

Minutes from the Silverdale Parish Council Annual Assembly 2024

13652. UNCONFIRMED minutes of the Annual Assembly of the Silverdale Parish Council (PC) held on Thursday 21st March 2024 at 7pm at the Gaskell Hall, Emesgate Lane, Silverdale.

13653. Present:

Chairman:	T. Bond (Terry)
Leader of Lancashire County Council & County Councillor (Cllr) for Lancaster Rural North	P. Williamson (Phillippa)
Lancaster City Cllr:	A. Greenwell (Alan)
Police Sergeant (PS): (Lancaster & Morecambe)	L. Brown (Lindsay)
Clerk:	L.D Challenor (Denise)
Deputy Clerk:	K. Lambert (Katie)
Members of the Public:	22

13654. Apologies for Absence – none.

13655. Approval of the Minutes from the Previous Annual Assembly – the minutes of the Annual Assembly held at the Silverdale Village Institute on Thursday 16th March 2023 were **APPROVED** and passed to the Chairman for signing.

13656. Matters arising from the Minutes of Previous Meetings, not Covered by the Agenda – none

13657. Report of Relevant Matters from Police Sergeant (PS), L. Brown – thanks given to PS Brown for his attendance at the meeting to give the following verbal report on matters affecting Silverdale over the past 12 months:

- a) *Reported crimes* – pleased to confirm that Silverdale is an extremely safe place to live, with an average last year of 6 recorded crimes per month on the National database. Whilst not to diminish the impact on those who have been affected by crime, to put the statistics in context, Caton recorded 20/30 per month and Morecambe 170/200 per month. The top category in Silverdale is violence, which may not be truly reflective given the large presence of caravan and camping sites in the area. Secondary to this is burglary which is seen by Lancashire Constabulary as the main threat to residents of Silverdale. Residents can be complacent with security, but over the last 12 months, together with the PC, Lancashire Constabulary has been disseminating information on how residents can better protect themselves against such crimes and PCSO's are readily available to visit residents to carry out a crime prevention survey and offer advice. Residents are to be assured that in the majority of cases, the criminals are known to the police and most investigations are still ongoing; it just takes time to secure enough evidence for a conviction.
- b) *Investments* – the Police and Crime Commissioner has invested heavily in tackling rural crimes with multiple cross-border operations with the Rural Task Force. Following the large nationwide recruitment campaign last year for police officer, recruits are now starting to come through and their presence should be felt this next year.
- c) *Questions from the public* - none

13658. Familiarisation Talk of PC Defibrillators by Parish Cllr Tony Houghton – despite not being medically trained, having used the devices on a number of occasions, Cllr Houghton is in a position to provide valuable information about the defibrillators available around the village. They are designed so that anyone can use a defibrillator, you do not need training. Once you turn it on, it will give clear step-by-step voice instructions and many also have visual prompts and images showing how to use it.

- a) *First Steps in an Emergency:*
 - **Check responsiveness** - are they responsive? Are they breathing? To check, place your cheek near their mouth and look down their body at their chest.
 - **Call 999** - when you call 999, the operator can tell you if there's a public access defibrillator nearby and provide you with the code to access.
 - **Get assistance** -if you're on your own, do not interrupt CPR to go and find a defibrillator. If it's possible, send someone else to find one.

- **Positioning** - ensure the person is flat on the floor. You can use the lid of the defibrillator case as a tool to place behind the head to help open the airways.
- **Remove clothing above the waist** - you might have to remove a person's bra by slipping the straps down or cutting it off or remove body hair from the chest area. Most defibrillator packs have tools like scissors and razors to help you to do this. It might feel odd or embarrassing but do not let that stop you. Remember, this is a life-or-death situation.
- **Apply the pads** - peel off the sticky pads and attach them to the person's bare skin. Put one pad on each side of the chest as shown in the picture on the defibrillator. Once you have attached the pads, stop CPR and do not touch the person. The defibrillator will then check the person's heart rhythm.
- **Follow instructions** - the defibrillator will decide whether a shock is needed. If so, it will tell you to press the 'shock' button. An automatic defibrillator will shock the person without you needing to do anything. Do not touch the person while they're being shocked. It will tell you when the shock has been given and whether you need to continue CPR. If the defibrillator tells you to continue to do CPR, continue with chest compressions until the person shows signs of life, or the defibrillator tells you to stop so it can analyse the heartbeat again.
- **Emergency services** – they will take the device with the patient as it stores information which may help medical professionals. They will then see to its return, usually within a week.

b) *Questions*

- **How many times have the defibrillators in Silverdale been used?** – the device outside the Gaskell Hall has been activated 5 times.
- **Who has funded the devices in Silverdale, and can one be placed near The Green?** – the PC have funded from the precept at a cost of £400/£500 per unit. The issue with locating a new device is that the area must have both a power source and a mobile phone signal. The power is needed to run a small LED light and a heater in cold weather, roughly costing £10/year. If a resident on The Green is willing to provide the power, the PC will look into providing a defibrillator and box.
- **Where are the defibrillators located in Silverdale?** – all PC owned devices are registered with The Circuit, the national defibrillator network which maps defibrillators across the UK. They are located at The Woodlands Hotel, the Methodist Church, Silverdale Village Institute, Gaskell Hall and Lindeth Close.

13659. Presentation by Susanna Dart, Climate Change Policy Officer at Lancaster City Council (LCC) - a target has been set to reduce LCC's direct emissions to net zero by 2030. In order to achieve this target, significant investment is required over the coming years. Achieving the target will require dedicated internal resources and significant long-term planning, which Susanna and her team of 6 are in the midst of doing. So far they have received £8m of funding from central government to help decarbonise, £1m of which is for the 18 buildings within their management stock. Salt Ayre is the first fully decarbonised, 100% grant funded, leisure centre in the UK and because of its success, LCC have secured further funding for 3 more. Susanna's team are also writing policies where houses built after 2028 will be making more energy than they use. For these long term strategies they are actively engaging with more young people/residents across the district to ensure the future needs are being met. From February 2024 mandatory biodiversity net gain (BNG) requirements, part of the Environment Act 2021, became effective. This means that in order to secure planning, developers must ensure a minimum 10% net gain in biodiversity, based on a pre-development assessment of the land they are developing. To assist with this, Susanna and her team are creating

'habitat banks' with public and private landowners so developers' monies can stay in the district. These projects, alongside many more including flood mapping, the Million Trees project, Communities in Actions, have meant that LCC has topped a leaderboard for district councils in an assessment of the actions being taken to achieve net zero. Climate Emergency UK created the scorecards by assessing 7 areas: buildings and heating; transport; governance and finance; planning; biodiversity; collaboration and engagement, and waste reduction and food. The district council average is 29% and only four district councils scored over 50%, with Lancaster the only district council to score over 60%.

The full results of the Climate Emergency UK scorecard can be found at councilclimatescorecards.uk.



Cllr Reed expressed his thanks to Susanna and her team for the advice, contacts and assistance they have given to the Net Zero Working Group and urges any residents who have an interest or experience to join to help Silverdale reduce its carbon emissions.

13660. Report of Relevant Matters from Lancaster City Councillor, Alan Greenwell – since taking office last May, Cllr Greenwell has addressed a diverse range of issues from the community. Serving on the LCC’s Planning Committee, he deals with complex matters regularly. Regarding residents recent Council Tax bill, he regrets the necessity of its increase, citing a 30% reduction in funding from central government, but assures residents that it was necessary to maintain the safety of services. In addition to his council duties, Cllr Greenwell volunteers to work with the older children at the local primary school, Silverdale St John’s, and encourages other residents to follow suit as it has brought a significant vitality to the school. Cllr Greenwell is also one of 4 Trustees of The Silverdale United Trust, formed a century ago to prevent villagers from entering the poor house. It is still very active today and has provided grants to the Scouts, has helped numerous families at the school and assisted R. Aitken to help fund impressive musical events for the village.

Cllr Greenwell wished to express his gratitude to the exceptional Silverdale PC, acknowledging their hard work and dedication, and conveying his deep appreciation for their efforts. No questions were raised from members the public.

13661. Report of Relevant Matters from Lancashire County Councillor, Phillippa Williamson – thanks given to County Cllr Williamson for her attendance at the meeting and for the written report circulated to all attendees and appended to these minutes. On the night, residents raised the following;

- a) *Declassifying the A601(M), wouldn't the monies be better spent elsewhere?* – Cllr Williamson assures residents that there is a method behind it. To maintain a road to a motorway standard costs a significant amount each year and the project has been based on the long-term savings it will bring.
- b) *Appalling state of the M6* – making improvements to this motorway and its connection would be a major factor in boosting the economy of the Lancashire. Cllr Williamson agreed.
- c) *Improvement to the bus provision for Silverdale* – Cllr Williamson encouraged to back PC plans to improve the timetable in Silverdale to coincide with the arrival/departure of trains at Silverdale station.

13662. Report of Relevant Matters from the Silverdale Parish Council Chairman, Terry Bond - a copy of the report was circulated to all attendees and has been appended to these minutes. A resident enquired as to the reasons for the precept increase this year. Cllr Bond explained the various projects the PC are currently funding, from the reserves for the playground, through to management of the woodland and the new public conveniences. The breakdown of what the monies are allocated for, including wages for the Clerks, Contractors etc, were published on the website and in the Parish Magazine.

13663. Matters Arising from Members of the Public – none

13664. Meeting Closed – 9:30pm

Appendix 1 – Review of 2023-24 from Lancashire County Councillor, Phillippa Williamson, Circulated at the Meeting

Once again, it has been a very busy but enjoyable year representing Silverdale and all the residents of Lancaster Rural North as your County Councillor.

Looking back perhaps the most historically significant development was the Government's announcement that it would be willing to enter into a Devolution Deal with Lancashire County Council, Blackburn with Darwen Council and Blackpool Council.

It is really exciting to have the opportunity to bring new money and powers from central Government to Lancashire to be administered by the first Combined County Authority. This will accelerate regeneration in our towns and cities; increase investment in skills for young people and the existing workforce, bring new inward investment and enable us to have a stronger voice with Government. It will not mean removing or merging existing Councils or involve any increase in Council Tax.

The eight-week consultation, which ended in January, asked residents, businesses and other stakeholders to give their views on the proposed deal. Aside from an online survey there was an extensive engagement programme involving over 50 in-person events across the County involving over 1,500 people.

A total of 1,881 responses were received during the consultation, with 1,695 being received from individuals. In total 186 responses came from businesses and representative groups, including a number from key organisations and large employers, who supported the deal.

The number of responses received are similar to public consultations undertaken for devolution deals in other areas. Feedback saw the majority of respondents welcomed the creation of the Lancashire Combined County Authority and many of Lancashire's largest and most strategic employers and organisations, including all five universities operating in the county, showed their support.

Councillors considered the consultation results in March and voted to submit the findings to the Secretary of State and confirm that Lancashire is ready for devolution. The government are expected to lay an order in Parliament to establish the new combined authority before the summer recess, with the new Lancashire combined County Authority being established by the Autumn.

Lots more has happened throughout the year so here are just some highlights of what the County Council has been doing for you:

Delivering Better Services

- Launched our £42m Bus Service Improvement Plan, a partnership between the County Council and bus operators, to make services more frequent, reliable and affordable.
- Spent over £30m on repairing our roads and in July '23 opened the £207m Preston Western Distributor.
- Launched round two of our Culture and Sport Strategy and the £0.5m Lancashire Culture and Sport Fund known as 'Crowdfund Lancashire' to support grassroot projects. Many projects in our area have benefitted from this.
- Our 64 Libraries go from strength to strength, expanding their role as community hubs hosting our Warm and Welcome offer and becoming Libraries of Sanctuary.
- Continued to collaborate on the TV documentary series following the work of Lancashire's Coroner's Service. 'Cause of Death' was nominated for the best factual series at the national TV awards.
- Held the second Lancashire Choir of the Year competition. Entries for the third round now open!
- Launched the Lancashire Artist of the Year competition.
- Hosted further Parish and Town Council conferences. Again, Silverdale and the other Parish/Town Councils in Lancaster Rural North were well represented, and this is helping us work together to support and improve services and amenities in our area.
- Held the Great Lancashire Debate for primary and secondary school teams across the county, who competed to present their views on important issues affecting the county and how they could be resolved by 2050. This was highly commended in the UK Parliament Week Awards and this year's debate is about to be launched.

Caring for the Vulnerable

- Our Adult Social Care teams have supported over 50,000 people at a cost of around £680m this year. Integrated working with the NHS and new technology continues to be a focus to help keep people living at home safely and independently.
- Our Shared Live Service has expanded and was assessed by the Care Quality Commission as Outstanding.
- Opened a new short break facility for people with disabilities
- Opened a new state of the art care home in Garstang with plans underway to update all the county council's other care homes.
- Launched our Carers Strategy to support the 10% of Lancashire residents who provide unpaid care to a friend or family member.
- Improved Adult and Children's Social Care so these services are better joined-up with those delivered by our partners, such as the NHS. This is helping avoid hospital admissions and getting patients out of hospital as soon as possible.
- Our Children's Services are GOOD by Ofsted, and we are now striving for an Outstanding rating.
- We have reduced the number of children in care by 20% by helping them remain safely at home. Where children do come into our care, we are increasing the number of foster places and residential children's homes the County Council operates. Two new children's homes have opened with more planned, so we reduce reliance on expensive external providers.
- Launched Family Hubs in all 12 districts across the County, providing local, one-stop services for children, young people and families. More hubs are coming on-stream in the coming months.
- We are creating additional school places across the county and planning a new school for North Preston to be opened in 2025.
- Improved our school buildings and created more Special Education Needs units at mainstream schools - 250 new places so far with more coming on stream across the County.
- We launched the first 24/7 male 'refuge' in the UK.

Protecting the Environment

- Petrol and diesel cars in the Councils fleet continue to be replaced with electronic vehicles.
- We are supporting peatland restoration and our newly formed Treescapes team is creating 170 hectares of rural woodland and planting an additional 30,000 trees across the County.
- We continue to enhance our Household Waste Recycling Centers - including Keer Bridge - to provide vital support to residents and businesses.
- We are investing £10m to develop the electric vehicle charging infrastructure across the County. We have already installed hundreds of electric vehicle (EV) charging points and piloting new ways of EV charging for people who do not have off-street parking (66% of housing in the county is terraced), including charging points integrated into street lighting columns and pavement cable channels to allow charging at home, hiding the cable under the pavement.

Supporting Economic Growth

- Extend our work to complete Salmesbury Enterprise Zone.
- Delivering a permanent home for Lancashire Cricket in Lancashire with Lancashire Cricket Club. Opening in 2025, the year-round facility will host top class mens and womens competitive matches each year, as an alternative site to Emirates Old Trafford. It will also provide a new training base for all Lancashire's mens and womens teams, from age- group to the first team. The new facilities will be made available to the local community, including for local cricket clubs and schools across the whole County.
- Building the largest employment site in the northwest, creating over 9,000 jobs through its construction and operation.
- Successfully bid for over £200m of projects in Lancashire from the second round of the Government's Levelling Up Fund. This included £50m to develop public transport, walking and cycling projects and £50m towards Eden North.
- Working with Government on the new home for the National Cyber Force in Lancashire, bringing over 300 high quality jobs to the county.

Crucially we are delivering all this as well as ensuring our finances remain strong. We are increasingly seeing Councils across the country declaring themselves bankrupt. There is no doubt there have been significant economic challenges over recent years and this will continue to play out for some time.

However, through our strong and prudent financial management, year in year out, we are not in that position, and we have no intention of allowing that to happen.

Lancashire is a huge county - around 1,200 square miles, 80% of which is rural and with a population of 1.2m people. To deliver all the front-line services residents expect and more costs just over £1.1bn a year net budget (our 620+ schools are funded separately by the Government and we raise almost £800m through commercial activity).

Of that £1.1bn budget, 65% is spent on Adult and Children's Social Care with the remainder available for Highways, Transport and 'active travel' (walking/cycling). Running the libraries, museums, conservation, archive and music services; supporting economic development activity and helping over 3,000 businesses.

We all contribute to that £1.1bn through our Council Taxes and it is essential we get value for money. Over the last year the Council has been impacted by rising costs like the rest of the county. But these pressures have been absorbed whilst maintaining and expanding our full range of services.

For 2024/25. Council Tax will increase by 4.99% and this means the County Council will deliver balanced budgets for the four years ahead, as well as retaining healthy financial reserves to protect against any future economic volatility.

Please Get in Touch

It is an enormous privilege to be your County Councillor. It is also a great pleasure to work with residents and your Parish Councillors who each work so hard to support the community and improve amenities in the village.

The County Council has introduced a number of small grant schemes to help Parish and Town Councils and local community groups. These include grants to improve public rights of way and biodiversity which are well used locally. But there are other funds available and as your County Councillor I also have grant funding to support grass-roots community.

So, if you think that a project you are working on may benefit from this type of funding, or if there are any issues you would like my support with, please let me know and I will do my very best to help.

County Councillor Phillippa Williamson Leader, Lancashire County Council Lancaster Rural North

E: Phillippa.Williamson@lancashire.gov.uk

F: www.facebook.com/PhillippaWilliamsonLancasterRuralNorth

T: 07473 966 636

Appendix 2 – Circulated Report from Parish Council Chairman, Terry Bond

It is nearly a year since this new council was formed in May 2023 and there have been some big issues tackled during this time. Apart from coming together for the monthly meeting all councillors are part of smaller groups working on issues related to Silverdale such as public transport, parking, toilets, woodlands and climate change.

The parish council are in the process of buying the public toilets from the City Council and having secured funding have decided that the best option is to demolish the existing block and replace it with a modern facility that will fulfil expectations for years to come. We are currently at the planning application stage and are in final discussions prior to putting together a tender document for the work. This modern facility should reduce the overall cost to the parish council of operating the toilets.

Overseeing the parish woodlands of Bankwell, Woodwell, Burtonwell, plus land at St Johns Avenue and the Playground is a task that has magnified in recent years because of the prevalence of ash dieback. This has meant the felling of nearly 10% of mature trees in these areas. Monitoring and general maintenance of these areas has been undertaken by a group of volunteers from the village and thanks are due to them for their efforts here. Fresh hands are always welcome! The area around Bankwell is also the subject of consideration and discussions are ongoing on how we manage this area.

Safety of the equipment and surroundings of the playground on Cove Rd is important to the council, but this also comes with a price and a substantial part of our budget goes toward maintenance of equipment and a reserve fund for the replacement of some items.

The Parish Council have lobbied for some years for better rural mobile phone coverage and earlier this year met with a group representing several phone companies following which it is likely that a formal planning application will be made soon for a new phone mast in the area.

Also, in recent months the Parish Council has relaunched its website and funded the formation of the new village website. If you haven't seen either yet, then please have a look. They can be found at; Silverdale Parish Council – Serving the people of Silverdale (silverdale-pc-lancs.gov.uk) and Home - Silverdale Village, Lancashire (silverdalelancashire.uk)

Another matter resolved this year has been the long process, nearly six years, of registering land owned by the Parish Council with the Land Registry. The Parish Council continue to have contact with other local organisations in the area to improve facilities in Silverdale and this liaison is vital. There is regular contact with both City and County Councils over matters of highways, flooding on Lindeth Rd, drains, road sweepers. I am grateful to both our City & County Cllrs for their help in this. Efforts are also going into the repurposing of the defibrillators from the currently defunct First Responders, and we are also attempting to locate the funds to help in this.

Along with this the council, in the past eleven months, dealt with 139 items of correspondence and reviewed 43 planning applications. Assistance with this and the financial accounting comes from our Clerk Denise and her Deputy Katie, to whom the Parish Council are grateful.

As Chair I am proud to be associated with a group of Councillors who are actively doing their best for their/our community and are committed to doing so – I thank them publicly for their continued efforts.

It is another 3 years before the next elections but it is likely that one or more councillors may have to step down before this. To those who like to criticise the Parish Council and its workings I would say – can you do better, and when a vacancy occurs will you step forward?

Cllr Terry Bond MBE