

Minutes of the meeting of Silverton Parish Council
held Monday 5th June 2023 at 7.30 p.m. in the Silverton Community Hall

Present: Cllr S Cross (Chair), O Kennard, V Maylan, E Trebble & S Hedges

District Cllr R Roberts and County Cllr M Squires

Minute 113717 **Apologies for absence**

Apologies had been received from Cllr Josh Wright

Minute 113718 **To consider any nominations to be co-opted to the Parish Council**

None

Minute 113719 **To note any Declarations of Interest**

(a) To declare any personal interests in items on the agenda and their nature

None

(b) To declare any prejudicial interests in items on the agenda and their nature (Councillors with prejudicial interests must leave the room for the relevant items)

None

Minute 113720 **Meeting open to any questions from members of the public – 10 mins**

Mr Wise queried why Hederman Close had been upgraded again this year when there were other areas in the village which desperately needed resurfacing or potholes filled. County Cllr Squires explained that patching of an area was carried out one season with the surface dressing being carried out the following season. These works were part and parcel of the same scheme. With regard to drainage problems County Cllr Squires stated that drainage problems do not get sorted as quickly as potholes

District Cllr Roberts explained that one of the key points of new District Cllr training in relation to potholes was to stress to members of public that these should be reported on the Devon County Council website. District Cllr Roberts confirmed his intention was to work closely with the Parishes within his Ward and to help the Parish Council in any way he could.

Minute 113721 **Minutes of the Meeting held on the 15th May 2023**

The Chair proposed the Minutes of the meeting held on the 15th May 2023 be accepted as a true and accurate record. Cllr Kennard seconded the proposal. A vote was taken with all Councillors present in favour.

Minute 113722 **Review of Action Plan**

Item 2 - Banking - it was noted that NatWest had explained to the Clerk every signatory needs to complete the form at the same time in order to generate the necessary additional forms. It was agreed the signatories would consider this item further after the meeting.

Item 5 - Old Fire Station - The Chair confirmed there were continuing issues. A TORT Notice had been served on the main Scout Association but the Association had responded to the effect that this must be dealt with by the local Tiverton Scouts. The main Scout Association had forwarded the Notice to the Tiverton Scouts but nothing further had been heard. The expiry date in relation to the notice is the 1st September and if the Scouts have not removed the items by that date the Parish Council will be able to dispose of them. The Chair reported that the Old Fire Station had been tidied up so the items belonging to the Scouts are one side and the Street Market are happy to sign the Licence and store their items on the other side. The Street Market will potentially be using the building from the 17th June.

Item 6 – Plaque for tree planted to commemorate the late Queen’s Platinum Jubilee - The Clerk had attended Timpsons in Tiverton and been given a quote of £107.00 for a brass 8” x 8” plaque with any writing on the plaque being free. It was noted that the Big Rec Committee had obtained a similar plaque on line much cheaper and it was agreed the Clerk would check the price on line.

Item 7 - Gate – Mr Wise confirmed he had asked Capricorn Engineering to contact the Council but the Clerk reported that to date she had not heard anything from the Company.

Item 9 – replacement bin liners – this item was complete and can be removed from the Action Plan

Item 10 - Cobbled Path - It was reported that Mr Maylan is currently in discussion with Mr Peter Smith regarding a possible project which could result in the path being included within another project but this is not likely to be until the Winter months. It was noted that maintenance of the path needs to be considered.

Item 11 – Revised Stagecoach bus timetable – no update

Item 12 – Information Plaque to be placed on Old Fire Station – Cllr Wright to be asked to update at the July meeting

Item 13 -Skatepark Quotation – on the Agenda

Item 14 – tree works on Bury the quotation had been accepted and this item can be removed from the Action Plan.

Item 15 – King’s Coronation – this item can be removed from the Action Plan

Item 17 - WI commemorate seat – The WI will erect the new bench after the Street Market. Delivery of the bench would be in the near future and as it comes flat packed the Chair had suggested it be stored in the Old Fire Station until after the Street Market

The Chair informed the meeting that Sharon Milton had offered a picnic bench to the Council to be sited on the Little Rec. The Chair proposed the Parish Council accepts the kind offer and liaises with her in relation to collection. Cllr Maylan seconded the proposal. A vote was taken with all Cllrs present in favour.

Item 18 – cost of play inspections – this item can be removed from the Action Plan as the MDDC Quotation had been accepted for the financial year 2023/24

Item 19 – Consultation re library services – this item can now be removed from the Action Plan

Item 20 – purchase of Ukrainian Flag – flag to be obtained

Minute 113723 **Discussion with on any relevant issues with County Cllr M Squires and District Cllrs Wright & Roberts**

County Cllr Squires apologised she had not been able to attend for a while. She confirmed she sits on the Children’s Scrutiny, and it does look like they are now turning a corner. She attended the Social Services offices recently and they are training the youngsters in readiness for when they leave care. The number for children in care has increased with 902 being in care the last she was aware. A lot of the children have additional needs (asylum, special needs etc) all of which costs more. She said essential workers are finding it difficult to find affordable housing. County Cllr Squires confirmed she will request a meeting between herself and the Neighbourhood Officer and the Parish Council as an update to the meeting which took place last year.

Cllr Maylan asked if the area has any Educational Pyschologists and County Cllr Squires confirmed Devon County Council has but she was not sure if any were available for the Mid Devon area but she would check.

The Chair welcomed District Cllr Rhys Roberts as the newly elected District Cllr for the North Ward. District Cllr Roberts confirmed he had a lot of training to undergo and had that afternoon carried out planning training which he felt was very interesting. He confirmed the Planning Department were now fully staffed and moving forward with effectiveness and have set targets. He has been asked to sit on the Audit and Scrutiny Committees. He confirmed the Political structure has now changed and the Lib Dems will dominate for the next 4 yrs.

Minute 113724 **Planning**

(a) Applications:

23/00741/HOUSE – Erection of link extension to rear following removal of existing door canopy – 1 Fore Street, Silverton

Cllr Maylan proposed the Parish Council recommends approval of the above application. Cllr Kennard seconded the proposal. A vote was taken with all Cllrs present in favour.

23/00732/LBC – Listed Building Consent for the erection of link extension to rear following removal of existing door canopy – 1 Fore Street, Silverton

Cllr Maylan proposed the Parish Council recommends approval of the above application. Cllr Kennard seconded the proposal. A vote was taken with all Cllrs present in favour.

Cllr Maylan pointed out that a Class Q Prior Notification had been submitted to MDDC but the Parish Council was not a consultee for such applications. After discussion Cllr Hedges proposed the Parish Council write to the local MP pointing out the Parish Council was not notified on Class Q prior notifications and asking if he could investigate. Cllr Maylan seconded the proposal. A vote was taken with all Cllrs present in favour.

(b) Approvals / Refusals by MDDC

Listed Building Consent for alterations to bathroom to include removal of stud wall – 1 High Street, Silverton

Approval – erection of side extension – 24 Silverdale, Silverton

(c) Any other Planning matters

None

Minute 113725 **Finances**

(a) Monthly invoices

Chq 002732 Mrs S Woodland – Clerk’s wages (£671.76) expenses (ink - £24.00) = £695.76
Chq 002733 Mr D Marsden – Contractor’s monthly invoice - £300.00
Chq 002734 Marbles FD Limited – Internal Audit fee - £480.00
Chq 002735 Parsons Landscapes Limited – grass cutting - £894.24
Chq 002736 Silverton Street Market – contribution to costs - £500.00
Chq 002737 Westcotts – Annual Accountant’s fee - £48.00

The Chair proposed the above cheques be approved for payment. Cllr Kennard seconded the proposal. A vote was taken with all Cllrs present in favour.

Cllr Maylan pointed out that with all the recent dry weather and the lack of growth was the next grass cut needed as she understood it was not recommended to overcut grass areas. It was agreed the Clerk would contact Parsons Landscapes Limited regarding this.

(b) Other financial matters

(i) Review purchase of Silverton Parish Council Banner

Cllr Kennard confirmed she had been waiting for the logo. There are two types of pop up banners one which costs £75 and £110 for a better quality one. After discussion the Chair proposed a pop up banner be obtained with “Silverton Parish Council” in colour for £110. Cllr Maylan seconded the proposal. A vote was taken with all Cllrs present in favour. It was also agreed to add the email, Facebook and website addresses to the banner. Cllr Kennard will obtain a mock up version of the proposed banner and circulate to all Councillors for approval at the July meeting.

The Chair proposed that item (v) be taken at this juncture. Cllr Maylan seconded the proposal. A vote was taken with all Cllrs present in favour.

(v) Financial update by Chairman

The Chair reminded Cllrs that the budget setting meeting had taken place in January when

the figures prepared had been considered and a budget had been set. At that time the amount of money noted in reserves was £31,333 and out of that figure was dedicated the sum of £15,000 to General Reserves and the remainder to the Earmarked Fund. The Chair said since she had been nominated Chair for the forthcoming year she had reviewed the figures and discovered there was not as much available as was thought at the Budget Meeting. The balance at the end of the financial year 2022/2023 was £12,596.99 and not £31,333 as noted at the time. There is an explanation of the deficit in the Internal Auditor's report. She had met with the Clerk the week after being nominated and the figures had been considered in depth and they had made sure sufficient moneys were available to pay all expenditure for the forthcoming year. The Internal Auditor had highlighted a reserves error. The Chair confirmed she had looked at the reserve figures and had just reduced them down. The General Reserves was £15,000. The Parish Council's Financial Policy states that the Parish Council should have in reserve 6 months annual expenditure but it then goes on to say when under extreme financial pressure there should be a reserve of 3 months salary to staff – i.e. the Clerk. She had calculated the figure for 6 months Clerk's salary and NI as £4,149.00 + NI. She therefore suggests the amount in General Reserves be amended to £5,000. The sum of £4,000 to trees to be reduced to £3,000. The agreed contribution of £2,000 to the Community Hall was paid at the end of the last financial year and is therefore not included in this year's budget. With regard to the Community Fund, all sums due in relation to the Kings Coronation had been paid and it had been agreed to contribute £500 towards a Youth Worker and therefore she felt this figure could remain at £2,000.00. This leaves the Earmarked Reserves with £2,596.95 for general maintenance and therefore the Parish Council will have to be very mindful with their spending during the current financial year. The Chair stated she was now keeping an Excel spreadsheet of the monthly total of expenditure and the Clerk will continue to do the banking. The Chair proposes she checks the monthly figures with another person checking the finances quarterly and report back to the Parish Council. If the Chair feels the finances are not on track she will report back at the next meeting. Cllr Hedges seconded the proposal. A vote was taken with all Cllrs present in favour.

Thanks were expressed to the Chair for explaining the current position and how the Parish Council will move forward with measures to keep an eye on all the finances

(ii) To consider Report by Internal Auditor for year ended 31st March 2023

The Internal Auditor's report was noted and his comments taken on board.

(iii) To appoint Parish Councillor to carry out quarterly financial checks

After discussion the Chair proposed Cllr Maylan be appointed to carry out the quarterly financial checks. Cllr Kennard seconded the proposal. A vote was taken with all Cllrs present in favour.

(iv) To complete:

a) Section 1 of the Annual Governance Audit Return for year ended 31.3.2023

A copy of the AGAR had been circulated to all Councillors prior to the meeting for their information purposes and it was agreed the following replies be given:

Q1 = Yes

Q2 = Yes
Q3 = Yes
Q4 = Yes
Q5 = Yes
Q6 = Yes
Q7 = Yes
Q8 = Yes
Q9 = N/A

The Chair proposed the above replies be forwarded to the External Auditor. Cllr Kennard seconded the proposal. A vote was taken with all Councillors present in favour.

b) Section 2 of the Annual Governance Audit Return for year ended 31.3.2023

The Chair confirmed the set of figures shown on Section 2 of the AGAR reflected those which were submitted to the Internal Auditor and she proposed these be agreed as a true and accurate record. Cllr Kennard seconded the proposal. A vote was taken with all Councillors present in favour.

The Chair initially inserted the Minute Reference in Section 2 in the wrong box which she crossed out and initialled.

(vi) To review quotation received from Evolution Skate Parks

The Chair confirmed there was circa £6,500 in the budget for repairs and she therefore proposed the Parish Council accept the quotation from Evolution Skate Parks in the sum of £2,845.14. Cllr Maylan seconded the proposal. A vote was taken with all Cllrs present in favour..

Minute 113726 **Annual Review of Statement on Internal Control**

The Statement on Internal Control had been circulated to Councillors prior to meeting. The Chair proposed the Statement be accepted and approved. Cllr Kennard seconded the proposal. A vote was taken with all Cllrs present in favour.

Minute 113727 **Annual Review of Policies**

Social Media Policy – there is duplicated wording which needs to be deleted

General Privacy Policy - **this** refers to Thomas Westcott – needs amending to Westcotts.

Complaints Policy – Practice spelt wrong

Reserves Policy – Chair proposes leave as is and review again if any issues arise will review.

It was noted 3 policies mention European legislation (Data protection, Diversity & Privacy) and it was agreed these policies will be reviewed prior to June 2024.

The Chair proposed the above action in relation to the various Policies. Cllr Hedges seconded the proposal. A vote was taken with all Cllrs present in favour.

Minute 113728 **Neighbourhood Plan update**

Cllr Kennard reported that the Consultation Reg 16 Consultees' comments and the Examiner's queries have now been responded to by the Neighbourhood Plan Committee and returned to both parties. The responses have also been uploaded to the Parish Council Website :

<https://www.middevonparish.co.uk/silverton/neighbourhood-plan>.

Minute 113729 **June Mini-Market report**

Cllr Kennard gave the following report:

Christine Pryke had asked if concrete slabs could be placed in front of the Book Swap. The Chair reported there are Section 106 monies available for improvements on the Little Rec of circa £8,500. She reported that this may cover a concrete path to run in front of the Book Swap and to the new RBL seat. A request had also been received from a parishioner for a water butt coming off the Old Fire Station, the water collected could then be used to water the flowers at the rear of the War Memorial. It was agreed "Improvements to the Little Rec" be an Agenda item for July.

Minute 113730 **Complaint received relating to youths behaviour in the Recreation Field and in particular in the area of the pergola**

A complaint had been received from a parishioner whose garden overlooks the Recreation Field regarding children/youths climbing on the pergola and bad language generally from the children/youths who sit in the pergola late at night. It was agreed any unsocial behaviour should be reported to the police. After discussion Cllr Maylan confirmed she would research anti-vandal paint which could be painted on the roof of the pergola. It is believed that this paint does not dry and anyone climbing on the roof of the pergola would find themselves covered in paint. It was agreed that the Parish Council would welcome any residents to attend the meeting to discuss any issues relating to the Recreation Field.

Minute 113731 **Correspondence**

It was noted Cllr Luke Taylor had been elected Leader of Mid Devon District Council with Cllr Frank Letch being appointed as its Chairman

Minute 113732 **Matters brought forward by the Chairman**

It was noted the Parish Council had today received a message from Simon Steer (also on Facebook) encouraging the Parish Council to let grass/wild flowers grow for the benefit of insects. It was agreed this to be an Agenda item for July.

It was noted the Clerk will be absent in July due to pre-operative recovery. Cllr Kennard had kindly agreed to take the July Minutes.

The Clerk had raised concerns regarding printing costs and for information this will be considered at the 2024 Budget Meeting.

Cllr Maylan reported that the Parish Council had received the harness for the accessible seat in the Children's Play Area but within a week it had been removed by an unauthorised party. She said this was upsetting as it was required for children who need to be held in the swing.

Meeting closed at 21.22 p.m.