

**SILVERDALE PARISH COUNCIL**  
**Minutes of the Parish Assembly held on Thursday 1 May 2025**  
**at 6.00 pm at Silverdale Library**

Present: Cllr H Adamczuk (HA), Cllr C Mrozicki (CM), Cllr G Churton (GC), Cllr S Doyle (SD),  
 Cllr J Crabtree (JC), Cllr I Gould (IG), Cllr S Toon (ST), Cllr R Jones (RJ)

Parish Clerk: Ms D Powell (DP)

In attendance: One member of the public attended the meeting.

**1. Apologies**

Apologies were received from Borough Councillors J Brown and R Adcock

**2. To sign the Minutes of the Annual Parish meeting held 9 May 2024**

**RESOLVED** to approve

**3. Public Open Forum**

A member of the public attended to observe the Parish Assembly.

**4. Annual report – Chair**

**Silverdale Parish Council**  
**Annual Assembly 1 May 2025**  
**Chair's Annual Report**  
**2024/25**

**1 Membership: Parish Council**

The year was characterised by several leavers and new arrivals, so there is a new team in place. June Avison, Clare Bennett and Karl Murphy resigned, all for personal reasons. Ian Hall joined, but after 8 weeks resigned owing to other commitments.

By April 2025, new recruits Cllr Sam Toon, Cllr Steve Doyle, Cllr Ade Osobu, Cllr Gareth Churton and Cllr Rob Jones had joined Silverdale PC and made their marks, in supporting the Steering Group and the Planning Sub-Committee and the new committees that were formed:

Allotments Sub-committee

Communication and Events Sub-committee

Parks and Recreations Sub-Committee.

There is one vacancy remaining, a considerable improvement on May 2024 when there were 3 vacancies to fill.

**2 External Contacts**

The partnership and dialogue with ward councillors continued. Silverdale ward councillors regularly attended monthly meetings to give updates on their activity with written reports. They have council committee roles notably Cllr Rupert Adcock is chair of Health, Wellbeing & Environment Scrutiny Committee and Cllr Jacqueline Brown is also a member and sits on Planning Committee.

The support from our ward members was crucial in the parish council's objections to the planning application for four new detached houses at the Bush Inn. That borough council planning refusal was later upheld at appeal.

Frequently, County Highways issues are reported and a voice at county is important in dealing with other County matters such as schools provision, planning applications at Landfill sites and Severn Trent Treatment plants. We hope today's election produces a county member, who becomes a regular contributor to our discussions as the constituency covers the whole of Silverdale ward.

New MP Adam Jogee attended one of our meetings and later facilitated the visit of the High Commissioner to the UK, Steve Smith on Australia Day. Steve visited the Miner's Monument and 86 Newcastle Street in tracing the path of Joseph Cooke in the 1870s prior to emigration and the ultimate achievement of becoming prime minister. In the 1920s, Cooke returned to the UK as High Commissioner, celebrated in the Bush (then Sneyd Arms Hotel). The last time we had the top Australian diplomat was in 1996 to unveil the Miners' Monument.

Chrissy Mrozicki is a member of the Knutton Quarry Community Project and I am a member of Town Board. The Walley Quarry Liaison Committee has ceased after the operator went into voluntary administration.

### 3 Silverdale Parish Council Budget and Community Grants

Silverdale PC continues to operate fully on the lowest total precept of all Parish & Town Councils in the district. The 2024/25's Precept of was a 1.99% increase in line with borough council.

Silverdale parish spend £31,212 (99%) against the revenue budget of £31,400 and £15,501 (98%) on Special Projects against the budget of £15,781. The Net Balance at end March 2025 has decreased and there are earmarked reserves that indicate priority projects for which funding has been allocated for next year.

Silverdale PC was happy to approve grant applications from community groups that they can apply to the Parish Council for grant funding of up to £3,000.

### 4 Achievements April 2024-April 2025

4.1 The purchase of 10 benches for The Parade, Church St. and Silverdale Park. Painting the railings in Silverdale Park Under 5s Play Area Silverdale Park. We thank Debra Powell our parish clerk for pursuing this to ensure the park looks better and receives better provision within our budget constraints.

4.3 Repolishing the Bronze statue and Miner's Tub and general maintenance on the Monument Plinth and bronze tablets inscribed with information about the history of mining and the list of names of miners who lost their lives in accidents from 1870. Implementing the maintenance agreement with NBC by contract with Plowden Smith. Ian Gould and Julie Crabtree were instrumental in ensuring our heritage is kept in good condition. Steve Smith was impressed by the condition in his visit.

4.4 Successful Seniors Meals at Park Road Community Centre 16 and 17 December at The Dell with many hands helping Julie Crabtree.

4.5 The purchase of two defibrillators at a cost of £2,647.20 and fitted with Aspire Housing and Silverdale Athletic Cub partners at the Parade (Tattooist) and at the Athletic club (outside the club house).

4.6 The repair/adjustment to external lighting clock for the Miner's Monument identified by Chrissy Mrozicki as a problem.

4.6 The draft new lease with NBC should give Silverdale PC the right to issue a tenancy agreement to the Acres Allotments Association. In agreement with the local authority, the extension land is being prepared to support new plots. To get to that stage has taken many months of patient exploration with little apparent progress. I thank colleagues Chrissy Mrozicki, Ian Gould and Julie Crabtree for support and especially convincing me that the extension of the lease was a possibility.

4.7 The litter-picking contract has made a difference at the Parade, Silverdale Park and the Mining Monument in Stonewall Place.

4.8 The AECOM Design Guidance and Codes 90 page illustrated report has set out the benefits of Silverdale Neighbourhood planning policy. This should form part of the legal planning framework along with the Local Plan at the culmination of the Neighbourhood Plan process.

(We also take action to support residents matters where other agencies are responsible, for example to lobby the borough council over lighting at Silverdale Park and to repair/adjustment the clock mechanism on St Luke's church and finding a suitable memorial for a resident.)

4.9 Separate statements covering the process of site selection in the North Staffs Greenbelt, Allocation of Sites at SP11 and SP23 and the Housing Policy allocation of T&G8 had been submitted to the Planning Inspector by the deadline 1 May 2025 so there would be a voice for the parish in the Public Hearings over May and June 2025.

The statements were partly based on the letter date October to the Borough Council and partly from comments made at Steering Group 23 April.

## 5 Outstanding at May 2025

5.1 As Walley Quarry is still a few months in the hands of the Environment Agency there is a long way to go before the site can be considered an historic issue. There's been no replacement Liaison Committee and some questions over long-term funding and management not yet made explicit. Once the liquidation of assets is completed there might be a more robust plan for the future of the site.

5.2 Creating Adult Play Equipment spaces in Silverdale Park requires further input from the Borough council before we can seek quotes and then a capital grant as the cost is likely to be in excess of £10,000.

5.3 The Locality funded Health Check with Intelligent Plans contract for the Silverdale Neighbourhood Plan is due to start but the documentation will be somewhat limited until we have a detailed Neighbourhood Plan Policy document from Hannah Barter of Urban Vision.

5.4 Website for Silverdale Evidence is still an important must do because the Neighbourhood Plan need to be widely understood and publicized before we go to the referendum stage.

5.5 Entertainments Committee proposed summer kids play in the park from 4 till 6pm.

5.6 Persistence of antisocial behaviour in Silverdale Park and the former golf course working in partnership with the police and local council

## 6 Walley's Quarry Landfill

Parish councillors have reported conditions at the landfill site over many years and played their role in action initially to ensure residents' odour complaints were heard and then in 2021 health concerns began to mount. The Stop the Stink campaign and the legal action by Silverdale resident Rebecca

Currie over her son's health conditions, the joint effort of all borough councillors took the operator to court in 2023. The nuisance abatement order set the scene for the dramatic events of 2024/25.

Prior to the 2024 General Election prospective candidate, Adam Jogee had invited Steve Reed, then Shadow Environment Sec of State (now Environment Minister) to visit Silverdale and meet Silverdale residents and protesters at Cornerstones. After the election Under secretary of Health Andrew Gwynne held a meeting at Fleet House, Cemetery Road to discuss odour impacts on local businesses and residents.

The Environment Agency had allowed the operator to continue to use the site before the abatement notice had expired but an appeal by WQL against the abatement notice failed. The Borough Council's Local Public Enquiry, commenced on 23 July to gather extensive evidence about the impact of the continued operation on residents across the district. As Chair, I reported that the Environment Agency decision to increase the permitted tonnage from 240,000 to 400,000 per annum on 30 October 2020 was a plausible explanation for the increase in complaints over 2021/22 which precipitated the health crisis. My evidence also implicated changes in government policy over the regulation of landfill operations weakened the controls applying to sites across the UK.

Arcadis carried out an independent study through Staffordshire County Council about the health consequences of both short and long-term exposure to air pollution used as evidence of the effects on the community reporting in November.

The 'calibration issue' where errors had been detected in reporting levels of harmful gases accurately had persisted over two years. The public admission of technical inadequacy – where measurements were a half of the actual level of hydrogen sulphide emitted-was a blow to the reputation of the Environment Agency.

A public meeting on 28 August 2024 alongside UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) was devised to answer residents' questions on the adjusted data and UKHSA's risk assessment.

The political pressure mounted on the Environment Agency, so that on 28 November the closure notice was served on Walleys Quarry Ltd landfill site in Cemetery Road. As with previous legal action, WQL appealed against that drastic measure but ultimately investors in the landfill company were not prepared to continue the operation, the appeal was dropped, and the company went into administration in February 2025.

The Environment Agency is now managing the site. There are funds currently available to ensure the works progress to cover the site, continue to neutralise harmful gases and collect gases that can be utilized for heating (methane) and prepare for an aftercare plan. Sub-contractors are being commissioned directly to complete the work on site.

However, given the long running history of health and odour concerns it is too soon to rest our case. Silverdale PC has still a role to play with ward councillors following up on the Environment Agency as the *de facto* landfill operator.

The involvement of ward councillors in the many council meetings and their reports to the parish helped Silverdale Parish to understand the change in circumstances as the site moved to the Environment Agency.

## 6 Neighbourhood Plan (Neighbourhood Development Plan)

The Steering Group of all parish councillors, ward councillors and up to 8 lay Silverdale residents met regularly to develop and discuss policy issues.

A Locality grant was received for AECOM to carry out a Design Guidance and Coding Report in the current financial year and completed in April. Also technical support for master planning advice had been submitted but the approval ran out of time and may have been unnecessary because of the timetable for the borough Local Plan extended into 2025 and Planning Inspection.

In addition, a Health Check Locality Grant was approved during the year to commence in May 2025. Planning Consultant, Hannah Barter of Urban Vision Enterprises supplied an estimate for her costs to write the Neighbourhood Plan Policies.

#### 6.1 Neighbourhood Plan Meetings April 2024- April 2025

Minutes and policy reports from Steering Group meetings were circulated to Parish Councillors. A big thank you to all parish councillors and Silverdale residents who have attended monthly meetings during the year to keep the Neighbourhood Plan on course and achieve several milestones.

#### 7 Local Plan 2020-40 former Keele Golf Course, SP11 Park Road, SP23 and the Traveller and Gypsy Site T&G8

We agreed to oppose the Local Plan as it affected Silverdale and to raise awareness of the Local Plan through a leaflet campaign and social media. Colleagues had been active in preparation for the final two public Local Plan meetings. I would like to thank Sam Toon, who produced leaflets and excellent maps adding to our Silverdale style of neighbourhood presentation at short notice. I adapted Sam's map for the Planning Inspection response.

The changes to the previous 2023 Local Plan include the provision of a country park, single entry primary school and retail but 1,100 houses instead of 1,170 were still planned on 25 hectares.

Councillors helped to agree a common approach along with lay members of the Steering Group who had been active over the future of the golf course and infrastructure problems implied by the potential redevelopment. Identifying a range of issues, as part of the consultation I wrote an 8 page letter sent through to the Planning Department in October.

The NBC timetable is superseded by the Planning Inspector's schedule after the 2024 consultation shows that the Local Plan will be assessed for soundness in May and June 2025. but the full decision may last to third quarter 2025 before the planning inspection result is formally published.

#### 8 NBC Planning Applications

Many Borough Council planning applications were commented on extensively and discussed at parish council and unfortunately it seems that often our views were not taken up by NBC Planning Officers.

The exception was when we used the call in procedure and had the matter debated at Planning Committee. An appeal against refusal to grant planning permission at 99 Silverdale High St against refusal was upheld.

#### 9 Christmas Lights 2024

**Signed .....**

**Date.....**

The Christmas lights switch-on event Friday 6 December 2024 due to report of adverse weather; gusts of wind and potential storms. Lessons learnt include a Plan B to utilise a community space for singing in the event of inclement weather. We also received valuable comment from Andrew Van Buren who had extensive experience in similar projects to feed into 5 December 2025.

Henryk Adamczuk, Chair Silverdale Parish Council

1 May 2025