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Cllr David Fothergill
Somerset County Council

14th January 2021

Dear David,

I received your letter this morning. I am copying my response to Parliamentary colleagues and the press – just as you have done.

Somerset County Council's use of government Covid-19 emergency funds continues to provide cause for concern. Published council papers show that almost £10million has been sitting in a non-allocated SCC reserve fund for several months. Some of that money appears to have been shifted into a car park reserve fund. The publication of "Your Somerset", a freesheet which carries extensive advertorials for SCC's unitary ambition, is also being financed with Covid-19 grants.

The latest published financial appendices in advance of next week's SCC Cabinet meeting clearly state that Covid grants are not ring-fenced. If the government has not ring-fenced this money then **you** have a moral duty to the people you represent to account to the public for every penny.

One reason I no longer attend your "briefings" is because they reveal nothing and I have never been convinced that I have been told the entire story. Additional proof of your reticence has been conveyed to me today. I understand you have been given exact figures for the current state of vaccinations in the area served by SCC but have so far refused to divulge them. Why the secrecy? If the infection figures can be published so should vaccination figures.

Your letter states that there are 700 redeployed Somerset county council staff involved in helping to rollout the vaccination programme. 700 may be your ultimate hope, but so far only ten per cent of that number has been deployed.

Covid has is causing tragic human cost. Truth should not be another victim. I hope you clearly understand this.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'I L G'.