

# Minutes of ANNUAL PARISH ASSEMBLY

Held on

Monday 22nd May 2022

## Apologies

Apologies were received from Parish Cllr V Maylan and following representatives of Organisations: Simone Stanbrook Byrne (Poetry Group), Bill Croome (Tai Chi) & Gill Barrett

## Present:

Cllrs S Cross, Cllr Trebble, Hedges, Kennard and Parish/Mid Devon Cllr J Wright

8 members of the public

### **1. Introduction and Welcome**

The Chairman explained to the meeting that this meeting was not a Parish Council meeting and no Parish Council decisions would be made at the meeting. However the Parish Council is legally bound to call an annual meeting for the Parish to raise any issues and the rules confirm that the Parish Chair, if present, chairs the meeting.

Cllr Cross explained that she had only been elected Chair of the Parish Council at the meeting on the 15<sup>th</sup> May. She had taken over from Cllr Melville who had stepped down from the Parish Council after a number of years and she thanked him for all his efforts during his term as a Parish Councillor.

Elections for the Parish Council had just been held with only 5 candidates putting themselves forward as Cllrs. Since the election Cllr Wright had been co-opted onto the Parish Council which means there are still a total of 5 vacancies and in the coming year Cllr Cross was keen to encourage new parishioners to join the Parish Council.

### **2. Minutes of the Annual Parish Assembly held on 24<sup>th</sup> May 2022**

The Chairman gave a resume of the Minutes of the 2022 Annual Parish Assembly. Cllr Hedges queried the figure of £3,000 shown as the Grant received from the Silverton Parochial Trust towards the Big Rec Project. The Chairman confirmed this should read £30,000.00. Subject to the one amendment the Chairman proposed the Minutes be accepted as a true record. Cllr Kennard seconded the proposal. A vote was taken with 5 in favour which represented those who were present at the 2022 Annual Parish Assembly.

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

#### 2022/2023 review

- (a) The conclusion of the Big Rec Project had seen £85k having been spent in improving the playpark facilities which included adding benches, a gazebo/ pergola, table tennis table and

gym equipment to make a great facility for all to use and enjoy. The funding had come from grants and fundraising and the hard work of a number of parishioners. The end of the project saw a fun day and football tournament at the end of August which had been organised by Amanda Radmore and Louise Sleep. The Chairman thanked them for their hard work.

- (b) The Neighbourhood Plan inches ever closer to its conclusion with the plan being considered by Mid-Devon before going to a referendum later this year. The Chairman of the Neighbourhood Plan Committee would be providing a report later.
- (c) The Parish Council had consulted on a number of planning matters over the last year. The Chair stressed the Parish Council are only a consultee and are not a decision making body. The Parish Council tried to convey the feelings of parishioners especially in relation to the contentious Silverdale development which is expected to commence in the coming year. As always the Parish Council encouraged individuals to put forward any comments they have to mid-Devon direct as this carries as much weight as the comments made by the Parish Council. It was often found that Mid-Devon would still approve a scheme even if the Parish Council did not support the proposals and a full planning statement for all such situations will be available on the Mid-Devon planning website.
- (d) The 2021/22 Annual Audit was successful with no concerns raised. The Chairman thanked the Clerk for her continued hard work and diligence.
- (e) Future plans for Old Fire Station had been considered following the repairs to the roof. It was felt that this was still a key community asset and plans for the Street Market committee to use as storage are underway. There is still a considerable amount of equipment belonging to the Silverton Scouts being stored in the Old Fire Station. The Parish Council has been trying to establish who is responsible for this equipment as some of it may be of use and it would be a shame if the Parish Council cannot find who to return it to.
- (f) The reduction in buses serving the village was of great concern in the Autumn. The Parish Council held a public meeting to discuss and collate ideas. Ideas have been put forward to Devon County and Cllr Wright is continuing to follow this up. However, the key message from DCC and Stagecoach is that the number of users has diminished and there is little demand. We are in somewhat of a catch 22 situation with the fact that a poor service reduces demand. Until the service improves it is likely people will seek alternative means of transport. The Parish Councils continue to lobby in relation to this.
- (g) There were concerns with regard to the state of the roads in general. The message from DCC had been that this is a County wide issue and there is a severe lack of funds available. Generally speaking pot holes should be reported on the DCC website and if they fit the criteria are filled within a reasonable time period. The concerns regarding Church Road have been raised with DCC and a site visit from County Highways is awaited. A meeting was held with the DCC Local Highway Officer and County Cllr Margret Squires last year to discuss highway issues and the Parish Council hopes these will be more regular. Again the key message coming from that meeting is that the area covered by DCC is vast and funds are few.

- (h) A Sub-Committee arranged celebration for the late Queen’s Platinum Jubilee and the Coronation of Charles III which was supported financially by the Parish Council out of the “community fund”. Both served as great events for bringing the community together. In addition the Parish Council had planted a tree to commemorate the late Queen’s Platinum Jubilee. A Ginkgo Biloba had been planted on the Big Rec and a plaque is being arranged. At the same time a Landmark Tree from Devon Wildlife Trust was planted at the Coach Road end.
- (i) A report has been produced in relation to the reinstatement of the old cobbled path in Newbarn Lane. It is considered to be of historical and archaeological importance and therefore the Parish Council are considering how best to arrange works in relation to both the short and long term maintenance.
- (j) Parsons Landscaping were awarded the contract for grass cutting in the village last year and have made an excellent job with the Parish Council reappointing them for the current financial year. The areas which are owned by the Parish Council have been beautifully maintained by Parsons.
- (k) On top of all the above the Parish Council had continued to deal with day to day administration and maintenance for the parish working closely with local groups and the District and County Councils. The re-siting of the dog-waste bin from the entrance of the little rec came about from Parishioner comment and hopefully the new location next to the Old Fire Station was proving a much more suitable location.

**4. Reports by Local Organisations**

Reports were received from the following local organisations:

Silverton Evangelical Church	Friends of Wyndham House Surgery
Wellbeing Co-ordinator (Trish Jones) + others including Tai Chi	Silverton Memory Cafe
Silverton Walk & Talk	Silverton Link Up
Silverton Street Market	Silverton Neighbourhood Plan
District Cllr Josh Wright	Silverton Community Hall

**5. Public Forum**

The Silverton WI had celebrated its 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary during Covid and it was donating a bench which was to be situated in Little Rec. Concerns had been raised regarding the picnic table but the Clerk confirmed this had now been removed. A discussion arose as to whether or not the seat should be secured in some way and it was agreed enquiries would be made of the manufacturer as

to suggestions. The Clerk would also make enquiries of the Parish Council's insurers as to whether or not this was necessary. Although the Silverton WI had now disbanded members were continuing with a "Women's Group" which would meet regularly.

A complaint was made that the Parish Council took too long in making decisions and in particular in granting the Street Market a Licence to use the old Fire Station. The Chair explained that the Parish Council had to ensure they took the correct legal route in dealing with the items left in the building. The Chair confirmed a Notice was being served on the Scouts shortly but the Parish Council could not take any action to dispose of the items for a period of 3 months from the issue of the Notice.

A query was raised as to whether or not the Commemorative trees would be watered during dry weather. The Chair confirmed arrangements would be made to ensure the new trees would be watered.

Meeting closed: 20:29

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