

Minutes of the Budget Meeting of Silverton Parish Council
held Monday 8th January 2024 at 7.30 p.m. in the Silverton Community Hall

Present: Cllrs S Cross, O Kennard, V Maylan, R Harrison, J Wright & S Hedges

Minute 113820 **Apologies for absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Maylan and Trebble

Minute 113821 **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 113822 **Meeting open to any questions from members of the public – 10 mins**

No members of the public attended the meeting.

Minute 11323 **Themes for 2024/2025**

The Chair reported that the reserves had now been built back up and it was anticipated there would be circa £23,000.00 in reserves at the end of the financial year 2023/24

(a) Consider request from SEC for a grant of £3,000.00 towards the cost of the Youth Worker in the Parish

Cllr Wright stated he felt he should declare a personal interest in this item.

A report prepared by Mr Roger Carne updating the Parish Council in relation to the work of the Youth Worker and setting out an application for a funding contribution for the financial year 2024/2025 had been circulated by the Clerk. The Chair stated that she believed the project was going well and other organisations in the village have contributed towards the cost. It was noted that the Parish Council would like to support any initiatives from local organisations if a request is made.

The Chair indicated If the Parish Council wished to support the scheme not all the funds need to come from a 2024/2025 precept increase and some funds could possibly come via the existing Community Fund. She pointed out that the Youth Worker is a long-term project and the Parish Council will need to build a figure into the precept if it wishes to continue to support the scheme each year.

After discussion the Chair proposed the Parish Council supports the request for a contribution of £3,000 but the decision as to how to split the funds is deferred until

the precept is considered later in the meeting. A vote was taken with all Councillors present in favour.

(b) Cobbled path – way forward

It was noted that the leaves have been cleared from the path. After discussion the Chair proposed the Parish Council continues to monitor the project with a view to supporting it by way of obtaining funding from third party grants. All Councillors present were in favour

(c) Request by Mr S Steer for wildflower planting in the Parish

Cllr Wright reminded Councillors that it is not as easy as just putting seeds down. The ground needs to be stripped back, poor soil is required and the vegetation needs to be cut back at the right time each year. It was noted that grants are available for such a project but a community group needs to present the Parish Council with a proposed project.

With regard to the grass cutting on the Berry, a question arose as to whether or not it was the Parish Council's intention to let this grow as it is currently in a poor state. Cllr Kennard stated that the grass does not need to be left but the mower blades need lifting. The Chair wondered if the grass is left until such time as the Parish Council thinks it needs cutting.

The Chair proposed the PC supports the idea if a group would like to come forward with a plan and costings with regard to creating and maintaining a wildflower area. A vote was taken with all Councillors present in favour.

With regard to the grass cutting on the Berry, the Chair proposed this be left to grow until it reaches a point where the Parish Council feels it should be cut. This will allow it to re-grow and strengthen. A vote was taken with all Councillors present in favour.

(d) Consider Road Wardens

It was noted that DCC's response every time the Parish Council asked for road repairs is there is no money and it cannot do it but the Parish Council can have a group of people who will be trained by DCC who will supply the materials. Any volunteers need to complete a course. The Parish needs a group of volunteers.

Cllr Wright stated that a Road Warden role in rural communities can include snow issues, hedge cutting etc. Cllr Harrison proposed the Parish Council to gauge the level of interest by posting details on Facebook for volunteers. A vote was taken with all Councillors present in favour.

(e) Request by Community Hall for Parish Council to pay for its use of the Community Hall

It was noted the Community Hall has been faced with increased running costs and the Parish Council has had use of the hall free of charge for all use. The Hall

Committee had been in touch to ask if the Parish Council would now pay for all use. The proposed cost for Parish Council use was £8 per hour - Circa £192 per annum. After discussion Cllr Wright proposed the Parish Council is prepared to pay for the use of the Community Hall for meetings. A vote was taken with all Councillors present in favour.

(f) Silverton Parish Green Action Group/Community Land Trust Forum

Both (f) and (g) falls into the Neighbourhood Group. Discussion took place re Line item on Anticipated Expenditure – Projects arising from the Neighbourhood Plan. There are likely to be a number of initiatives arising from the Neighbourhood Plan and the Chair proposed to put forward an initial figure of £5,000.00 to cover any such projects. A vote was taken with all Councillors present in favour.

(g) Glebe legal arrangement fees

As above

(h) Discussion re Community Transport ideas

It was agreed the Parish Council will support any group who may approach the Parish Council in finding possible grants and the Chair proposed this item falls within the projects arising from the Neighbourhood Plan item. A vote was taken with all Councillors present in favour.

(i) Tree Regeneration Programme

This was an on-going project being undertaken by Cllrs Kennard and Hedges. Cllr Kennard reported that in her opinion this will be expensive as it includes removing stumps and planting new trees where appropriate. The Chair commented that there may be grants available as it is an historic area. The Chair proposed the Parish Council assists by looking for any grants which may be available. A vote was taken with all Councillors in favour.

Cllr Donovan stated he thought a working group should be set up to consider what undergrowth/branches need to be removed from the Lime Trees on the Berry. The Chair confirmed that the work recently carried out by Hi-Line came from reserve. After discussion Cllr Donovan proposed a Working Group be set up to consider lower level maintenance for the Lime Trees on the Berry and any cuttings to be left for parishioners to use. Cllr Donovan to co-ordinate. A vote was taken with all Councillors present in favour.

Minute 113824

Consider change of electricity provider

The Clerk confirmed the E-on Next contract expires on 1st June 2024. The Chair proposed that Cllr Harrison and the Clerk liaise with regard to possibly changing the provider this in advance of the May meeting. A vote was taken with all Councillors present in favour.

