

Minutes of the Virtual Budget Meeting of Silverton Parish Council
held Monday 18 January 2021 at 7.30 p.m. via Zoom

Present: Parish Cllrs A Melville (Chairman), F Derbyshire, S Cross, V Maylan, L Trebble, G Perkins, K Faulhaber, S Roach & Josh Wright

Minute 113290 **To note any apologies**

Apologies were received from County Cllr M Squires & District Cllr B Deed

Minute 113291 **Meeting open to any questions from members of the public – 10 mins**

No members of the public attended the Zoom meeting

Minute 113292 **Discussion/agree Working Arrangements Proposal prepared by Chairman**

The Chairman explained the draft Working Arrangements document was intended to organise the Council for the forthcoming year and to align its work with the Neighbourhood Plan which had similar themes.

The document set out four themed groups which he anticipated would include Councillors with one Lead Councillor. The idea of each themed group would be to include any parishioners who would like to be part of that group which would then bring back to the Parish Council ideas and suggestions. Task and Finish Groups would be used which would provide timings for the Group. The work would be monitored via the Action Plan which would be tightened up using colours and definitions. Any formal decisions on each group would be the responsibility of the Parish Council as a whole.

It was generally felt that this was a good starting point and it was essential that members of the community are added to the groups in order for openness etc. After general discussion the Chairman proposed that the Parish Council adopts the Working Arrangements proposal which will include 4 themes, Task/Finish Groups and be monitored via the Action Plan. Cllr Roach seconded the proposal. A vote was taken with all Councillors present in favour.

Minute 113293 **Themes for 2021**

The Chairman explained these would be items for possible new budgets. He explained the Precept for 2020/2021 had been £26,500.00 and for each £1,000.00 increase on this year's precept would amount to an additional £1.28 per annum per Band D household. Should the Parish Council wish to increase the Precept to £30,000.00 this would be an uplift of 15%, a £37,000.00 Precept would be an uplift of 41%

(a) **Consider waiving Scout rent of Fire Station for 2019/2020**

It was noted that Silverton Scouts would not have been able to fund raise during the year and had not been holding meetings due to Covid restrictions. Cllr Wright informed the meeting the group were struggling for numbers and he felt the Parish Council should be encouraging the youth. After discussion Cllr Roach proposed the £354.00 rent for this year be waived. Cllr Wright seconded the proposal. A vote was taken with all Councillors present in favour.

(b)/(c) Potential new equipment for the Children's Play Area and maintenance of existing equipment

The Chairman reported that there may be S106 funds available from that already allocated to create a footpath from School Road to the Square which scheme had now been abandoned. For the funds to be re-allocated it is understood the Developer who contributed the S106 funds would need to approve for the re-allocation. There were also funds allocated for a fence and to provide seating in relation to a potential toddler area adjacent to the Children's Play Area. The Parish Council had already resolved not to proceed with.

Cllr Derbyshire reminded the meeting that a request had been received, since the disabled access had been provided, to provide a gate in the railings behind the War Memorial.

It was generally felt that parishioners did not realise the cost of new play equipment and the installation costs and it may be that fundraising needs to take place to contribute towards the costs. Cllr Maylan said she believed parents are keen to see the rope swing replaced.

It was noted that the Parish Council should be seen to be benefitting all groups in the village and not just children although it was appreciated that the play area helped with children's mental health issues in these difficult times. The Chairman stated that maybe the Parish Council would need to focus on maintaining the current play equipment during the forthcoming year for which there was currently earmarked the sum of £607.00. Cllr Wright stated he felt that as the play area was an important feature of the village people would be happy to contribute towards maintaining the current equipment.

Cllr Perkins said he felt the Parish Council should consider all items together which would ensure the village is kept clean, tidy and safe and have an asset led approach for quality. There was a need to ensure the funds available should reach as many parishioners as possible.

The Chairman pointed out that the Council's Financial Regulations does allow the Council to earmark funds to the General Fund and then at a later date these funds can be allocated to different projects.

The Chairman proposed that the Council focuses on maintaining the existing equipment and replacement of any which is broken. Cllr Wright seconded the proposal. A vote was taken with all Councillors present in favour.

(d) “No dog” signage for Recreation Field

The Parish Council contractor had confirmed he had the stencil for the signage on the footpaths in the Recreation Field and the Clerk stated he had purchased paint and would re-paint these as soon as the weather permitted. It was noted there was a sign on the footpaths on each entrance bar one. It was agreed to ask our Contractor to put an additional sign on the paving slabs at the entrance by the side of the flats.

(e) “20 is plenty” signage

Cllr Perkins said he assumed the use of the “green” signs would need the agreement of Devon County Council. He felt that a sign would be required at each gateway to the village which amounted to 5 signs at a cost of £53.00 + VAT for a non reflective sign or £110.00 + VAT for reflective signs. A query arose as to whether or not the local Estate Agent could be asked to assist with the provision of signs but Cllr Perkins felt as a SCARF investigation would be needed the Parish Council should purchase the signs itself.

Cllr Perkins proposed the Parish Council budget for green signage at the 5 gateways and set a sum of £600.00. Cllr Trebble seconded the proposal. A vote was taken with 8 in favour and 1 abstention.

(f) Quotations re infilling of old Skate Ramp

Cllr V Maylan declared a personal interest prior to the discussion on this item.

Two quotations had been received:

E D Rogers - £4,274.00 + VAT

S Luxton - £1,500.00/£2,000.00 + VAT

Cllr Wright proposed the Parish Council accept the tender received from Mr Luxton. Cllr Faulhaber seconded the proposal. A vote was taken and all Councillors present were in favour.

(g) Increase supply of defibrillator pads

The Clerk had been unable to obtain a current price for these as the system for ordering the pads had changed. However, in 2017 one set of pads cost £79.00

After discussion the Chairman proposed that the Parish Council earmark sufficient to pay for 5 sets but stagger the purchase during the year on an “as and when required” basis in order that the expiry dates will also be staggered. Cllr Derbyshire seconded the proposal. A vote was taken with all Councillors present in favour.

(h) Bus Shelter repairs

Cllr Perkins stated he will take photographs when the weather permits and confirmed he felt the “worst case scenario” would be having to have the tiles

taken off and the flashing re-done. Cllr Wright stated that when he saw the contractor he was told there were no real problems with the bus shelter.

After discussion Cllr Derbyshire proposed the Parish Council earmark the sum of £700.00 to cover the repairs required. Cllr Faulhaber seconded the proposal. A vote was taken with all Councillors present in favour.

(i) Discussion re possible purchase of the Telephone Box

Cllr Maylan confirmed the cost of purchasing the telephone box would be £1 although the box does need refurbishing. She felt that if the consensus of the initial public consultation was not to purchase then the Parish Council would need to consider other options. She felt there was not sufficient space in the bus shelter, there was a possibility of a store on the Little Rec but this would need the Richard's Educational Trust consent. Cllr Derbyshire queried if it was the Parish Council's responsibility to purchase a store and wondered if the community could fund raise for a store. Cllr Perkins stated that the COVID pandemic had changed the way the village acts and thinks.

The Chairman stated that there may be ways to release and repurpose S106 funds towards such a scheme but this would depend on the result of the consultation. The Chairman proposed that the consultation relating to a community facility/book swap store continues and when the decision is known the Parish Council will seek to find funding. Cllr Derbyshire seconded the proposal. A vote was taken with all Councillors present in favour.

Minute 113294 **Asset transfer of MDDC grass areas**

The Chairman pointed out that the asset transfer of MDDC grass areas arose as MDDC and DCC were not cutting the respective areas to a standard parishioners felt was acceptable. MDDC had confirmed there are 3 options for the Parish Council (i) to purchase the areas of land (ii) lease the land from MDDC with a right to maintain or (iii) not lease or purchase but maintain the areas. Full details of the various options were not yet known and MDDC had been contacted to explain further. A quotation for the additional grass cutting had previously been obtained from our grass contractor and this had added an additional £2,850.00 to the annual budget.

The Chairman reminded Councillors there had been a previous decision to proceed to acquire the land but he pointed out the Parish Council needed to be able to use it as it wanted and did want the public liability for the areas. It was agreed the Chairman and Clerk would continue progressing this item and would bring it back to a full Council meeting when the various options were clearer.

The Chairman proposed the grass cutting budget be increased by £500 to cover the cost of cutting the football field. Cllr Trebble seconded the proposal. A vote was taken with all Councillors present in favour.

Minute 113295 **Consideration of financial reserves**

The Chairman pointed out the Parish Council would have an underspend for the current financial year of circa £4,311.82.

The Receipts/Bank Account Reconciliation and Suggested Earmarked Reserve Fund for financial year 2021/2022 were considered and the Chairman proposed the overview of the accounts as presented be accepted. Cllr Maylan seconded the proposal. A vote was taken with all Councillors present in favour.

The Chairman proposed the end of year balance be moved into the Earmarked Reserve Fund for the refurbishment/replacement of parish amenities/assets. Cllr Derbyshire seconded the proposal. A vote was taken with all Councillors present in favour.

Minute 113295 **Approve appointment of internal auditor**

The Clerk confirmed Mr Dishman had confirmed his fee would remain at £400 + VAT.

After discussion the Chairman proposed that Mr James Dishman be asked to audit the accounts for the current financial year. Cllr Wright seconded the proposal. A vote was taken with all Councillors present in favour.

Minute 113296 **To consider budget papers and set precept for financial year 2021/2022**

The Anticipated Expenditure Sheet was considered on a line by line basis and agreed figures for the year inputted. This produced an annual budget required for 2021/2022 of £33,382.48.

Cllr Roach proposed an annual precept for the financial year 2021/2022 of £34,000.00. Cllr Derbyshire seconded the proposal. A vote was taken with all Councillors present in favour.

Meeting closed at 9.35 p.m.