

DIDDLEBURY PARISH COUNCIL

Chairman: Cllr D Hedgley

Clerk: Mrs Jean de Russett, 12 Church Road, Brampton Bryan, Bucknell, SY7 0DH

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MINUTES

**of the meeting of Diddlebury Parish Council
held on Wednesday 26th November 2025 at 7.30pm at Diddlebury Village Hall.**

111/25– Present

Cllr. D Hedgley - Chairman, Cllr. R Povall, Cllr. S Povall, Cllr. A Rattu, Cllr. T O’Boyle, Cllr. C Martyn, Cllr. R Morgan, Cllr. A Watson and Cllr. B Watts

In attendance - the Clerk and Corvedale Cllr. Colin Stanford

112/25 – Declarations of Interest.

Members were requested to declare any Disclosable Personal or Pecuniary Interests they may have in matters to be considered at this meeting in accordance with the Localism Act 2011 s32 and The Relevant Authorities (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests) Regulations 2012.

No declarations were made.

113/25 – Public involvement session,

No members of the public attended.

114/25 – Approval of the Minutes of the parish council meetings of 22nd October 2025

The draft Minutes of the meeting of 22nd October 2025 had been circulated prior to the meeting and no amendments were requested at the meeting.

Cllr. Martyn **proposed** that the Minutes of the meeting of 22nd October 2025 be approved as a correct record of the meeting.

Proposal **seconded by** Cllr. R Povall.

Vote: Six in support of the proposal, three abstentions.

115/25: Matters arising from the Parish Council Meeting of 22nd October 2025 not dealt with elsewhere on the Agenda.

094/25: The Chairman reported work is on-going with the WWI information board and it is to be hoped it will be in situ for the 2026 Remembrance Day.

105/25/4: Cllr. O’Boyle had requested Cllr. Rattu obtain details of Diddlebury Village Hall Committee’s up to date financial position. Cllr. Rattu advised this information is not in the public domain and anyone wishing to obtain it should attend the AGM which is held in May.

116/25- Reports

116/25/1 – Chairman’s Report. The Chairman reported that Severn Trent Water had caused chaos by digging a hole in the road in Peaton but failed to display any warning signs at the Bouldon end.. SC are responsible for filling such holes and eventually filled the hole. Difficulties at The Moors, Diddlebury included a missing sign post from the Craven Arms direction, which Cllr. Watson dealt with. There have been problems with mail and parcel deliveries incorrectly delivered to The Moors instead of the Moors View and vice versa. Some missing post was located in a ditch in Aston Munslow

He has been approached by the Church Faith Group with a request the DPC supply and decorate a Christmas Tree in Diddlebury Church. It was agreed DPC would contribute £20 towards the cost of a tree: Cllr. Rattu will loan a tree stand, the Chairman will supply ornaments and he will be at the church on 11th December to decorate the tree and welcomes any offers of help.

Mr. Patrick Wrigley had invited staff and neighbours including parish councillors to join a social Bonfire Night celebration in the grounds of Delbury Hall on 5th November. Around 60 Diddlebury parish residents had attended including six councillors and their families. It was a social event open all local residents so attendance was acceptable.

116/25/2 – Corvedale Division Cllr. Colin Stanford’s report. Cllr. Stanford reported that SC are still trying to negotiate a £60 million loan from the government to plug their budget deficit. Scrutiny of the finances has revealed a large overspend in the transporting of certain children to school using taxis – 87% of SC’s budget now goes on adult and child social care. An independent advisory board has been set up to examine SC’s finances. If the requested loan is not forthcoming the government will send in a team of auditors to run SC. It is likely, in that event, that leisure facilities will be closed down.

As he tours the Corvedale he noted that many potholes have been repaired. He has investigated the traffic chaos caused by traffic lights on the B4368 in Beambridge, caused by the delays in the specialist repairs to the listed old forge building. He had an appointment to discuss this with Highways but their representative failed to keep the appointment. He is grateful to Cllr. Martyn for keeping everyone advised on flooding issues. His home was recently hemmed in by flood water and he was grateful to neighbours who helped him get out. He has seen diggers working on land in Middlehope which he hoped will be work on leaky dams. Cllr. Martyn felt this was unlikely as a local landowner will not allow work on leaky dams during the shooting season.

There has been a lot of talk about the Shropshire Together Memorandum of Understanding issue but no action as yet. It seems that town councils are more involved than parish councils. Cllr. Watson asked if SC will raise the council tax by more than 5% in the next financial year. Cllr. Stanford felt this would only happen if the government steps in to run SC and would in any event need a referendum.

Cllr. S Povall asked what can be done to bring the provision of taxis for certain school children under control. Cllr. Stanford responded he is not aware of any plans to deal with this issue as yet. It is a statutory requirement to provide this service and so any solution may need legislation to change it.

116/25/3 - Flood Action Group report. Cllr. Martyn reported that Storm Claudia had caused some over-road flooding in Middlehope. Glebe Cottage was not affected by flooding this time. The Diddlebury gauge was not recording. A visual inspection of the Diddlebury gauge showed a peak of 900 mm, substantially lower than last year when a level of 1.600mm was recorded. He had no reports of flooding in the Bouldon area. The next Flood Action Group meeting is on 8th January 2026. The FAG would welcome details of any flooding concerns residents wish to raise at this meeting.

116/25/4 - Diddlebury Village Hall Report: Cllr Rattu advised the recent Chilli Night had been a great success. The issue of Notice Boards misuse was raised again. Cllr Rattu advised that the DVH Committee had decided on the following actions:

1. The existing notice board will be for DPC items and local events and will be maintained, in good condition, at DPC's expense.
2. DVH Committee will buy their own lockable notice board exclusively for DVH events and information.
3. DPC will erect a third notice board to contain the information about WWI and also the Three Castles Map. It is proposed this will be sited in the car park by the route of the footpath. The existing Millennial Board will house the WWI Information sheet.

117/25 – Planning applications. No applications had been received.

118/25 – Highways, foot paths and environmental matters.

118/25/1: The Land Registry and other documents relating to the parking arrangements for Jack's Cottage, Bache Mill were discussed. Local information suggested that holiday makers renting Jack's Cottage are advised to park in The Moors. This is causing a lot of parking congestion in an already crowded area.

118/25/2: Cllr. Rattu advised that he spoke to an engineer at SC re the continuing flooding on the bridge on the B4368, which he has also reported to FixMyStreet. The engineer told him SC has no money to deal with the problem. One drain is blocked by concrete which surely would not cost a lot to remedy. Cllr. Martyn felt Highways had been out as some sandbags had been moved.

118/25/3: Cllr. Watson reported that two men had been seen inspecting the dead and dying trees on the bridge, as DPC had requested. The Clerk advised she had not received any communications from the Tree Team as yet.

119/25 – Consideration of correspondence and communications - Correspondence List for meeting on 26th November 2025

1. Shropshire Council Notification of Consultations on New Design Guidance. Consultation ends 19th December 2025
2. Email from Alison Hosker, Arboricultural Technician (Amenity Protection), Planning Services – Tree Team, Shropshire Council confirming that one of their tree officers will examine the trees on the bridge on the B4368 in Diddlebury.
3. Email from Shropshire Council explaining how councillors should enter their DPI forms on to the Council's Extranet
4. Email from Tina Porter, Assistant Development Manager of Connexus advising that a tender has been issued for the demolition of 3 and 4 Mill Lane, Diddlebury and they aim to start building the new houses in February 2026.
5. Email from the Hills Ford Stages rally, advising that a motor rally will take place in September 2026 which will affect the Diddlebury area and which will involve road closures. A map showing the route will be published in due course.

6. Bundle of documents from Mr Robert Ireland including Land Registry Certificate title number SL 73253 re the registration of legal rights to a parking space opposite Jack's Cottage, Bache Mill.
7. Email circulated by Cllr. Rattu setting out the current position re the scope of the BDUK Gigabit Broadband rollout. It appears that the Diddlebury area of the Corvedale is "under review" and there are no current plans for the delivery of Broadband signal to those areas which do not currently have a signal.
8. Details of the launch of the Rural Housing Enable Hub
9. Briefing note from Shropshire Council on FlyTipping Fortnight. Residents are asked to report any fly-tipping promptly to FixMyStreet.
10. Parish and Town Council – Planning Guidance Note issued by Shropshire Council
11. Email from Corfton resident with concerns about the height of the fencing around The Sun Inn, about possible cruelty to dogs, and concerns about a Doberman and a German Shepherd dog worrying sheep and he has fears of them attacking his dogs as they are kept in an insecure area. Resident invited to PC meeting to discuss issue but did not attend.

Responses: Item 11. Agreed to ask Enforcement Dept. to investigate the fencing; to advise resident that the dog issues should be reported to RSPCA, Police and SC Environmental Health Dept.

120/25 - Finance Report for November/part December 2025

120/25/1 – Finance Report

Balance b/fwd from October 2025 **£7,012.65**

Less: cheques/direct debits drawn on Precept Funds on 26.11.25

1. Mr D Hedgley – Chairman's expenses for course on 25.07.25 "Shropshire Together". Previous cheque destroyed.	£ 21.60	
2. HSBC bank charges	£ 1.60	
3. Clerk's net salary for November & December 2025	£573.88	
4. HMRC – PAYE on Clerk's Nov/Dec.2025 salary	£ 48.40	
5. Mr D Hedgley - Chairman's expenses - £25 for Poppy Wreath for Parish Council on 11.11.25	£ 25.00	
6. SALC – fee for training course for Cllr. Watts	£ 40.00	
7. <u>Administrative expenses for November 2026</u>		
• November contribution to Broadband/telephone	£20.00	
• 1 book 8 x 2 nd class stamps	£ 6.96	
• Mileage at 45p per mile 26.11.25 - Diddlebury Village Hall for PC meeting - 32 miles	£14.40	
Total admin expenses	£41.36	£ 41.36
		<u>£751.84</u>
Balance of Precept Funds c/fwd to January 2026		£ 751.84
		£6,260.81

Ring-fenced funds, reserves funds and third-party funds held by Diddlebury Parish Council

CIL/Neighbourhood Fund: Balance b/fwd from October 2025	£5,500.95	
Less: Coker Exhibition Systems Ltd – notice board for Bache Mill	£ 558.00	
	<u>£4,942.95</u>	£4,942.95

Environmental/asset maintenance fund: Bal. b/fwd from October 2025	£ 530.82	
Legal Expenses ring-fenced fund	£ 750.00	
Diddlebury Village Hall reserves fund for car park maintenance	£3,500.00	
Reserves Fund held for SC elections	£ 457.73	
Ring fenced fund for WWI Information Board	£ 300.00	
<u>Third Party Funds</u>		
Corvedale Walking & Footpath Group bal. b/fwd from October 2025	£ 550.00	
Flood Action Group	£ 228.46	
	<u>£11,259.96</u>	

Cllr. Watson **proposed** that cheques/direct debits to the value of £1,309.84 be approved for payment.

Proposal **seconded** by Cllr. O’Boyle

Vote: Unanimous in support of the proposal

Balance of funds held by DPC following payment of June authorised cheques etc

Precept Funds	£ 6,260.81
Ring-fenced and third party funds held	<u>£11,259.96</u>
	<u>£17,520.77</u>

120/25/2 - Verification of the Clerk’s Cash book and HCBC Bank Statement 399 reconciliation

Cllr. O’Boyle checked and approved the reconciliation.

120/25/3 – Consideration of first draft of the Precept Budget for the Financial Year 2026/2027

The Clerk had circulated prior to the meeting a first draft of the 2026/2027 proposed Precept Budget, which was considered by the councillors. A final version of the Budget will be approved at the meeting on 28th January 2026. The Clerk requested that DPC’s website be changed from Web Orchard to Hugo Fox and her reasons for this proposal were debated. Cllr. R Povall **proposed** that DPC change its website provider from Web Orchard to Hugo Fox.

Proposal **seconded** by Cllr. Rattu

Vote: Unanimous in support of the proposal.

Cllr. Martyn kindly agreed to investigate how to facilitate the change.

121/25 – To consider adding profiles and photographs of councillors to DPC’s website

Cllr. Martyn advised that the current website cannot accommodate photographs or profiles of councillors. He will explore the options with Hugo Fox.

122/25 – Audit 2025 – 2026 preparation

122/25/1 – Appointment of auditor for 2025/2026:

Cllr. R Povall **proposed** the appointment of Mrs Jennie Griffiths as DPC’s auditor for the financial year 2025/2026.

The Chairman **seconded** the proposal.

Vote: Unanimous in support of the proposal.

122/25/2 – Review of Code of Conduct.

The Code of Conduct was reviewed by Councillors. It was not felt that any amendments needed to be made to it.

122/25/3 – Review and Update of Standing Orders.

DPC's Standing Orders had been reviewed and updated last year, but NALC has made further amendments. It was agreed that this item of business be deferred to the January meeting.

122/25/4 – Review of the Reserves Fund and Legal Expenses Fund.

DPC has a Reserves Policy which was adopted in 2017 and last reviewed in March 2023. The Auditor has requested that it be reviewed for the next audit.

DPC has General Reserves – which is the accumulation of unspent sums obtained from the Precept budget, which reserves are kept as a “cushion” against unexpected and unbudgeted expenses which may arise, such as the replacement of IT equipment, repairs etc. It also holds Earmarked Reserves which are set out in full each month in the Finance Report. Within the Earmarked and ring-fenced reserves are £3,500 for future repairs to the DVH car park and £750 for legal expenses. At the time the Reserves Policy was instituted interest rates were so low that it was agreed to hold the sums in our current account. However, it is now felt that £4,250 should be transferred to a deposit account at HSBC.

The Chairman **proposed** that DPC should open a deposit account with HSBC and transfer £4,250 into it.

Proposal **seconded** by Cllr. Rattu

Vote: Councillors voted unanimously in support of the proposal.

The Clerk was asked to organise a deposit account with HSBC.

123/25 - Any Other Business (for the dissemination of information only)

No matters were raised.

There being no further business to conduct, the Chairman thanked everyone for their attendance and wished them all a Happy Christmas and good New Year.

The meeting was closed at 9.10pm

The next Parish Council Meeting, commencing at 7.30pm, will be held on Wednesday 28th January 2026 at Diddlebury Village Hall.

Minutes signed by: _____

Dated: _____