

Somerset West and Taunton

Rebecca Pow MP
The Great Western Hotel
Station Approach
Taunton
TA1 1QW

Our Ref: FS-R/RPMP0921

Date: 29 October 2021

Phosphates discussion

Dear Rebecca,

Thank you for your time this morning on the phosphates issue, as you will no doubt recognise the Council are doing everything in their power regarding the phosphate's issues both as the Local Planning Authority and in providing the funding and delivery of interim solutions. We discussed these interim measures and our concern over the land take that would be necessary were the creation of wetlands to be considered as a viable ongoing option, our view being that it is not, but may help bridge the gap until a strategic solution is in place.

We also discussed the need to have national policy mandate the Water Authorities to upgrade their treatment plants as a matter of urgency. Our measures, if successful to the levels we hope them to be, won't be sufficient to clear the backlog in our current planning system.

We were pleased to hear you describe this as an emergency as that reflects our view also. We believe that the Water Authorities should be given a timeline in the region of 18 – 24 months to put in place an updated Asset Management Plan to take account of this situation and that Natural England should consider the requirement and then the commitment from the Water Authorities sufficient to support the planning process.

Yours sincerely,



Cllr Federica Smith-Roberts
Leader, Somerset West and Taunton Council