High street to remain open. The majority voted to return the High Street to its completely open status.

South Glos Council has ignored this and continues to misrepresent the views of thornbury residents.

Please help to change this terrible decision for the good of Thornbury, a town that is my home and has been since 1978.

9. Peter Mannion – Thornbury High Street

Why, in what normally is known as a democracy, are the wishes of the Thornbury residents being completely ignored by most of the members of South Glos Council led by the politically insensitive Toby Savage and our MP Luke Hall?

For a change a truthful answer would be nice please as I will attend on July 1st to see who attempts to justify this pointless scheme to close a market town and decimate a local economy while wasting £4m of taxpayers money.

Attached is Thornbury High Street on a warm Saturday evening in June at 8.30pm with the measures in place. Not even a cyclist. Shame but no surprise!! (*photo available on request*)

10. Hilary Legg – Thornbury High Street

I am one of very many who object to the total lack of democratic process in this matter.

Despite public opinion it appears South Gloucestershire is determined that they know best when they don't live in the town, attend residents' meetings on the subject or even it appears to have ever visited.

Using statistics taken during lockdown and immediately after was tantamount to skulduggery on the part of the Council.

The nonsense of moving the bus stop from the High Street without prior discussion is the final straw.

Then to relocate it to the narrowest most congested piece of road in Thornbury causing massive pollution problems, traffic chaos, the almost certain cause of serious accidents and discomfort to the elderly living in the adjacent flats, making some prisoners in their homes as they cannot negotiate the extra traffic.

Having effected that stroke of genius in matter of days, to be told it would take possibly six months to reverse the decision.....why?

This is all madness and total lack of respect to an old historic market town and its taxpayers.

11. Gil Gilroy – Thornbury High Street

We all know by now that the vast majority of Thornbury residents are strongly opposed to Councillor Savages's vision and destruction of a Market town High street. In the wake of these changes, 20% of Thornbury residents are, and will be forever denied the opportunity to shop or visit the High Street again. These are the the bread and butter shoppers who kept our High Street alive kicking.

If this comes as a surprise to you, well, it's because no data has had been collected prior to the decision to proceed with the vision and closure by SGC cabinet who voted for it, they were voting

blindfolded. Shame on you, your job in public office is to protect your electorate and fight for democracy.

No good will come from burying your head in the sand and hoping for the best, these decisions should be considered from data and facts taken from a proper fair and honest consultation.

The residents of Thornbury conducted their own consultations and impact studies, and before you ask, yes by professionals. It was a Fair and Honest consultation with all stakeholders, the community and especially with the businesses in the High Street. The conclusions of the consultation were given to Councillor Savage and the other council leaders, prior to and again at the WECA meeting on 27 February 2022, they have also been circulated to every SGC councillor and is publicly available on line. And please do not insult our intelligence by quoting Atkins. To replicate the output values stated in the Economic Appraisal of the OBC. The extent of the errors and misrepresentations contained within the OBC are now apparent, and their consequent impact on the Present Value Benefit (PVB) claimed within the Economic Appraisal. The document is heavily weighted in favour of Councillor 's Savage vision of closing Thornbury High Street.

There are so many more negative impacts this closure will cause on: Business, Health, Traffic, Safety, Emergency services and of course the HUGE negative impact on the lives of 20% of Thornbury residents. How would you like your Mother & Father denied the democratic right to shop? Many blue badge holders will be denied on a daily basis. Others, Young & Old who suffer with a disability will be denied to shop in the High Street forever, unable to walk very far with a disability and with breathing difficulties, especially on the high street slope.

I implore to reconsider, think of people first and retain our High Street businesses, before it's too late. Please do not continue with this vision to just save face and hoping for the best

12. Bernard Crocombe – Thornbury High Street

If there is any democracy in local government now is the time to show it.

The majority of the people who actually live in Thornbury do not want the high street closed as was shown by the poll taken, 72% of the the votes were for opening the high street.

The high street is now under used and frankly looks quite sad why some of our elected decided to close it without consulting any of the people of Thornbury is beyond belief it makes no sense at all.

Please allow the people who live in Thornbury make up their own minds as per the poll.

One last item why is the decision on the high street being held so far away are you all afraid to look us in the eyes when you will ignore our views?

Think of US not some potty idea that someone dreamt up and can't let go off.

13. Val Ricketts – Thornbury High Street

My concerns:When people visit Thornbury, they can no longer go straight down the High Street.They go past Tesco's , Aldi's and don't see the High Street. Previously they could drive onto the High street , park , and shop in the High Street.

The High street was bustling, full of life. Now it looks awful. I loved our High Street, now I hate it.

I can't park on the High street and pop into a shop.

People who have mobility issues but do not have a blue badge can't walk from the car park to the High Street.

I believed we were a democracy, but no one is listening to the majority of Thornbury folk who would like the High street back to how it was, or single lane traffic.

The pollution in Rock street and Midland way is TERRIBLE.

Rock street is dangerous and trying to overtake a stationary bus is horrendous.

Please listen to the residents of Thornbury.

YOU ARE MEANT TO LISTEN TO PEOPLE, NOT DICTATE YOUR VIEWS.

14. Clive Washbourne – Thornbury High Street

I wish to register my objection to South Gloucestershire Council's (SGC) application for funding to finance the alteration and restrictions to be imposed on Thornbury High Street and its surrounding area. Apart from the High Street alterations to Midland Way and Rock Street are no needed.

The WECA needs to take into account that there has been no valid consultation taken place. I am aware that there are business owners in the affected area who have not had any direct approach for their opinions by the SGC. There has been two substantive petitions against the scheme which have almost been totally ignored. There has also been a Parish Poll high showed 72% wanting the High Street to be returned to pre pandemic levels. This has been ignored. SGC has stated that facilities for a bus stop will be made for southbound buses in Rock Street when they have already agreed with our local MP to permit the bus service to travel southbound on the High Street.

I have a notification that three people were responsible for initiating the scheme. That notification names Toby Savage (Leader of the Council) Mark King (Head of SGC Street Care) and a Nigel Rigler (Head of another Section). Decisions have been made by SGC Executive Committee even though none of them reside in any Thornbury Ward. It is further rumoured that one main instigator does not even reside within the SGC area. If true this would bar that person from public office with SGC and make all decisions illegal.

A High Court Judgement recently published which I have read concerning the town of Totnes and Devon County Council which found against the Council would indicate that after the Experimental Traffic Order implemented because of the Corona Virus for Thornbury High Street expired that before any implementation of a new Order there should be a public enquiry. I have commented on this to Mr Toby Savage no positive reply was received.

I would inform WECA that I have sent SEVENTY emails to Mr Savage, caused TWO public meetings, had ONE communal conversation vis ZOOM but he has NEVER met me or anyone objecting to the scheme face to face.

It is felt that funding should not be given until SGC and Mr Savage acknowledges that HIS scheme is WRONG for Thornbury and that an alternative should be publicly discussed.

Of all the public who have spoken to me the majority feel that SGC is not listening and intend to DO AS THEY PLEASE.

If funds could be found to make a legal challenge then that is what should happen.

15. Stacey Kensley – Thornbury High Street

I am writing again to share mine and my husband's feelings regarding the High Street. We are devastated by how the community is being ignored and the changes are being pushed through regardless. My main concern with the changes are:

Impact on the traffic in the town.

Walking to the high street down past the college is terrifying with young children, the pavement is so narrow you are forced into the road to pass people. I'm scared a car will mount the pavement and find the only way is to walk in a single file. Ridiculous with young children.

The volume of cars all heading out of the town via Rock Street is causing so much pollution.

The entrance to the town is depressing, the beautiful High Street now looks like there was a party that no one attended. It is lifeless and an uninspiring place to be.

The Swan pub has filled the road with ugly tables and chairs and planters filled with cigarette butts. I do not want my children to be raised in a society where all social events are focused around alcohol.

The continental outdoor seating is only going to be used during small pockets of time.

Close the high street for the market and for other events, I don't believe anyone would object to this.

Having it open to deliveries makes the closed high street a farce. You can freely walk down the road so everyone sticks to the pavements making it pointless.

Why does it have to be all or nothing? A number of people have suggested a one way system around the town. But we have been ignored.

I've lost faith in the leaders at the council and feel ignored and betrayed.

16. Graham Shipp – Thornbury High Street

Having lived in Thornbury for over 60 years I have witnessed the Town growing with housing developments and the thought of more developments in the pipeline beggars belief.

The traffic congestion due to the current situation is causing additional pollution with vehicles queuing from the bottom of Castle Street and at Gloucester Road as far as the junction with Eastland Road, particularly at school drop offs and pick ups. This is also causing extra stress to all concerned.

The High Street is dying with several shops losing trade and some shops have decided to close.

Crime has increased in the high street late at night at the weekends with anti-social behaviour.

Service Vehicles are unable to negotiate the traffic congestion at peak school times and already an elderly person has been knocked over by a vehicle in Rock street.

The costs involved to close the high street is ridiculous, this money would be better spent reducing the amount of potholes and improving the road surfaces in the area.

The majority of residents in Thornbury do not want the high street closed and want it returned to its pre-pandemic status, therefore please listen to the people who live here.

17. Nat Bennett – Thornbury High Street

I have lived in Thornbury just over three years, having relocated with my young family due to my husband's job. We settled quickly with welcoming neighbours, school community and clubs, we soon fell in love with the town, its residents and surrounding countryside.

Please find my supporting statement in relation to the closure of Thornbury's high street to two-way traffic for the final meeting to decide on the funding application by SGC for changes to the high street:

I would very much like the high street to remain closed to two-way traffic. The street has some beautiful buildings: The Swan, the old Town Hall, the quaint frontage of Rosie and Rex, the garden centre and its courtyard, the always beautifully presented shop window of Papillio as examples. The reduction in parked cars, through traffic and busy pavement at peak times has meant we can really enjoy the architecture, space, peace and quiet, let the children wonder without worrying about cars reverse parking or waiting an age to cross the road and we can take full advantage of the new seating and the new market running the length of the street during the warmer months. To access the high street we walk or cycle depending on the weather and use the car and car parks when we know we will have too much shopping to carry home. The high street is a quick and convenient shopping street where I can get gifts and cards, pet food and pet bedding, plants, household and DIY materials, food, books from the shops or library... and the list goes on. I do use Tesco, the Mall and online shopping for the wider family needs but I am also a regular user of Thornbury town centre.

I have a lot to say about the high street, I hope the attached email can reach the right people to show my support for Thornbury and share some of ideas I have, albeit I am no expert!

Public Consultation: I believe SGC have consulted and listened to the public and made changes to better enable access for all residents based on feedback. I am disappointed to learn that there is very vocal minority of residents that feel the road should be reopened and come across as angry and reluctant to embrace a change for the future of the high street and the climate. The recent yes/no parish poll inviting residents to answer the question on should the high street be reopened could be interpreted that there isn't such a strong view towards re-opening as some residents would like us to believe: only 2,556 voted out of 10,852 (less than 24% of the parish) and of that only 18% wish the high street to reopen and almost 76% did not vote. (Please note: I have taken these figures off a Facebook group and not fact-checked them to ensure their accuracy.) I feel some of the continued negativity and anger stems from the lack of consultation when the high street first closed and the lack of access for blue-badge holders. However, like I have already stated, I feel that SGC have adequately consulted and made positive changes since the challenging times of Covid which brought about the sudden closure of the high street. It would be a shame for the high street to reopen due to the views of a minority of residents in and around Thornbury and I hope any U-turn would be due to more pressing and valid reasons that come to light from your public consultations - not due to the result of the parish poll.

Investment in the High Street: Despite my positivity and passion for the high street, I am unsure of the success of the high street as it currently stands. Some anecdotal evidence seems to indicate that many young/working families don't use the high street as they feel it has nothing to offer, which is worrying. Has SGC asked residents what would bring them to the high street regularly? Have SGC looked at other successful towns to see if any of their ideas can be brought to Thornbury? My questions are: how is Thornbury being marketed to attract a greater diversity in retail: shops that both young and old would enjoy, pop-up shops, eateries, bars, independent baker/butcher/deli/etc, how can shops capitalise on the increase of home-working to catch those out for a walk, wanting something tasty for lunch, having more time in the evenings to enjoy the town because less time is spent commuting, could some shops offer a mobile coffee/sandwich/ironing collection/drop off service on some of the housing estates to serve those working at home? Are more events being planned: live music (attracting local musicians), different types of markets: arts and crafts/vintage/food/etc, family fun days. Are there grants available to shop owners to improve their façade and interior, as an example Horders is perhaps not in-keeping with the historical market town status and Ridderfords is a treasure-trove of wonderful local produce but feels dark, cramped, a little lacking presentation/TLC (I know they are well-loved, please don't think I am being unkind at their hard work and commitment to residents), the high street is much more of an experience for residents, visitors and tourists to browse, shop, eat and drink whilst enjoying a pretty, peaceful and relaxing few

hours. All the towns I have lived in as an adult: Crystal Palace, West Norwood and Malvern have put on a good variety of annual local events: craft, food and vintage markets, science fair, music event with bands positioned in and around the local streets and pubs, bands in the park each Sunday during the summer, Sunday food market and family fun day.

Landscaping: What will the high street look like once the funding is agreed and the plans are finalised? I would like to see trees being added to help improve biodiversity, climate change and enhancing the peaceful and beautiful feel the high street already has now the cars and street parking have gone. Please change the black plastic planters. I recently visited Monmouth, the town is open to through traffic but they had some really great wooden planters full of flowers and each planter also had a section of trellis to help shield the diner from the traffic, making the most of the wide pavement for visitors to walk as well as dine. I think this could work well for The Swan pub where the seating area at the front of the pub could be improved to help it look smarter and shield the drinkers and diners from the passing pedestrians, cyclists and occasional passing vehicle. As a positive note, some of the hanging baskets have fabulous displays and I like the bunting put up for the jubilee celebrations.

Parking on Castle Court: The double yellow lines have been removed from Castle Court, cars now regularly park along the length of this road and it is proving to be difficult to navigate and dangerous to drivers wanting to reach the car park and back out again. The road has a sharp bend, when the cars park alongside the Methodist hall and chip shop you can not see round the bend and are forced onto the wrong side of the road because of the parked cars but you can not see what is approaching from the junction. The majority of people parking here at peak chip shop times or Saturday shopping are not displaying their blue badges, so I assume are using the parking for convenience rather than real need. What can be done about this illegal parking as the road is well used now there is no parking on the high street. The market in St. Mary's Street car park on Saturday reduces the parking for Saturday shoppers looking to access that end of the high street or St Marys. Could this be moved to the pedestrian area of St Mary's or the high street?

Road access to the town: Some residents, and myself agree, that approaching the town from the A38 and heading to Midland Way/Rock Street does not give visitors the best impression of what Thornbury has to offer with Tesco, an industrial estate, the car park and Aldi not being the finest example of a historic town. A suggestion has been to open the High Street as one way to traffic from the Bristol Road down to The Plain. This may cut some of the traffic from Rock Street which some residents bitterly complain about. I am unsure if this plan would work as the high street may 'commuter a rat run' at peak times but it could be worth some consideration. The street could be closed to through-traffic for events.

Cycle routes and cycle schemes: As a family, we have enjoyed cycling in Thornbury having come from a very hilly town it's a joy to be on the local flat roads. I have found cars to be very considerate of cyclists, reducing their speed and giving plenty of room when passing. I would be interested to see what could be done to introduce cycle lanes around the town and perhaps introduce a trial e-bike hire to encourage those who may not have considered cycling due to fitness and/or loss confidence. It would help those who want the convenience of parking outside their favourite shop, rather than walk from the car park and helps out environment!

I think shutting high streets to through-traffic is a really positive step and hope more councils will explore the idea. We really need to encourage all generations to stop getting in their cars for short journeys and seek alternatives: local bus service (£1.50 a ticket around Thornbury), walk, cycle, e-bike/scooter, car share. The decline of the high street has been reported for years, so it is not vehicle access that is causing the decline. Make the high street somewhere people want to visit, spend time and money and the heart of our towns will be there for years to come.

18. Stella Chick – Thornbury High Street

Please can Thornbury High Street be restored to its original state prior to Covid. Closing access to cars and buses has reduced footfall and threatens the future of existing retail outlets and consequently discourages new ones from opening up.

I have lived in a village just outside Thornbury for over 50 years. It has always been an attractive old market town with a vibrant High Street and a good community spirit. The town has a long history

and much to entice visitors but sadly the traffic is now sent through the unattractive back route of the town so no-one sees the lovely flowers in summer or the Christmas decorations in the winter.

I implore you to reopen Thornbury High Street to one way traffic as soon as possible because this lovely town is going through a slow death.

19. Christopher Griggs-Trevarthen – Thornbury High Street

I have lived in Thornbury for 9 years and am raising a family here. I am fully supportive of the proposed improvement works to the High Street. Reducing vehicle movements and providing high quality public realm will make the High Street safer and a more attractive area to be, likely driving an increase in footfall and revenue for local businesses. It also represents a piece of the jigsaw of infrastructure measures needed to encourage active travel and mode shift away from private cars which is ultimately needed to tackle the climate crisis.

I would therefore urge all the committee members to approve the full business case so that this project can finally get underway.

20. Jacqueline and David Howard – Thornbury High Street

Democracy is sacrosanct

We have always:

- believed in democracy
- voted in local and national polls/elections.

We are now astounded, appalled and dismayed that despite an overwhelming majority vote by the residents of Thornbury at a local parish poll to return the Thornbury High Street to pre-pandemic conditions, South Gloucestershire Council are once again ignoring the will of the people.

What is the point of democracy, if it completely and utterly ignored?

Two recent democratic votes in Thornbury for comparison:

1. Thornbury Neighbourhood Plan Referendum

Do you want South Gloucestershire to use the Neighbourhood Plan for Thornbury to help it to decide planning applications in the neighbouring area?

Date:	Turnout:	Votes=No	Votes=Yes	% of YES votes
31 March 2022	21.25%	230	2126	89.97%

2. Thornbury Parish Poll

Do you want Thornbury High Street to be returned to its pre-pandemic status of through traffic for all vehicles and timed parking bays on both sides of the carriageway?

Date:	Turnout:	Votes=No	Votes=Yes	% of YES votes
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26 May 2022

23.59%

707

1852

72%

South Gloucestershire Council accepted and acted on the result of the 31st March 2022 vote

Whereas

South Gloucestershire Council totally ignored the results of the 26th May 2022 vote

How is this democratic?

The plans in the current business case are incomplete. The assumptions made by the consultants, Atkins, have been proved to be based on inaccurate data.

The following questions have never been directly answered:

1 Bus Stop – pull-in

The current plans to reinstate the bus to the High Street do not include a bus pull-in.

How will emergency vehicles get passed the bus, when passengers are getting on/off the bus as the bus will be in the middle of the single carriageway?

3 Trade – Economic Impact

Where is the pre-pandemic, pre-closure, economic impact assessment on what the High Street closure has and will continue to do to the traders?

4 Environmental – Increased traffic congestion and pollution

Due to the High Street closure, Rock Street and Midland way are regularly gridlocked.

Many home owners in Midland Way have installed air purifiers and cannot open their windows.

Where are the results of the pre-closure and post-closure pollution levels for direct comparison?

5 Dangerous Positioning of Rock Street bus stop together with increased traffic

Reduced visibility to overtake parked buses at the bus stop has already resulted in several accidents. The SGC plan to slightly alter the road markings will make little or no difference to the safety of the congested area.

Where is the pre-closure traffic flow assessment?

6 Cyclists – Designated Cycle Lane

The current plan for two-way cycling in a one-way single carriageway is dangerous!

Why is there no designated cycle lane in the current plans?

Buses, lorries, delivery van drivers will not be expecting cyclists to be coming towards them (often at speed, as it is downhill) especially at night or in bad weather conditions.

Where does a cyclist go/move when they are faced head-on with a vehicle in a single one-way carriageway?

The logical solution is to re-open the High Street one-way to all through traffic and reinstate short stay parking for all (30 minutes) plus designated disabled parking bays on-one side.

Democracy and logic must prevail.

21. Richard Williams – Thornbury High Street

I am writing with my objection to the closure of thornbury high street, not only have we all been fed lies about the consultation that toby savage has said he has ordered his paid council staff to do, but his refusal to face the people of the district to explain his ideas and then face questioning over them. sections of thornbury are so now clogged with traffic it is becoming unusable. Without even getting your backing for his ideas he is already ploughing on doing road alterations, so unless you have already given him the green light which it looks like you have without again waiting at least for the motion to be put in front of you, it looks to one and all this is another stitched up council whitewash where the decision is made before you hear the facts. at least in this case national newspapers and tv are looking into your behaviour and will be reporting on it.

22. Lindsey Hall – Thornbury High Street

Thank you for allowing me to speak. My name is Lindsey Hall and I am a resident of Thornbury.

4½ million pounds is a lot of money. It might not seem much to you dealing with hundred-million-pound budgets but 4½ million pounds is a lot. We have many problems in this country, and we're a bit broke. We had a massive financial crisis in 2008/9 and didn't really recover from that before Covid came along in 2020 prompting the government to spend eye-watering sums of money to keep people's livelihoods and the economy afloat. Whatever your views on Brexit, the other big issues of the 2010s, it certainly comes with a short-term cost. We now have war on the edge of Eastern Europe, inflation at 9%, predicted to be 11% or more by the end of the year, fuel at £2 a litre and the biggest cost of living crisis since the 1970s. And I remember the 1970s.

I don't recall anyone ever saying Thornbury High Street was one of those problems before certain members of South Gloucestershire Council saw an opportunity to grab some cash (all our taxpayer's money by the way) for a pet project that initially had no consultation and has consistently disregarded any due democratic process. A project to this day that few people want, and no-one needs.

4½ million pounds. I'd like you to think of all the other things you could spend 4½ million pounds on. Education, all those textbooks for schools, social care, appointments so that housebound elderly people can get the care they need. Transport - there are many in Thornbury who now have less public transport than before the closure and have less access to the High Street. There are many more.

Yet today you are considering whether to spend 4½ million pounds so that the likes of me, on the dozen or so nice days of the year when the sun shines, can sit in the middle of the road, and enjoy a posh coffee. Seriously? Remember, we live in England, not the Mediterranean.

At a time when people are struggling to afford the most basic necessities in life, are you really going to sign off 4½ million pounds on a project that has consistently been shown to be flawed and that the vast majority of the people of Thornbury have continually demonstrated they don't want, even by one of the Council's own surveys, so that I can enjoy a posh coffee or a pint of beer, sat in the road? To my way of thinking, in the current economic and political climate, that would be utterly shameful.

You have a choice Councillors. You can either turn down this terrible idea and spend a bit of the 4½ million pounds returning Thornbury High Street to the way it was pre-Covid and use the rest of the money for much needier causes in tough times.

Or, you can sign it off so that I can enjoy my coffee in the road, yet disabled people can't access that road, traffic in the surrounding roads is more busy and dangerous than it ever was, our retained fire-fighters take longer to get to callouts and vital shops and businesses pack up and leave as they're already doing with 30% less footfall that makes their businesses unsustainable.

It's a choice Councillors you can either be proud of or ashamed of.

23. Brian Casson – Thornbury High Street

1. Active Travel England Funding In May 20 Active Travel England provided £220k for cycling and walking scheme(s) in Thornbury. Also, issued was Statutory guidance Traffic Management Act 2004: network management in response to COVID to support COVID-19 published 9th May 2020 and was issued progressively to 1 April 2022. This is to provide "high level principles" to support Network Management Duty Guidance November 2004 and the Traffic Management Act 2004 for these scheme(s).

2. A cycling and walking scheme, less than 0.2km long was put in place from 8th June 2020 in an already wide and spacious High Street by South Gloucestershire Council (SGC). As described at the Full Business Case Appendix A, page 9, Background and Research Objectives and page 9 of 97 of the Full Business Case.

3. This has now culminated in a Full Business Case (FBC), diverging from that original ATE requirement to now provide a High Street Vision which was not part of that £220k ATE funding. The High Street Vision is about interventions that include outside eating and drinking, markets and events (already in place before COVID) plus other matters such as street art, sand pits, green spaces and other street furniture that are not directly related to ATE funding for cycling and walking. It has diverged because The High Street Vision was not part of cycling and walking as defined by ATE funding.

4. Divergence This divergence has occurred in three ways as follows:

a. (1) Reallocating road space measures To not investigate and explore other cycling and schemes other than a short 0.2 km length in the designated High Street zone which are:

i. Other pop-up cycle lanes and traffic speed reductions on the Thornbury estate;

ii. The Thornbury Neighbourhood Plan walking and cycling scheme at its Annex D which includes the West of England wide Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan. As required by Statutory guidance;

iii. An improved cycling and walking facility for cycling for the long upward gradient up Thornbury Hill (Bristol Road) to other pop-up cycle lanes on the A38.

These are just other examples that could have been considered within reallocation of Road Space measures.

b. (2) Engagement & Consultation and Other Considerations To diverge the Consultation aims of cycling and walking, provided by ATE funding but by introducing a Thornbury High Street Vision in the Consultation survey questionnaire. This is not part of the ATE cycling and walking funding. To then use the output of Thornbury High Street Consultation Output Report in such a way as to justify the implementation of the High Street Vision when the weight of opinion was not overwhelming for it.

c. To not include the Consultation responses of all the users of the High Street which are now missing. These are statutory consultees including bus operators, chiefs of police including emergency services and freight industry representatives as well as Royal Mail, contracted rubbish collectors and utility provider consultees.

These users use the High Street to carry out their day-to-day work duties and are missing but the interventions impact them;

d. (3) Monitoring and Evaluation To not collect the appropriate data (information) such as traffic counts (in which a pedestrian is classed as traffic leading to footfall data) including a range of traffic conditions for the seasons, working days, weekends, holidays, travel patterns and behaviours over the last 24 months as confirmatory information on which to make informed-decisions.

5. Strategic Case - Issues with Network Management Duty By not doing the above, the following has happened, and these issues will remain if the FBC funding is approved and the interventions made permanent:

a. To allow the returned buses to stop in the High Street carriageway for pick-up and drop-off without providing a bay and hence creating a congestion issue for the now "access only traffic" to the High Street;

b. To create congestion and increase the probability of road safety issues in Rock Street and its feeder roads including the exacerbation of pre-existing road safety issues known before COVID;

c. To create unloading and loading issues for those users to contravene road regulations and the high way code in a two way carriageway at the entrance of the designated intervention zone of the High Street because "through traffic" is not allowed;

d. To create parking, road safety and congestion issues between Chapel Street and The Close for the residents, the Blue Badge Holders (BBH) users parking bays that are outside the exit end of the intervention zone in the High Street when reversing, manoeuvring and for the one way entrance to Chapel Street and the two way traffic immediately outside the intervention zone of the High Street with confusing "give way" road markings for exiting the intervention zone;

e. To have created road safety issues at Castle Court involving parking, manoeuvring and delivery and pick-up for residents and users;

f. To have created a footfall reduction issue, impacting the shops, by the interventions which could have been measured over the last 24 months to confirm and understand the impacts of the interventions;

g. To not understand those users whether statutory consultees or just consultees at Para 4c for their needs and uses in the High Street;

h. To have created issues for Blue Badge Holder parking by disadvantaging them from pre-COVID levels in terms of availability and flexibility.

6. Network Management duty Guidance These issues will now persist because of the interventions now in place and are to be made permanent by the FBC approval of funds. This means that the Road Traffic Management Act of 2004 at Part 2, Sections 16, 17, 18 and 19 has been compromised by SGC as a Local Traffic Authority.

7. The Road Traffic Management Act is supported by Traffic Management Act 2004 Network Management Duty Guidance dated November 2004. For COVID and after Statutory guidance (see Para 1). This was issued as “high level principles” and supports the Act. SGC are negligent on this as the “traffic manager”.

8. Economic Case To have not done a step-by-step approach to meet the Treasury Green Book appraisal and evaluation reviewing in the following order to understand the impacts and realism of each;

a. Financial Cost Information To have ignored and not done a full appraisal and evaluation of all the options considered to understand and compare all their respective costs only. This has only been done on the High Street Vision which was not part of or proportionate to the £220k ATE funding;

b. Monitoring and Evaluation Not to use the Monitoring and Evaluation information (not collected as requested – traffic counts etc) to understand the true effects that the costs of the interventions will have with respect to the High Street and the surrounding area;

c. Monetised Benefits To use monetised benefits, to justify a high Benefit Cost Ratio, as a Value for Money case with that only one option’s financial information, which is the High Street Vision, is not a comparison. This has relied on the Active Mode Appraisal Toolkit (AMAT), a predictive model, which has yet to be demonstrated, if it is reliable, as it cannot be compared with actual traffic data, for the real world, that could have been collected over the last 24 months for Thornbury for realism. AMAT was not required as it is not detailed in Statutory guidance and has it been shown to be qualified, realistic or assessed by an extensive verification and validation programme against other real world scenarios.

9. Expenditure The total expenditure for this scheme is £5,057,000.00 and is made up of the following:

a. Sunk Costs This is £220K Active Travel England Funding plus £260k Feasibility and Development Funding as sunk costs, i.e. spent on the current High Street now in place, and then;

b. Planned Spend after Approval This is £4,577,000.00 Economic Development Fund funding planned spend or costs including £363,263.00 for car parks. This is a further £4,264,000.00 of interventions in the High Street. Included are other consequential costs of £91,825.00 on crossings, a priority change and road marking adjustment elsewhere on Thornbury roads, outside the High Street zone where the interventions are to be made permanent.

10. This is expensive and unnecessary. Now that the costs at Para 9a are sunk, and not spent wholly on cycling and walking or not appropriately intentioned then perhaps there could be a less expensive alternative. Return the High Street to “all through traffic” making the best use of the existing wide carriageway for timed parking bays with a pop-up cycle lane. This will have the advantage of reducing or eliminating those issues at Para 5, created by the interventions planned for in the Full

Business Case and reducing expenditure when compared to the only High Street Vision option when financially considered on costs.

24. Tony England - Thornbury High Street

I am writing to ask that at the meeting on Friday the Council Leaders do not give a grant for the Thornbury High Street pedestrianisation. There have been several consultations and a recent poll on this scheme, all of these have indicated a majority of local people against this scheme – which has arisen out of a short term closure due to the Covid threat. The scheme has been pushed through by Council Members and Officers of our largely urban Authority who fail to appreciate our small market town in the Northwest corner of their area. The High Street is the heart of our little town and has been rendered dead by the imposition of this unnecessary and unwanted traffic restriction. Former back streets have become clogged with traffic due to the closure, further driving people away from our town. The Leader of South Gloucestershire Council has repeatedly refused to come to discuss the closure with local residents and explain why this decision is being made against the wishes of the majority.

We wish our High Street to be returned to its former historic two way thoroughfare, not become a stereotype urban precinct. Please do not fund this unwanted scheme, in these times of increasing austerity there are far better social uses of your funds.

25. Frank Brady – Thornbury High Street

I am writing to ask that South Gloucester Council's bid to permanently close Thornbury High street be refused. My complaint is made as a resident of Midland Way which now gets at least double the pre closure traffic flow. The residents of Midland Way and Rock Street are now faced with unacceptable levels of noise and pollution. Myself and neighbours have bought air purifiers and keep our windows closed. This is not acceptable.

Traffic management in Thornbury is certainly not being properly handled by South Gloucester Council. The town is gridlocked in the morning and afternoon. It is a disaster. The majority of Thornbury residents oppose the undemocratic action by the council.

Please help us. Thank you.

26. Angela Green – Thornbury High Street

How can a plan which goes against the known wishes of the vast majority of Thornbury and district residents be considered democratic? It is not, and must therefore be dropped.

How can it be sensible to spend £4.5 million on something that is not needed or wanted? This is especially wasteful when Thornbury, with its hundreds of new houses, is crying out for all sorts of other facilities, like better health care provision and so on. It is not sensible. The plan must be dropped.

We would hope for something better from our Council than that they allow this senseless, upsetting plan to go ahead.

27. Chris Tippetts – Thornbury High Street

I am basing this statement on the government document entitled "Creating resilient and revitalized High Streets in the new normal" "Resilient high streets make sense in their local context: Local authorities should design policy interventions based on a contextual understanding of the high street in question, and the needs and demands of its users. Community engagement can be used to

build important partnerships and provide valuable insights which can support the design and delivery of projects.”

I maintain the consultation process was flawed, incomplete and did not follow a democratic process. The consultation time was reduced to 10 minutes for each appointment where most of the time was taken up by SGC council representatives telling each resident, who managed to make an appointment, what was going to happen to the High Street. There were insufficient appointments available for the majority of Thornbury residents, especially those who were working when the limited Consultation timetable was drawn up. The business owners and local residents comments and genuine concerns were ignored by SGC. SGC did not realize Thornbury High Street could not be compared to other High Street closures in South Gloucestershire because it does not have more than one relief road (Rock Street) to cope with the extra traffic generated from closure of the High Street.

In addition SGC moved the Bus Stop from the High Street to Rock Street and installed it near to the busy main car park junction. As a cyclist or as a driver this location is extremely hazardous for all vehicle users and pedestrians. At times I have had to cycle past two stationary buses by crossing the central white lines in the middle of Rock Street whilst facing oncoming vehicles traveling in the opposite direction. In addition I have to be alert to traffic emerging from the junction in front of the buses. Also Rock Street has a large private sheltered accommodation called Grace Lodge which now has to cope with greater pollution from the extra traffic. Even the new plan of moving the centre white line to give more room for the parked buses will not take away the danger of vehicles emerging from the Bath Road Junction across the path of vehicles/bicycles passing parked buses.

The elderly and the less mobile who used to use the bus to access the bus stop on the High Street have complained they are unable to conveniently access the shops on the High Street so they prefer to go by bus to Yate Shopping Centre. In one fell swoop SGC have stopped passing trade in the High Street which was part of the “life blood” supporting local businesses.

“As with any investment, projects designed to strengthen and reinvigorate the high street, they need to be financially viable and deliver clear social benefit. To increase the financial viability of socially beneficial interventions, sources of government funding are available (such as from the Levelling Up, Community Renewal, Shared Prosperity and Active Travel Funds), and there are mechanisms for sharing risk. Local authorities can invest in interventions which could have a significant impact on high streets, but poor financial planning risks undermining potential benefits.”

The High Street closure plans proposed are based on the false assumption we in the UK are part of a newly formed “Café Society” where we attempt to create areas on the High Street where people can sit outside to eat and drink. This system is completely unsustainable between September and March leading to scenes reminiscent of a “ghost town”. Businesses can no longer benefit from passing vehicle trade. This trade was vital to the survival of the businesses located on the High Street. My contention is SGC have not prepared an in depth examination of the performance of the High Street when it was open to traffic (pre covid) and compared it to the data from a survey carried out after the “forced” closure of the High Street. They would then have evidence of whether the closure had benefitted local businesses. Have the changes improved traffic problems??? Definitely not. Has there been a social benefit for Thornbury Residents??.....Less people are visiting the High Street except on the Saturdays when there is a street market.

SGC and Toby Savage have been repeatedly asked to come to meetings of the Thornbury Residents Association to discuss the plans for the High Street. All requests were refused and the lack of

information provided by SGC has been used to divide and confuse the community. I myself have no trust in the adhoc plans put forward to regenerate our dying High Street.

In addition Thornbury Accessibilty Group have submitted questions about the reinstatement of the bus stop on the High Street and the importance of clearly marking the asphalt ramps so that the partially sighted or those with macular degeneration are able to locate the ramps. The answers have been extremely vague and all attempts to obtain complete answers have been frustrated by SGC's lack of response.

"Tied to risks of digital divides, our population is ageing, with growing demand for healthcare and social services too. In tandem, there is a growing number of active retirees. High streets should adapt to serve the needs of an older population, but can benefit from the footfall of relatively young, retired visitors in stores and the involvement of similar residents in local community organisations.

High streets with high numbers of commuters and tourists will have to accommodate for each respectively, considering weekend versus weekday provision and accessibility from public transport hubs to the high street.

The main aim of any High Street reorganization should be to maintain or increase footfall during the day and evening. The present plans allow for two "dropping off points" limited to 10 mins. This situation is abused daily by drivers who pretend they need to access a "drop off point" but instead drive up the High Street to gain access to Tescos or Alveston Hill. In the mornings or evenings people are no longer able to park briefly on the High Street to increase the footfall of people using the convenience stores, the post office or our last remaining bank.

In return for their support SGC appears to have allowed the Swan pub to expand their presence on the High Street to a greater width than the width of the pub building frontage whereas other businesses are not allowed such a wide area containing tables and chairs.

SGC have reduced the accessibility for certain groups to access the High Street businesses and failed to give any meaningful explanation for the changes they have instigated.

The two photos were taken at 12.29 pm on 27/06/2022 showing the High Street. The weather was good. The sketch was posted by SGC showing their future view after changes to the High Street. Until SGC properly consult owners of businesses and Thornbury residents about the proposed plans for changing OUR High Street the grant should be withheld. In depth Traffic Surveys including Pollution Level changes before and after the High Street was forcibly closed should be part of the Business Plan.

28. Julie Burrell – Thornbury High Street

For my 88 year old father, The closure of the high street is just another social barrier.

Unable to safely manage the distance from the car parks, he is now completely reliant on me for banking and shopping. Both things he could do himself previously. We tried to park in the High Street recently. No spaces were available at the time of our appointment.

From the very beginning, assumptions have been made about the ability of the disabled and elderly to cope with all these changes. They are the silent citizens of Thornbury without the digital means to complain, or the level of health needed to attend Public Meetings.

We as Carers are having to find solutions to problems that simply need not exist. A whole section of elderly and disabled people have been marginalised and it is often those that are least able to cope with alternative solutions.

29. Michael Pownall – Thornbury High Street

“My thoughts of the closure to Thornbury High Street”. In my opinion it should never have been closed on the pretext of social distancing for Covid as there was plenty of room on both sides of the high street for this function. Toby Savage and S.G.C never consulted with Thornbury residents before putting the High Street closure in place. They have flatly refused to discuss any significantly beneficial changes to their scheme. Their “engagement” sessions were just another tick-box exercise with no intention of registering the level of opposition. They have refused to comment on the outcome of the Parish Poll, which rejected their scheme. This has killed the High Street for the majority of business.

I am very concerned that all traffic is directed up Midland Way then down through Rock Street. The traffic is congested or grid locked, the fumes from the traffic is so bad that the elderly residents have to keep their windows shut whilst pedestrians are also breathing in considerable fumes whilst they walk down rock street. We did not have this problem when the high street was fully open.

Since the closure of the High Street a bus stop has been provided in Rock Street with no lay-by for the bus to stop in to pick up or put down passengers this also causes congestion as the bus has to stop on the carriageway thus causing a dangerous precedence for traffic trying to get by.

I understand if the changes go through with the closure of the High Street there will only be a single lane available for access to shops and residents of the High Street and that there may be a possible chance to have the bus back to using the High Street one way but that no lay-by will be provided at the bottom of it, this is ridiculous as this will block the carriageway to any emergency vehicle trying to get through the high street as the bus would have no option to pull over to allow the emergency vehicle to go by. Cycles have two way access to the high street making it very dangerous for pedestrians crossing the road as all other traffic is only one way.

Our local Fire Station in Thornbury is located on Gloucester Road going out of the town. It is manned by Retained or part time personnel, in the event of an emergency they are alerted to attend the fire station by a alerter. The Retained personnel then have to drive from their workplace or home to get to the Fire Station so they can mann the fire appliance to attend the emergency. The Retained personnel do not have blue lights or two tone horns to enable them to force the way through busy traffic to enable them to get to the Fire Station **YOU ARE PUTTING LIVES AT RISK AS THE ROUT TO THE FIRE STATION IS OFTEN CONGESTED OR GRID LOCKED DUE TO YOUR INCOMPENTANCE OF CLOSING THE HIGH STREET.**

30. Gil Gilroy – Thornbury High Street

We all know by now that the vast majority of Thornbury residents are strongly opposed to Councillor Savages’s vision and destruction of a Market town High street. In the wake of these changes, 20% of Thornbury residents are, and will be forever denied the opportunity to shop or visit the High Street again. These are the bread and butter shoppers who kept our High Street alive kicking. If this comes as a surprise to you, well, it’s because no data has had been collected prior to the decision to proceed with the vision and closure by SGC cabinet who voted for it, they were voting blindfolded.

Shame on you, your job in public office is to protect your electorate and fight for democracy. No good will come from burying your head in the sand and hoping for the best, these decisions should

be considered from data and facts taken from a proper fair and honest consultation. The residents of Thornbury conducted their own consultations and impact studies, and before you ask, yes by professionals. It was a Fair and Honest consultation with all stakeholders, the community and especially with the businesses in the High Street.

The conclusions of the consultation were given to Councillor Savage and the other council leaders, prior to and again at the WECA meeting on 27 February 2022, they have also been circulated to every SGC councillor and is publicly available on line. And please do not insult our intelligence by quoting Atkins. To replicate the output values stated in the Economic Appraisal of the OBC.

The extent of the errors and misrepresentations contained within the OBC are now apparent, and their consequent impact on the Present Value Benefit (PVB) claimed within the Economic Appraisal. The document is heavily weighted in favour of Councillor 's Savage vision of closing Thornbury High Street. There are so many more negative impacts this closure will cause on: Business, Health, Traffic, Safety, Emergency services and of course the HUGE negative impact on the lives of 20% of Thornbury residents.

How would you like your Mother & Father denied the democratic right to shop? Many blue badge holders will be denied on a daily basis. Others, Young & Old who suffer with a disability will be denied to shop in the High Street forever, unable to walk very far with a disability and with breathing difficulties, especially on the high street slope.

I implore to reconsider, think of people first and retain our High Street businesses, before it's too late. Please do not continue with this vision to just save face and hoping for the best.

31. Jenny Goddard – Thornbury High Street

I am unable to attend the meeting at Midsomer Norton, but ask that my statement is considered.

I would like to request that those making the decision regarding Thornbury High Street, please listen to the points raised by Thornbury and District Residents' Association. It is not a bunch of NIMBYs who don't want change – SGC's plans are flawed, please listen to the representatives from TTA/DRA, I feel you will have to agree.

For myself I want to stress how South Gloucestershire Council has made me feel, throughout this process. Initially I attended one of the early consultation sessions at Turnberries – I found the set up extremely chaotic, cramped into half the available space, displays had clearly been mocked up at the last minute as they showed out of date information which made them confusing, meaning you had less time to take information on board...all in a time limited slot.

Throughout the process I have found the council to be quite hostile to any form of criticism of their plan, even when it is clearly flawed. Any mention of specific points are met with a vague comment about it not all being confirmed and that it's still in the consultation phase...but those very plans then go through. I have written to several councillors and either received no response at all (in spite of checking that I had send them to the correct address...Toby Savage, Rachael Hunt) or been completely fobbed off.

As a voter, I am furious that an elected body think they can simply choose to actively ignore the wishes of voters. The initial questionnaire put out to residents of Thornbury clearly demonstrated that SGC's plan was not wanted – they even commented as such in their following leaflet. However they still pushed on with it. There has been a recent poll in which 72% said they wanted the High Street reopened, but SGC still pushes on with their unwanted and costly plans. Why can't Thornbury

be permitted to choose its own future? SGC seems determined to make us into some sort of leisure destination, why can't we be permitted to be the small, thriving market town we were prior to lockdown? I have come to the conclusion that SGC used lockdown as an opportunity to close Thornbury High street, because they knew it would be almost impossible to achieve this under normal circumstances, it certainly was not due to social distancing, in fact some of the new measures actually caused a bottle neck in parts. Sadly, once in place the plans are proving almost impossible to reverse post pandemic... hopefully only almost and common sense will prevail! It does make me stop to consider, what else are this group of elected people choosing to do out of ignorance or vanity at the expense of tax payers?

Please consider the effect on democracy that choosing to impose something will have. Residents of Thornbury already feel marginalised— we have no direct access to speak to the council, as the One Stop Shop was removed from the library some time ago. To compound the issue, the phone is sometimes not even answered and I have found the website does not always function either.

32. Ann Smith – Thornbury High Street

Well, I guess my Subject Heading says it all!! In my view, and in the view of the almost 2000 people who voted for our high street to be returned to its pre-pandemic days, our South Glos Councillors had made up their minds that their 'vision' for Thornbury was going ahead whatever the wishes of the majority of its residents. Our Councillors wouldn't even listen to the suggestion in making the town centre a one way system, thereby alleviating the chaos that occurs now in all its surrounding streets at peak times.

So, as I sit writing this email to you at almost the end June, the storm clouds are gathering overhead. Another downpour is imminent and no one in their right minds would sit out in it. So far this summer we have had hailstorms, high winds, rain, below average temperatures but little of summer sunshine. But hey, our councillors have got their hands on a pot of money which they are desperate to spend, even if it destroys the very fabric of our town.

I'm now classed as one of Thornbury's 'elderly' residents. But it's the likes of me and all the other 'oldies' who use the high street on an almost daily basis. If our councillors are hoping that the newly arrived residents are going to fill the 'Plaza' (I'm calling it a plaza because I'm sure the name High Street will be discarded very soon), eating and drinking and enjoying the ambience around them, then think again because it's the younger residents who are struggling to make ends meet and won't have the money to fill the coffee shops and restaurants.

Nothing will stop South Glos now. The fight is almost over. Even though the Brexit referendum didn't go everyone's way, it was a democratic vote and the result was adhered to. Not so with our vote. I knew it was a foregone conclusion when someone asked one of the council team overseeing the voting process taking place in St Mary's Church Hall in May whether she had to put a cross or a tick on her ballot paper. The reply she was given was "You can put a cross, a tick or a smiley face if you like". That was the moment I knew that no matter what the result, nothing would stop South Glos Council from continuing with the destruction of our town! What a travesty?!!

33. Keith Parr – Thornbury High Street

Hi I understand you lot have a big public meeting tomorrow and Thornbury High Street I have looked at all this very carefully and taking very good advice there have been a number of extreme amounts off Fallings in all this we all know the Thornbury Chamber OF commerce has not been pulling there wat with all this we all know South Gloucestershire Council and Thornbury Town Council and chamber of all had private meetings in all the lock downs with the west of England combined

authority and atkins and Bristol City Council and Bath and North east Somerset Council about getting extreme amounts of tax payers money from the west of England combined authority to waste 🗑️ in paying atkins extreme amounts of tax payers to close the High Street to all traffic we all so know your trying to put people out of business and work you have not had any public consultation no planing application's whent in no emergency vehicle's and the air ambulance and police helicopter can get on it so its all dangerous and as no charity events can not get on it this year the Thornbury carnival parade and travelling fun fair for the Xmas lights switch can not be on it so not only is it all very dangerous it could all be illegal as your refusing to let charity events on it the good news is paperwork has been sent to the charity commission and they have sent something back to confirm they got it all so it looks like it will go back to full normal soon or it goes to court

34. Ian Parker – Thornbury High Street

Re the disaster South Glos Council have inflicted on the residents of Thornbury

This is our history, this is Thornbury's history, it's not up to one man to undemocratically change it without properly consulting with the residents who actually live here in the town, this through road is the gateway in & out of our town, it's the first thing people see when they enter our town & the last when leaving.

Toby Savage the leader of SGC in my view is simply out of his depth on this, the whole high street debacle appears to be his very own little vanity project gone terribly wrong and we the people of Thornbury are paying for it with the ongoing disruption to our town & surrounding roads which is so unnecessary & unneeded, neither he or any of the others involved with this total farce live in Thornbury so they don't have to put up with the disruption they have caused here, the money that has been wasted so far on this is an absolute outrage.

SGC need to listen to the people of Thornbury, 72% of the recent vote were against their changes & want the high street to return to its pre pandemic status, the councils own online consultation which was so heavily biased towards closing the road, the result of that was very much against the changes but SGC are just not listening, they seem to have a simply we no best attitude.

We used to have free flowing traffic throughout the high street & rock street areas of Thornbury but now all this extra traffic is all diverted on to rock street with all the vehicle emissions now here whereas before it was spread evenly between the two through roads and I also noted the emissions were never a problem when the high street was open to through traffic, but now is a big problem on rock street & also on midland way.

So far Dan Norris has been the only one to have shown any real interest in the problems SGC have caused here in Thornbury & has taken the time to actually come to the meetings held here in Thornbury whereas Toby Salvage never seems to be available to come and face the residents of Thornbury & explain himself, Dan Norris gave us hope the money would not be released without full & further consultations etc, Savage new this then changed the source of the funding as he knew Dan Norris wouldn't sign off the money for his unwanted vanity project so used this route with a simple nod from his fellow council leaders.

Now we also have the road changes about to alter the road layout around rock street & the two mini roundabouts on midland way to try & relieve the problems they themselves have created with closing the high street as a through road, a total farce you simply couldn't make this up.

Finally please do not sign off & release the money to SGC with this man Toby Savage in charge, we want our high street returned as it was before he got involved, we have seen what he has done with the money he has had so far & the mess he has left us with & will continue to leave us with here in Thornbury

35. David Redgewell on behalf of Brendon Taylor - Somerset Catch the Bus Campaign and Bus Partnership-

Public statement Somerset catch the bus campaign and Somerset bus partnership.

We are very concerned about the proposed the first group bus service Network review in the west of England mayor combined transport Authority and North Somerset council. First group bus service review with the new unity Somerset council .

AT meeting last night we had representatives from Bath and North Somerset council area , North Somerset council and mendip District council. Stakeholders and passengers were worried about the following services. With a number of cross border services

Such as 126 from weston super mare bus and coach to locking, Banwell Winscombe,Axbridge cheddar,Draycott and wells bus and coach station.

D1 Bath spa bus and coach to Bathampton limpley stoke Winsley Bradford on Avon Trowbridge Westbury warminster and Salisbury 24 connections.

D2 Bath bus and coach station to Midford Norton st Phillips, Rode Beckington and Frome sainsbury's.

Services 20 .

Berrow,Brean,uphill hospital Weston

Berrow!,Brean uphill hospital, weston

super mare bus and coach station

With connections from Taunton town ,Bridgwater bus station,Highbridge and Burnham on sea services 21 .

174 ,173 Wells bus and coach station to shepton mallet, interchanges or chilcompton,Midsomer Norton ,Westfield Radstock, peasdown st john ,Bath spa bus and coach station

376 Street Glastonbury, wells bus and coach station,chewton mendip Farrington Gurney Clutton pensford whitchurch Hengrove knowle Bristol Temple meads and Bristol bus and coach.

At wells bus and coach station and not Glastonbury Town hall these services connect with services 29 To street and Taunton Town centre and musgrove park hospital.

75 to street and Bridgwater bus and coach station.

77 Wells bus and coach station to Glastonbury hospital Town hall somerton , ilchester and yeovil bus and coach station

These cross boundary services are very important in the historic county of Somerset.

At the cheddar meeting the issue of the lack of a Sunday and Evening services to on 126 from wells bus and coach station to Draycott , Cheddar Axbridge winscombe Banwell locking and Weston super mare Somerset bus and coach station was addressed and link to Bristol and Taunton.

The Falcon coach services from Bristol bond street to Bristol Airport ,churchill East Brent ,Bridgwater ,Taunton Wellington , cullompton,Exeter,Newton Abbott and Plymouth coach station.

Was of concern about connections.

And Connections from the cheddar valley cheddar, locking Banwell and winscombe.

Passenger information on bus stops and interchange were very important in North Somerset. Bus shelters being cleaned

Timetable information repairs and bus shelter cleaning.

Between sidcot , winscombe Banwell and locking Weston super mare bus and coach station have the I point not working.

Ellborough park and Ashworth road need repairing .

On The Bristol bus and coach station Bristol Temple meads station Farrington Gurney corridor the local councils want better realtime information systems and displays and realtime information from chewton mendip Wells bus and coach station, Glastonbury and street.

173 via chilcompton,174 Bath spa bus and coach station to peasdown st john Radstock Westfield midsomer Norton paulton chilcompton wells bus and coach station or 174 via shepton mallet interchanges

171 172, 173, 174 corridor is very important better Bath spa bus and coach station, Peasdown st john Radstock Westfield midsomer Norton paulton.

And to shepton mallet interchanges and well bus and coach station.

The 376 Street, Glastonbury, wells bus and coach station, chewton mendip Farrington Gurney Clutton pensford whitchurch Hengrove knowle Bristol Temple meads and Bristol bus and coach station.

Stockwood/ whitchurch Hengrove knowle Bristol Temple meads station Bristol Cabot circus city centre park street, Clifton Down station ,Westbury Henbury ,Henleaze, Southmead hospital bus station cribbs causeway bus station.

These are important city region Transport corridors and where they cross the corridor Borders in Somerset the Somerset Authorities need to work together.

On the bus service improvements plans

We need to sea discussion on the services reviews between the west of England mayoral combined transport Authority and North Somerset council and Somerset county council.

On First group services reviews .

and bus shelters improvements information and realtime information systems. Especially at bus and coach station like wells in Somerset. Glastonbury and street, Radstock ,midsomer Norton paulton shepton mallet.

We also need Somerset cross boundary marketing campaign for public transport bus timetable booklets and maps for the historic county of Somerset.

SUPPORT CATCH THE BUS CAMPAIGN

IN SEPTEMBER IN SOMERSET AND SOUTH WEST ENGLAND.

in September we have Somerset and National catch the bus campaign we are hoping the west of England mayoral combined transport Authority and mayor Dan Norris and North Somerset council leader Steve Bridger will support the campaign with the leaders of South Gloucestershire council Toby savage, Kevin guy from Banes council and mayor Malvin Rees from Bristol city council.

Transport executive councillor Don Alexander, sarha WarrenBanes ,stephen reade ,south Gloucestershire and steve Hodges North Somerset council.

We Do hope the mayor of west of England mayoral combined transport Authority Dan Norris and councillor steve Bridger/ will call a bus forum to talk about the Network services review as will Somerset county council after their review Bus Advisory Board meeting on the 14 th April 2022 .

We also want to see better bus link to Frome railway station and castle cary station from the mendip towns and the city of wells.

And Highbridge and Burnham onsea station.

36. David Redgewell – support for Portishead Railway

The Portishead Branch Line (Metrowest Phase 1) Order Phase 1 – app.ref. TRO40011

The reopening of passenger services of the railway branch line between Portishead and Pill, and improvement the existing railway line between Pill and Ashton Junction.

Joint Representations from 10 Bristol Citizens

We the undersigned wish to respond to the above and have our representations considered in respect to this application for development.

We request that in determining this application the Planning Inspectorate consider the following:-

1) The climate crisis places an imperative on all decisions we all now make to ensure the reduction or elimination of carbon in the realising, constructing, and operation (plus disposal) of our developments.

a) The upgrading and reuse of an existing rail line fulfils many of the objectives to decarbonise our future and we fully support the intention of this development.

b) The future energy source that will replace most of our carbon based energy is sustainably generated electricity. This is the case for transport generally and railways in particular.

c) We appreciate that the clearance under the new overbridge at Portishead is designed to accommodate future electrification of the line. The existing tunnels and bridges may not accommodate overhead electrification, but nothing should now be done that will hinder the future electrification of this railway line in full or part.

d) We understand the proposed rolling stock is diesel electric. This means of transport replaces much more carbon intensive alternatives by road and is welcome. But diesel electric rolling stock by passenger kilometre is not as efficient as fully electric rolling stock which should be used.

e) Considering that if this application is approved, the earliest date for operation of the service

is in 2024/25; this is half way through the 9 years left of our estimated expenditure of the carbon budget to stay within 1.5degs. As a consequence we believe diesel will not be an option in 5 years time and the need for electrification will be unassailable.

f) The railway line between Pill and Ashton Gate runs through an exceptional landscape, the gorge and below the Clifton suspension bridge, and is of international significance. If full future electrification is undertaken only the least visually intrusive single post and cantilever arm support should be considered.

g) If part electrification of the line is the most economic and practical solution, rolling stock would run using either battery power or overhead line. Such stock is available now and is in demand elsewhere. Before the line is opened it is not unreasonable to expect design and technical development of this mixed powered rolling stock and therefore in this development should be constructed now to run electric rolling stock..

2) The frequency of service, as well as the journey time, is key to the success of any railway

a) " A second stage may be promoted separately in the future, to upgrade to a half hourly service. This second stage would require separate statutory processes, business case and funding package. There is currently no programme for the second stage". PORTISHEAD BRANCH LINE DCO SCHEME ENVIRONMENTAL STATEMENT, VOLUME 1, NON TECHNICAL SUMMARY 2.1.1.

The Portishead Branch Line (Metrowest Phase 1) Order Phase 1 - 9 of Bristol Representation Page 2

We consider that this should be implemented now to help mitigate the climate crisis, to accommodate the new demand at Ashton Gate, and as stated below.

b) The journey from Portishead to Temple Meads is predicted to take about 23 minutes, and the proposed service at 1 hour intervals.

"The service between Portishead and Bristol Temple Meads would take 23 minutes and stop at Pill, Parson Street, and Bedminster.

"The alternative 'hourly plus' service involves passenger trains operating every 45 minutes during peak period." PORTISHEAD BRANCH LINE DCO SCHEME ENVIRONMENTAL STATEMENT, VOLUME 1, NON TECHNICAL SUMMARY 2.4.1, 2.4.2

c) We think that most people would consider the proposed 1 hour service frequency limiting and the hourly plus frequency of 45 minutes inadequate. Considering the urgent need to develop public transport alternatives, and encourage the use of this railway in particular;

this service frequency is too low.

d) In the worst case, to make a connection with half hourly trains to London, a journey from Portishead might include 40 minute wait to leave Portishead, plus 23 minute journey followed by a wait of 25minutes at Temple Meads – a total of 1hr 27mins. If train departing times were co-ordinated at both ends of this journey, the best case, the time would be about 25 minutes but realistically many would consider they would need to plan connections and leave at least 1 hour. If the perception of a connection time is this long, other means of transport begin to compete.

e) The number of passing places should be increased to ensure that the frequency of service can be improved in the future.

3) The application for the proposed development does not include a station at Ashton Gate. We consider a station should be included for the following reasons:-

a) The potential to increase service frequency is improved if a station and passing place are located at Ashton Gate.

b) Bedminster station is about 0.9 mile from Temple Meads, Parson Street a similar distance further away from this important terminal. The next station is at Pill, about 5.7miles beyond the city boundary, Of this section of line about 1.1miles are in the built-up area of the city to Ashton Gate. We suggest the spacing of urban stations should not be more than 0.5 mile apart (15minute walk). This would place a new station at Ashton Gate.

It should be noted that to the north, on the other existing branch line from Temple Meads to Sea Mills, the stations (Clifton Down, Redland, Montpelier, Stapleton Road, Lawrence Hill). are spaced at 0.5 miles, half of that on the proposed new passenger line.

c) Historically there was a railway station located at Ashton Gate, at the request of and, to serve Ashton Court Mansion.

d) In addition to the existing and recent residential area developments in the area, there are currently important uses and institutions that an Ashton Gate station would serve:-

i) Bower Ashton Campus of University of the West of England

ii) Ashton Park School

iii) The Create Centre

iv) Ashton Court conference, visitors centre, events and theatre

v) Ashton Park (leisure and festivals)

vi) Bristol City, and Bristol Rugby Club football ground and proposed 230 bedroom hotel, 30,000 sq ft office and 165 dwelling , 4,000 place conference centre which, subject to planning permission, will open at the same time as the proposed railway.

e) Transport routes also converge on Ashton Gate with the potential for interchange:-

i) Guided bus fast route

ii) Bristol ferry

iii) Airport bus service

iv) South Bristol outer circular route and Portway to Avonmouth

v) Festival Way and other cycle routes

f) A station at Ashton Gate would also reinforce existing and new commercial activity in the immediate area.

g) The proposed demolition of the Plimsoll Bridge and associated elevated road structures (necessitated by the excessive maintenance costs) provides the potential for the integration of a new station at Ashton Gate.

4) A new station at Ashton Gate should:-

a) be planned to give primacy to pedestrian and cycle access integrated with that of the Plimsoll bridge replacements

b) give good pedestrian and cycle route access to all 3 d), 3 e) and 3 f) above.

5) Objections to creation of a new station at Ashton Gate have been cited, namely:-

i) Cost of station construction, road improvements and access, associated parking etc.

ii) The need to accommodate heavy peak demand arising from:-

(1) Football and rugby matches at Bristol City football ground and most weekends during the season.

(2) Ashton Park festivals i.e. Balloon, Kite, Music, occasionally during summer.

iii) These peaks require longer stations and more rolling stock and better access which is needed along the whole line.

6) However these have to be considered in the context of the primary purpose of this railway. It does not make sense to bypass all of the public facilities at Ashton Gate because the railway is to be built with a limited capacity. The proposed railway line's design should not foreclose provision for these peak demands, limiting operational policy and a possible increase of service

frequency; for instance, a shuttle service between Temple Meads and Ashton Gate.

The climate crisis and carbon budget militates against anything that reduces our ability to reduce carbon based activities, reduce energy consumption; this railway has this function.

Further extra capital and revenue costs will be offset by:-

a) Additional use (ticket payments) and the facility provided

b) The integration of the new station access with the proposed new and simplified road layout replacing the Plimsoll Bridge should have opportunity for considerable cost savings.

7) We believe that new transport infrastructure should anticipate a low carbon future and serve the needs of the communities it passes through. It is a false (dangerous) economy not to properly build this into the proposals for this railway line.

The non-technical summary of the submission states what are considered to be the benefits of The Portishead Branch Line (Metrowest Phase 1) Order Phase 1 - 9 of Bristol Representation Page 4 the proposed railway line:-

“The DCO Scheme is predicted to provide:

- employment generation through additional train drivers, train managers, station and facilities managers and infrastructure maintenance;
- reduced journey times and congestion; and
- wider regeneration benefits throughout Portishead, Pill and the West of England.

“Measures incorporated into the design to promote wellbeing and improved access for vulnerable groups include:

- ensuring that the new stations are accessible by all modes of transport and facilitates walking, cycling and other public transport trips to and from the stations”

PORTISHEAD BRANCH LINE DCO SCHEME ENVIRONMENTAL STATEMENT, VOLUME 1, NON TECHNICAL SUMMARY 4.8.5, 4.8.6

We applaud these but say they are partial in effect. These benefits are not equitably provided along the route of the railway line; the line runs through the Ashton Gate area with no access for vulnerable groups, potential users and employees who live and work in this area of Bristol.

8) Finally we do not wish to delay this important improvement to Bristol’s transport infrastructure.

We urge the Inspectorate to approve this development, conditioned as necessary, but with the proviso that nothing is done that may impede concurrent or future improvements similar to those suggested above.

37. Gill Dunkley – Thornbury High Street

The closure to 'through traffic' of Thornbury High Street is one of the major and *divisive impacts* that Thornbury has had in its long history (100 years ago, the saga of the Pump may have been an equivalent, in the 70s the building of South Glos Council Offices in Castle Street(demolishing a period property) being probably the most recent). As an Authority SGC have enormous work to do to regain the trust of their electorate.

Fundamentally, this High Street Scheme has been imposed and evolved on false premises and hence the **SGC request for funding on the basis of this Business Case should be rejected** in order that due and appropriate process can take place.

Since the presentation of the Outline Business Case, there is further evidence to support this view.

1. For the first time *since 2020*, an SGC Councillor responsible for the High Street scheme decision making (Councillor Steve Reade), attended a Public Meeting and agreed to answer pre-submitted questions - this was an Extraordinary meeting of Thornbury Town Council on 25th May 2022. Questions had been pre-submitted by Thornbury town Council, those supporting the proposed scheme and those seeking its return to Pre-pandemic status. Frankly, the 'answers' given were unacceptable to *ALL* parties and in many instances failed to answer the questions posed and displayed a degree of 'arrogance' that has been evident throughout this whole process.
2. Thornbury Town Council were requested by residents to hold a Town Residents Poll on 26th May

'Do you want Thornbury High Street returned to it's pre-pandemic status of through traffic for all vehicles and timed parking bays on both sides of the carriageway'

The cynic in me would query why after nearly 2 years, a Cabinet member would come to Thornbury the night before this Poll?

It is fair to say that in the 40+ years I have been a resident of Thornbury and most likely in living memory, there have never been **sustained queues at polling stations** as there were for this Poll. From the time they opened till the time they closed(the last 45 mins after the official closure as people had joined the queue prior to 9pm), queues were there waiting **for UP TO AN HOUR** to record their views. This was unprecedented. This serves to demonstrate the **strength of feeling** that people had. In addition, there was exasperation by those unable to have a postal vote and likewise for those who live 'outside' Thornbury Parish and were unable to record their view.

The results of this Poll were very clear, 2567 residents voted, **72% YES and 27% NO**. **If you compare this to the very first Consultation that was carried out, the results are startlingly similar! Overwhelmingly, residents want it returned to pre-pandemic status.**

Perhaps we can now all agree, that this so called 50/50 split that SGC have suggested to be the case is totally false. No doubt it will be said that only 2567 of a possible 10884 voted. However, I will remind SGC that they actually considered the vote of only 2363 residents to accept Thornbury's Neighbourhood Development Plan. Hence, if it was appropriate for the Neighbourhood Development Plan, it should be for the High Street too. I suspect that the polling rate is also not dissimilar to local election rates when not combined with a General Election, and Councillors readily accept their seats.

SGC then put out a statement within 24 hours demonstrating the same arrogance that we have become used to, that they would forge on with their plans.

3. To date, The Scheme implementation has been a shambles. 'Restricted parking zones' that are unworkable, parking bay times totally inadequate, at least 2 accidents on Rock Street that I am aware of, queuing traffic, that did not previously exist etc.
4. No formal plans available for comment or true consultation.
5. No genuine analysis of the impact on current business in the High Street.

I have not done a further analysis of this Business Case, fundamentally it has all the same flaws of the Outline case, for which I did some analysis.

I also recognise that most that I send this to will not do me the courtesy of reading my full submission. I will attach it though for those of you that feel it is appropriate to consider the views of residents.

I will leave you with a further thought. Most 'younger' people have to earn a living and do that typically 9-5 Monday to Friday. Given that a typical trading week for the High Street is Monday-Saturday 9-5, that means that for over 80% of the trading week it is usually the 'non-workers' (older people/young carers) that will generate the greater proportion of the High Street economy. Hence recognise, that this group is who the High street serves the majority of the time and their voice IS critical to the economy of the High Street and ALWAYS will be. 25% of Thornbury residents are over 70.

I thought this picture too might demonstrate how a 'thriving High Street' did work!... complete with cyclists, pedestrians ... and even cars and buses!...I think this demonstrates and contrasts the total lack of life we see now over 80% of the time!



I do have a question, I would like to know if this Scheme **in anyway** generates a measure that 'contributes' to SGC net zero target?

Please, do not continue this sham democracy that we have been subjected to and reject this bid, so that genuine analysis can take place, to upgrade the public realm appropriately for the residents of Thornbury.

38. Ross Howard – Thornbury High Street

I have always believed in democracy and voted in local and national polls/elections.

I can't believe that despite an overwhelming majority vote by the residents of Thornbury at a local parish poll to return the Thornbury High Street to pre-pandemic conditions, South Gloucestershire Council are once again ignoring what the people want.

What is the point of democracy, if it's ignored?

The logical solution is to re-open the High Street one-way to all through traffic and reinstate short stay parking for all (30 minutes) plus designated disabled parking bays on-one side.

Democracy and logic must prevail.

39. Tim Weeks, Friends of Suburban Bristol Railways – Portishead Branch Line - MetroWest Phase 1

FoSBR were pleased to see a diverse cross-section of local groups and individuals attend our recent event at Pill in support of the Portishead Railway reopening. All were united by a desire to see the MetroWest Portishead project completed. Local councillors, residents and transport campaigners were there. We also received messages of support from MPs whose constituencies the line will serve. There can be no doubt that project is widely supported.

We now call on the West of England Combined Authority, North Somerset Council and the DfT to ensure that this scheme is funded. This is a generational opportunity to transform travel in the region, which must not be lost.

Here are a few of the comments we received:

Reintroducing passenger services on the Portishead line is part of establishing a modern transport network for our area, similar to those being developed in other city regions in the UK. If we are to take the environment and climate change seriously then modal shift to connected trains, trams and buses is essential. Re-opening the Portishead line to passengers is one of the easiest ways to start this vital process.

Martin Garrett, Transport for Greater Bristol

I'm supporting FoSBR in reopening Portishead Rail line.

Cllr David Wilcox, Lockleaze

Local residents and indeed rail travellers from the Bristol region as a whole have been kept waiting long enough for this new embodiment of an old line. It is now vital from many viewpoints, from ease and convenience for local commuters to feeding into the wider West Country and indeed nation-wide response to the current and worsening state

of Climate Emergency. Thank you Central Government for what you can do to facilitate this, as locally it has (mainly for funding reasons) come to an impasse! -

Anna G, local resident

Railfuture welcome the proposed reopening of the Bristol Temple Meads to Bedminster, Parson Street, Pill and Portishead railway and call on Grant Shapps to fund the missing £15.5 million to allow the line to open as part of MetroWest .

David Redgewell, Rail Future Severnside

40. Thornbury Chamber of Commerce – Thornbury High Street

Our High Street was closed under an emergency traffic order on 08/06/2020 with no consultation with local businesses and residents, and has remained so since. There have been various tweaks but essentially our road remains closed to through traffic and is only allowed for access for deliveries and drop offs. This has had a huge detrimental effect on both the local businesses trade, and access for vulnerable less mobile people. Businesses are moving from the High Street to other premises, both in and outside Thornbury. The closure of these businesses is not as we are being told due to “people shopping online” but directly in response to a drop in footfall. We are a small rural market Town and our High Street was the lifeblood of not only residents in Thornbury but in the surrounding villages. Prior to COVID we had a thriving High Street and had bucked the trend of other High Streets for many years, prior to the road closure we had 95% occupancy of shops. With the road reinstated there is no evidence that this would be any different. South Glos have had over 2 years to prove the benefits of their current plan, and there are none. Shops/businesses are closing and footfall is down dramatically.

South Glos Council have not followed the due process in implementing their experimental traffic scheme which they then made permanent in June 2021. They still have not undertaken the correct consultations. There has been no impact study for these changes in relation to economic harm or pollution.

A Residents Association formed because of the High Street changes asked for a referendum but they were refused and so called a parish poll which was undertaken on the 26th May 2022 and the result was a resounding yes to have the road reopened. This was held under parish poll rules where people had to attend in person and with only a 5-hour window, so you would expect a very low attendance rate. There was a 23% turnout for this poll and a resounding 72% want our road reopened. The polling stations were overwhelmed with people queuing for over an hour, for the whole 5 hours the polling stations were open.

This whole scheme is causing the close-knit community in Thornbury to become very disillusioned in both the state of democracy in our country and also the Conservative party in general.

We as a chamber believe that proper consultation has not been undertaken and we have been kept informed by the Residents Association as to the details contained in the business plan submitted for the release of funding and we are not convinced proper and full consideration has been made to the impact on both the business and environmental consequences of these changes. Why has South Glos refused continually to look at other options suggested by many organisations within Thornbury, who have knowledge of the Town? This is a huge amount of money to be spent without proper and

full consultation. There is clearly some support on all sides within the Town, for a proper one way system to be trialled but this has continually been refused, why?

Dan Norris the WECA mayor intervened and said he would not release funds until he could see proper consultation had taken place, and now it seems that the vote is being changed again to the 4 unitary authorities, rather than the WECA Chief Executive, why is this? £4.5million pounds of public money being spent on something the majority of the Town do not want in the current financial climate is reprehensible without other options being given proper consideration.

We urge you to halt this process and hold the funds until a full and proper consultation can be undertaken, and other options have been considered. We would urge a trial of a proper one way scheme, with parking and a bus stop reinstated in the High Street, this would seem to be a sensible and cost effective compromise.

41. JD Cason - Thornbury High Street

1. Within the many documents made available to the public on Thornbury High Street it is noted that from ECS78/2021, dated 17th November 2021 “.....£1,081,923.89 allocated to active travel fund (VT856) within the Directorates 20/21 Capital Programme (of which £943466.87 has been spent to date. Should the scheme be abandoned or part abandoned, any remaining funding would be reallocated according to the grant conditions.” and that from Report to: Cabinet 7th June 21“...£220K has been allocated...”

2. Work started on the Rock Street Care Home Pedestrian Crossing Island funded at £14,379 this Tuesday/Wednesday (27/28th Jun 22). This is listed in the Full Business Case at Page 38. **As the Full Business Case has not yet been approved by the WECA Joint Committee Meeting on 1st July 2022, it is wondered what the purpose of the Joint Committee is, when work starts in advanced of approval!**

3. Whether it was £220k, or £1,081,923.89 for active travel, or the sum of the both respectively or that the £220k is included in £1,081,923.89 or some other combination with perhaps other SGC towns allocated. Thornbury High Street has so far has been left in a sub-optimal physical state with the Network Management Duties not carried out fully. To get to this state of a reduced footfall and a range of users left with a less than an optimal use or conditions imposed by the interventions for them to work has occurred in the High Street – perhaps an unintended feature of the interventions now in place.

4. South Gloucestershire Council (SGC) was asked to carry out a number of activities as part of their Network Management Duties. This is when implementing cycling and walking schemes under Statutory guidance Traffic Management Act 2004: network management in response to COVID-19 initially published on 9th May 20 by the Department of Transport. It was updated and the last issue was on 1st April 2022 and applies to highway authorities.

5. In carrying out these activities SGC:

a. Restricted the allocation of the scope of cycling and walking to a very short length, of one eighth of a mile in the High Street only but the High Street was already wide with non-essential shops closed so was it really needed. No other alternatives were reviewed such as other pop-up cycle lanes, the Thornbury Neighbourhood Plan and better cycling up Thornbury Hill **as required by Statutory guidance: Reallocating road space: measures;**

b. Did not actively seek to collect data, counts and or information over the last two years on the performance of the interventions in the High Street **as required by Statutory guidance: Monitoring and Evaluation;**

c. Have not consulted fully with a range of users that require access and use of the High Street **as required by Statutory guidance: Engagement and Consultation;**

d. To have provided an inconclusive Consultation Output Report on cycling and walking as the High Street Vision was introduced. This does not reflect a proportionate spend on the High Street,

within the Active Travel England (ATE) funding allocation, **as required by Statutory guidance: Other considerations;**

e. It is recognised that this “Report to: Cabinet” states dated 7th June 21 “ *allocated to temporary measures...*” but the Consultation Output Report states that, “*On the 9 May 2020 the Department for Transport issued statutory guidance of the reallocation of road space to encourage cycling and walking and enable social distancing*” and that Statutory guidance intent, later, in time, was to make these cycling and walking schemes permanent or a lasting legacy which was supported Minister of State by Chris Heaton-Harris MP in his letter dated 20 July 21 Active Travel Schemes supported by Government Funding - to Leaders of all combined, transport and highway authorities in England.

6. Because the above activities have not been done fully, the requirements detailed in the documents below have not been met:

a. Traffic Management Act 2004, Network Management Duty Guidance, November 2004;

b. Traffic Management Act 2004.

7. The following will now remain for Thornbury:

a. Congestion issues created by the interventions in Thornbury High Street – **Traffic Management Act 2004, Part 2, Section 16;**

b. A reduced efficiency in the expeditious movement of traffic – **Traffic Management Act 2004, Part 2, Section 16;**

c. SGC as the local transport authority, the “traffic manager” has not demonstrated that it can identify road congestion issues, the expeditious movement of traffic and in turn introduced, by not demonstrating Value for Money interventions at the Economic Case of the Full Business Case in the High Street. Value for Money cannot be demonstrated as only one option has been financially reviewed by SGC and the consequences of these interventions are not recognised by SGC. Thus SGC as the Local Traffic Authority is not effective in the performance of their duties. This includes the Authority’s decision-making process - **Traffic Management Act 2004, Part 2, Section 17;**

d. SGC have not taken cognisance of Statutory guidance as the ATE funds have not been spent appropriately on cycling and walking as intended by the national authority. This means that the Network Management Duties of the Traffic Management Act 2004 has now been compromised or not followed as intended by the national authority’s published Statutory guidance - **Traffic Management Act 2004, Part 2, Section 18;**

e. SGC have created a lack of data, counts and information which represents real world traffic (not based on a model to forecast monetised benefits) patterns and behaviours for the roads and therefore cannot make informed-decisions on them and nor can the national authority request this for the last two years because Freedom of Information requests have declared that it has not been done or not available – **Traffic Management Act 2004, Part 2, Section 19**

8. If the Active Travel England (ATE) funding had been spent proportionately then the now costs of the cycling and walking scheme for the High Street maybe within the region of £220k but it is now £4,223,737.00 which is disproportionate, as only £220m was allocated for around 1186 small (748), medium (347) and large (91) sized towns including Wales (Source ONS – Census 20011). That is £185k per cycling and walking scheme per town including Wales!

9. This funding has not been spent appropriately as it leaves a range of matters concerning the Traffic Management Act 2004 not resolved as the ATE funding was used to create a High Street Vision which is also not appropriate and not needed for that cycling and walking intent provided in May 2020 through ATE funding.

10. There is a solution that could resolve some of the above which is to explore the result of the Parish Poll held on 26 May 22 as it reduces the interventions (the costs) and reduces in turn the impacts to congestion but improves the expeditious movement of traffic. **However this is too late as the purpose of the Full Business Case has been undermined as work has already started before**

approval or agreement by the WECA Joint Committee. This is the Rock Street Care Home Pedestrian Crossing Island.

11. It is noted that other cycling and walking schemes are to be implemented in the future – it is doubtful whether SGC can do this based on the approach taken in Thornbury so far.

Note: The congestion and expeditious movement of traffic is created by the interventions as follows because:

1. In Rock Street -because there is more traffic;
2. Between Chapel Street and The Close – because there is Blue Badge Holders parking bays and the resident parking where there is manoeuvring and reversing in a two way section at the south end of the one way access only exit point to the High Street;
3. Between Castle Court and The Plain - because in the two way section of the High Street where there is no access to the High Street residents' vehicles, traffic and delivery vehicles manoeuvre, reverse and if delivery vehicles then unload and load breaking the highway regulations and the Highway Code;
4. A Bus Stop in the High Street – because it is in the carriageway intervention zone for pick-up and drop-off of passengers, i.e. no bus stop bay;
5. The interventions prevent users in the High Street covering emergency services, Royal Mail, freight delivery, rubbish collection services and utility services having a more flexible, through access and ease of use to carry out their work duties and for Blue Badge Holders to have a reduced access by limiting their parking.

42. Mr K Woosnam re Thornbury High Street

I am not addressing you to-day as a representative of any local or resident's group. But I have lived in and around Thornbury for almost 50 years.

I therefore believe that my knowledge and experience of my town, its character, community, and daily life far exceeds that of those who do not live, or work, or take any part in the life of our town nor contribute in any way to our local communities.

That is to say, the supporters of this funding application, South Glos. Council.

I fully endorse and rely upon all of the points and issues raised in objection by TTA/DRA but do not see any purpose served by further rehearsing in detail, those highly cogent arguments.

I will therefore confine my submission to one issue : The failure of the Council to enact the clearly stated will of the people of Thornbury to re-open our High Street following the extraordinary powers that allowed for the 'Temporary Closure' during the unprecedented Covid 19 virus public control measures; this instant measure was conducted with such speed that it was totally impossible to first carry out even the most primitive of base or background studies (such air pollution, traffic numbers, high street footfall, business turnovers, parking use, numbers of elderly people using the local transport to the high st, etc)

So : The subsequent contentions of the council in support of its clearly stated desire to permanently close the high street were totally without any evidential foundations : And, as such fatally flawed.

The Council formed a view that this closure should become permanent based without any supporting evidences, on a theory (held by a small and vociferous minority) and only then sought the 'Consultation of the Thornbury residents).

The local consultation responses showed a large majority in support of reinstatement of the High Street to its 'Pre-pandemic use'.

The council ignored this result because it did not align with what they wanted to see happen

In anger and frustration, the local businesses (who had been sidelined) and separately the local residents formed several groups to try to influence the council decisions, going forward

All of those protests and requests for 'true and meaningful public engagement' fell upon deaf ears "there are none as deaf as those who choose not to hear".

As a result of that continual contempt for the views of the residents, and due to the commitment of those few people who would not accept the rejection of their right to be at the forefront of this community life decision, they arranged for a local (Thornbury Town [Parish]) referendum, this was held under the direct supervision of the Council's own returning officer and overseen by him personally.

In view of the shortness of time available and without access to the voters register, the organisers' (mainly through Email) did a magnificent job in mobilizing a turnout of over 24% of the entire voting community.

The council have chosen to ignore the results of this democratic voting process because 72% voted to return our high street to its original pre-pandemic position.

If you can in all conscience decide that this setting aside of the results of that democratic process and the clearly stated decision of the residents is irrelevant and that funding should be awarded to now carry out this unwanted vandalism of our high street, then you will also be complicit in the burial of the concept of public and community engagement.

Please think hard before you act.

End