

# Minutes of ANNUAL PARISH ASSEMBLY

Held on

Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup> May 2021

## Apologies

Apologies were received from Cllrs F Derbyshire & S Roach together with County Cllr M Squires & District Cllr B Deed

## Present:

Cllrs V Maylan, A Melville, J Wright, S Cross & L Trebble

6 members of the public

The Chairman gave a resume relating to the regulations overseeing an Annual Parish Assembly and confirmed if the Chairman was present then he/she must chair the meeting. The Chairman stated that due to COVID 19 an Annual Parish Assembly did not take place during 2021. The Chairman emphasised that the meeting was an opportunity for Parishioners to raise any issues of concern for consideration by the Parish Council. This meeting was not the annual meeting of the Parish Council but the annual meeting of the Parish.

## **1. Minutes of the Annual Parish Assembly held on Monday 28<sup>th</sup> May 2019**

The Chairman stated that as it was 2 years since an Annual Parish Assembly took place he assumed that parishioners would not be able to recall the discussions at the 2019 meeting and he therefore gave a resume of the content of the 2019 Minutes.

Mr John Barrett proposed the 2019 Minutes be accepted as a true record. Mr Wise seconded the proposal. A vote was taken with 7 in favour and 4 abstentions

## **2. Annual Report by Chairman of Parish Council**

The Chairman reported that it had not been possible to hold a Parish Assembly last year due to Covid restrictions and it was encouraging to see things, including this meeting beginning to return towards normality.

Over the last year the Parish Council had been continuing its role by working virtually and meeting via Zoom, which has proved successful, although some of our projects such as the wider consultation on speed restrictions, "20 is plenty" and the use of shared spaces have not been possible to progress.

During this last year many parishioners will have lost loved ones to the COVID virus, know of those who have and suffered hardship. The community spirit across the Parish has been commendable through so many acts of individual kindness and support including the Silverton Angels, community food larder and book swap scheme. All self-initiated by members of the community coming together to support others.

The Chairman stated that he had previously reported that due to lack of volunteers to help with maintenance the Jubilee Garden was looking very neglected. He was pleased to report that this area

has now been remodelled to provide an area that can be used by everyone and arrangements have been made for the Parish Council contractor to upkeep the area.

The old skateboarding ramp area, which had become unsafe had now been landscaped to provide a grassy bank and the broken children's roundabout has been replaced with new equipment. The cost of play equipment is significant and at a recent budget meeting the Parish Council agreed our focus would be on ensuring adequate maintenance of equipment and replacement of old worn-out items rather than on any new equipment schemes.

The Parish Council had undertaken a safety assessment of the lime trees on the Bury, an area of historical importance to Silverton, and taken all remedial action highlighted.

The clock at St Marys Church has been refaced and gilded and now provided one of the best examples in the locality. Albert Campbell, the parish clock winder and captain of the bell ringers, provided valuable advice and co-ordination in the completion of this work. An oak plaque dedicating the restoration in the memory of Councillor Jenny Roach had been placed inside the clock tower.

Access to the little rec opposite the Spa shop had been remodelled to ensure those with mobility needs were able to make use of the space.

The Parish Council had a contract for much of the grass cutting that takes place in the village and had entered into dialogue with MDDC about asset transferring those small areas of grass which it owns to the Parish Council. This would give the Parish Council control over the grass cutting of these areas. This has progressed more slowly than the Parish Council would have liked due to Covid restrictions but is now back under active discussions.

Potholes and road repairs are raised regularly in consultations. The Parish Council are aware of the problems and parishioners are reminded that reporting these themselves via DCC website is the most effective way to have them resolved.

The Parish Council is one of the consultees on planning applications, however the decision-making body for all planning matters in the Parish is the District Council. The Parish Council has made comments on various planning applications during the past year, the majority of which we have been able to support.

It is with regret that Silverton Football Club unexpectedly and without prior notice ceased to exist leaving the Parish Council responsible for the upkeep of the area. A community fund raising venture had raised the money for new goal posts, which are being installed imminently.

Silverton village remains very challenged with car parking issues both in the Square and at times High St/Fore Street. Whilst there are no quick or easy solutions to this complex issue the Parish Council remains cognisant of it when commenting on planning applications and liaising with both the County Council and emergency services.

As the Parish Council set the budget for the year it became necessary to increase the precept to realise an overall budget of £34,000 which is an increase from £26,500 the previous year. This takes account of inflation and works which the Parish Council needed to make provision for including tree maintenance, asset transfer of taking over MDDC grass areas, and maintenance/replacement of parish owned equipment.

There are still vacancies to be filled and we would encourage anyone who would like to join us to make contact with either the Clerk or myself for more details.

The Chairman stated that on behalf of this Annual Parish Assembly he would like to publicly record its gratitude to the Parish Clerk, Shelia Woodland, for her support, knowledge and tenacity in helping the Parish Council to continue its work especially during this last year.

### **3. Reports by Local Organisations**

Reports were received from the following local organisations:

Friends of Wyndham House Surgery	St Marys Church Bellringers
Silverton Memory Café	Silverton History Society
Silverton Walk & Talk Group	Silverton Neighbourhood Plan
Silverton & Exe Valley Seniors	Silverton Community Hall
St Mary's Flower Club	Silverton Drama Club
Silverton Evangelical Church	

### **4. Matters brought forward by the Chairman**

Mr John Kilkaldy made a plea to the Parish Council to reconsider its decision to remove the Book Swap from the Bus Shelter. He stated the scheme was working well and it was kept tidy and clean every day. He stated the scheme was a benefit to everyone in the village and excess books are passed on to Charity. Mr Kilkaldy felt that as this was working well in the Bus Shelter it should be left alone as he felt it was in the right place and well supported. In particular the Drama Club would as the Parish Council to reconsider its decision.

The Chairman explained the Parish Council had to balance the needs of everyone including people who use the bus stop. The Parish Council supported the Book Swap moving to a new position in the Little Rec in order to release the bus shelter back to the community, some of whom have felt unsafe when using the bus stop due to coming into close proximity with parishioners looking at the various books. The Chairman stressed that Miles Snowdon and Christine Pryke were generously giving their time and are working with the Parish Council in relation to the re-siting of the Book Swap. The Chairman confirmed the Richard's Educational Trust had approved the idea of the Book Swap on the Little Rec.

Mr Wise informed the meeting that parking in the Square was becoming impossible and he was aware someone had recently been issuing yellow tickets for parking infringements. He asked if there was anywhere that could be utilised for off road parking in the village. The Chairman pointed out that parking was a real challenge in the village with not many opportunities to provide an uplift in parking spaces. The Chairman stated that there may be small areas of land when MDDC had completed its Asset Transfer of grassed areas which could be used. Rather than trying to increase parking space Parish/District Cllr Wright had been looking into different transport schemes. Unfortunately Cllr Perkins had to step down as a Parish Councillor due to currently living outside the parish. Cllr Perkins had been looking to have a consultation (his expertise) with the parish with the assistance of Cllr Wright on the issues of parking, traffic flow etc. Parish/District Cllr Wright stated there had been an increase of developments with the legal requirement for parking only 1.8 cars per household. He said that Silverton as a rural community and when any traffic surveys are carried out the results are not high enough to trigger any action and the Parish Council needed the

public to put forward suggestions. Mr B Croome pointed out that parking is addressed in the draft Neighbourhood Plan but it does not highlight any particular areas. The draft Neighbourhood Plan does ask for 2 spaces per house. Mr Wise asked if there was any possibility of acquiring any land to ease the pressure of parking?

Meeting closed: 8:15 p.m.