

DIDDLEBURY PARISH COUNCIL

Chairman: Cllr D Hedgley

Clerk: Mrs Jean de Rusett, 1 Pipe Aston Barns, Pipe Aston, Ludlow SY8 2HG
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MINUTES

**Of the meeting of Diddlebury Parish Council
held on Wednesday 27th January 2021 at 7.30pm via the remote viewing platform Zoom.**

001/21 – Present via Zoom

Cllr. D Hedgley - Chairman, Cllr. R Povall, Cllr. T O'Boyle, Cllr. S Povall, Cllr. A Watson,
Cllr. M Woodhouse, Cllr. K Worthington

Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Cllr. Selina Thomas

In attendance - the Clerk, Unitary Cllr. C Motley and a number of members of the public

002/21 – 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.

The Chairman made a declaration of interest in respect of Planning application 20/05271/FUL.

Cllrs. Worthington and Watson made declarations of financial interest in respect of Item 18 on the 2021-2022 Precept Budget – a possible donation to the Westhope Village Hall Committee, of which they are both members.

Cllr. Woodhouse made a declaration of financial interest in Item 18 of the Precept budget in his role as committee member of Diddlebury Village Hall.

003/21 – Public involvement session.

No matters were raised.

004/21 – Approval of the Minutes of 25th November 2020

The Minutes of the above meeting held via Zoom had been circulated prior to this meeting and publicised on the website. No amendments were requested.

Cllr. R. Povall **proposed** that the Minutes of 25th November 2020 be accepted as a correct record.

Proposal **seconded** by Cllr. Watson

Vote: Six in favour, one abstention.

005/21: Matters arising from the Minutes of the 25th November 2020 not dealt with elsewhere on the Agenda.

The Chairman advised there had been no response from the owner of Church Farm. Notices had been put on the website and Corvedale News about advertisement boards on the highways verges and the owners of the Tally Ho had been contacted and asked to remove the remains of their sign from Mill Lane. The Chairman and Cllr. Motley are continuing to pursue DPC's CIL entitlement. Ian Davies of the PPSG is having a meeting on 28th January with Renee Wallace, SC's Community Housing Enabler, about the Community Led Housing Scheme (CLHS).

006/21 - Reports

006/21/1 – Chairman's Report

The Chairman has this month initiated a S.O. 27 group re planning application 20/04972/FUL, had a site visit and discussed the application, which the Group supported. He has held discussions with Ian Davies about the CLHS initiative and agreed a notice for the Corvedale News. He has considered the latest review to the Local Plan and noted it mostly deals with Craven Arms. He has considered background information about the Westhope Village Hall purchase. He has held discussions with Cllr. Woodhouse and Cllr. Motley about the Severn Trent Water grant application for DVH car park. He has been contacted by parishioners concerning the collapse of wall in Bouldon and a landslip in Middlehope and has reported both matters to the Highways Dept. He discussed the meeting dates for 2021-2022 with the Clerk and invited members to confirm they were happy to re-instate the April meeting date, which unanimously they were. He had considered a letter from Graham White, solicitor at SC and the legal topic paper the Clerk circulated re the proposed Community Governance Reviews (England).

006/21/2 – Unitary Cllr. Motley's report

First, Cllr. Motley discussed the forthcoming Community Governance Review, which is now active and could lead to the creation, abolition, alteration or grouping of parish councils. These changes could come via legislation or informal arrangements. It could also resolve quirks in parish boundaries: she recommended DPC and Culmington start discussing the Seifton boundary issue. Adjoining parish councils should also be jointly discuss planning issues. She will call another Chair's and Clerk's meeting when further information is issued by SC relating to this Review. The Chairman raised with Cllr. Motley certain safeguards which had been built into the legal framework of the Community Governance Review: Cllr. Motley felt it was always open to SC to change the legislation.

Next she mentioned the forthcoming 2021 Census and urged the council to help publish information about it. Every household must have completed and submitted their household census return by the 21st March 2021.

Cllr. Motley advised there is a rights of way/footpaths problem. Due to the lockdown there had been increased use of footpaths for exercise which has resulted in an increase of 215% in maintenance complaints being logged, which has placed the Footpaths Team at SC under enormous pressure.

Finally, Cllr. Motley advised she is live to the issues about the state of the highways in the parish and is in touch with Andy Keyland.

006/21/3 – Diddlebury Village Hall report

Cllr. Woodhouse reported that DVH's grant application to Severn Trent Water for £9,000 had been rejected on the basis they are not funding capital projects at present. He asked Cllr.

Motley if another meeting can be set up to urge SC to pay over the CIL monies. Cllr. Motley advised the personnel who dealt with the CIL applications have changed: Gemma Davies has gone. She is trying to establish contact with the officer who has taken over from her.

006/21/4 – Flood Action Group

Cllr. O’Boyle advised members that Geoff Neden has published data from the gauges on the Diddlebrook. No flooding had occurred during the recent heavy rains.

007/21 – Planning applications

7.1 20/05271/FUL – application for the erection of a first floor extension, internal alterations, alterations to the rear porch, replacement windows and relocation of PV panels at Bouldon Mill, Bouldon, Craven Arms, SY7 9DP

The applicant attended the meeting to assist the councillors. The Chairman outlined the proposed works and advised there were no objections on the planning portal from the public nor statutory bodies. The applicant advised he was just seeking to make sense of the building and to improve its appearance by replacing the windows.

Councillors considered the application.

Cllr, Robert Povall **proposed** that the parish council resolves to strongly support this application.

Cllr. Woodhouse **seconded** the proposal

Vote: The Chairman had made a declaration and so did not vote. One member abstained, and five voted in favour – proposal approved.

7.2 **Chairman’s Actions Report** on application 20/04972/FUL – application for the erection of a single storey extension, following demolition of a cow shed and garage at Red Brick Barn, Corfton, SY7 9DF, dealt with by the parish council as a Chairman’s action pursuant to Standing Order 27, sections (g) to (k). As mentioned in the Chairman’s report, a site meeting was conducted and the Group assembled under SO 27 considered and approved the application. There had been no public objections to the application.

008/21 – Consideration of highways and environmental matters

008/21/1 A landslip has occurred in Middlehope. The Chairman reported it to Highways.

008/21/2 The stream in Bouldon has worn away the bank/wall supporting the highway and a gaping hole has appeared in the road, opposite the Tally Ho. The Chairman has reported it to Highways. Local people have placed fencing and warning signs around it, for which DPC thanks them.

008/21/3 Despite DPC asking for two years, no salt bin has been provided in Middlehope and nor does the Highways Dept. any longer leave grit/salt in piles on the verges. After discussion it was agreed this is a serious health & safety issue for both Middlehope and Bache Mill.

Cllr. Robert Povall **proposed** that DPC should purchase salt bins for both Middlehope and Bache Mill,

The Chairman **seconded** the proposal

Vote: The proposal was passed by a unanimous vote.

It was agreed the Clerk and Cllr. Watson will source the best value bins and Gary Trim will be asked about the feasibility of obtaining supplies of grit/salt from the Craven Arms depot and delivering it to the bins periodically.

The provision of a mirror on the B4368 and various blocked drain issues are dealt with in Correspondence.

009/21 – To consider the following communications and correspondence received and to deal with any issues arising therefrom as appropriate.

1. Re: Item 18 on Precept Budget – possible financial assistance to Westhope Village Hall Committee for their purchase of the freehold of Westhope Village Hall.
Letter 07.01.21 Underhill Langley Wright, solicitors of Bridgnorth, confirming their instructions to act for the vendor of the hall.
Letter 12.01.21 from Greens, solicitors of Ludlow, confirming their instructions to act for the committee of Westhope Village Hall in their purchase of the village hall. In addition to the purchase price the committee have to pay their own legal costs and disbursements and those of the vendor.
2. 22.01.21 – notification from SC re [20//03877/FUL](#) – proposed barn conversions at Hales Barn, Diddlebury: conversion of Barn B into 3 dwelling houses, alteration to existing vehicular access and installation of a treatment plant.
Planning permission granted.
3. Notification from SC re [20/04274/FUL](#) – application for the erection of a two-storey extension to the side of Lower House Farm, Bache Mill.
Planning permission granted.
4. 11.01.21 – letter DPC to Tally Ho, Bouldon asking for the remains of the signage on the B4368 at Mill Lane to be removed and advising of the law relating to signage on highways.
5. Notification of a 2021 Census to be carried out in Shropshire. Households will receive a postcard advising them of the census between 22 – 27th February, then a contact pack by 3rd – 12th March. Each household has to complete and return the Census Questionnaire either on line or by post by 21st March 2021.
6. To help shape Shropshire’s cultural sector for the next 10 years, SC has launched a Cultural Strategy Consultation]: visit [Shropshire.gov.uk/get-involved/vibrant-shropshire-cultural-strategy-2021-2023](#). You can respond by visiting [www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/Shropshire-Cultural-Strategy-2020](#).
7. 22.01.21 – Letter from Legal & Democratic Services at Shropshire Council advising there is to be a Community Governance Review. Views are sought from Town and Parish Councils on proposed changes by the 12th March 2021. Further information awaited as to what the proposals are.
8. 18.12.20 – Email from the Planning Policy Department of Shropshire Council concerning the latest review of the Local Plan. Anyone who wishes to review the latest draft Local Plan and make any representations about it must do so by 5pm on 5th February 2021. Visit the following website for further information.
<https://shropshire.gov.uk/get-involved/Reg-19-Pre-Submission-Draft-Local-Plan>
Representation may be made by emailing: Planningpolicy@Shropshire.gov.uk.
Proposed submission documents are available on www.shropshire.gov.uk
9. Highways issues

Jan. 2021 - Request from parishioner in Westhope for various blocked drains to be attended to as the road is flooded in several areas. Mr Trim and Highways Dept. notified.

Jan. 2021 – request from Chairman to Highways Dept, for action to be taken re road which has been eroded by the stream undercutting a retaining wall and creating a hazard opposite the Tally Ho in Bouldon.

Jan. 2021 – fourth request DPC to Highways Dept. for a salt bin to be provided for Middlehope.

Jan. 2021 – fifth request DPC to Highways for the provision of a mirror on B4368 by Bache Mill lane. On 17th November 2020 Highways were notified that a parishioner had offered to pay for it, but no response has been forthcoming to date.

010 /21 – Finance Report for December 2020 - January 2021

1. Precept balance b/fwd from November 2020 £3,529.13

Less: Cheques authorised to be drawn on Precept Funds in Jan. 2021

1.	Clerk’s net salary for Dec. 2020 & Jan. 2021	£428.34	
2.	PAYE on Clerk’s Dec.2020 & Jan. 2021 salary	£ 12.00	
3.	Mr Gary Trim – asset maintenance to Peaton & Corfton bus shelters	£107.20	
4.	Annual Subscription to “Clerk’s Direct” magazine	£ 12.00	
5.	<u>Administrative expenses incurred by the Clerk in Dec 2020 & Jan. 2021 on behalf of DPC</u>		
	• Dec. 2020 & Jan. 2021 contribution to telephone & Broadband @ £20 per month	£40.00	
	• A4 paper and pkt envelopes	£ 4.05	
	• Travelling expenses claimed at 45p		
	30.11.20 – to Bouldon to see Chairman about the location of Smartwater signs around the parish & to collect Minutes Book and papers following Zoom meeting on 25.11.20.		
	27.01.21 to Diddlebury & Bouldon to get cheques etc signed		
	Total mileage – 70 miles	<u>£31.50</u>	
	Total of administrative expenses	<u>£75.55</u>	<u>£ 75.55</u>
	Total claim on Precept funds in January 2021	<u>£635.09</u>	<u>£ 635.09</u>
	Balance of Precept Funds c/fwd to February 2021		<u>£2,894.04</u>

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

- **Community Infrastructure Levy /Neighbourhood Fund**
Balance b/fwd from November 2020 **£3,040.63**
- **Environmental Grant/Fund – b/fwd from November 2020** **£775.81**
Less: Invoice from G. Trim for work on clearing drains in

Diddlebury village	<u>£ 25.00</u>	
	<u>£750.81</u>	£ 750.81
• Transparency Code Grant fund – b/fwd from Nov. 2020.	£96.49	
Less: Invoice from A Holmes, 14.01.21 for installing Kaspersky Internet 2021 security & general maintenance	<u>£25.00</u>	
(Paid in cash by Clerk and reclaimed by her)	<u>£71.49</u>	£ 71.49
• Funds held for Flood Action Group - bal. b/fwd November. 2020		£ 150.09
• Ear-marked reserves for village hall car park resurfacing - balance b/fwd from November 2020		£4,723.39

Cllr. T O’Boyle **proposed** that the parish council should authorise the cheques itemised above for payment.

Proposal **seconded** by Cllr. Watson

Vote: Councillors unanimously voted in support of the proposal.

3. Balance held by DPC following authorisation of the above listed payments on 27.01.2021

1. Precept	£2,894.04
2. Community Infrastructure Levy	£3,040.63
3. Environmental grant/fund	£ 750.81
4. Transparency Grant fund	£ 71.49
5. FAG third party funds	£ 150.09
6. Ear marked DVH car park reserves	<u>£4,723.39</u>
	Total: <u>£11,630.45</u>

4 Bank statement and cash book reconciliation

Councillor O’Boyle verified the Clerk’s reconciliation between HSBC bank statements numbered 340 and 341 and DPC’s Cash Book

011/21 – Consideration and adoption of the Precept Budget for 2021/2022

Councillors had discussed a first draft of the Precept Budget for the financial year 2021/2022 at the November meeting. Further details which were not available in November, have now been included in the draft. In addition, since the November meeting the Committee of Westhope Village Hall have negotiated the purchase of the freehold of the village hall for the sum of £1,000 plus the vendor’s legal costs. They have requested financial assistance from DPC to assist with this purchase. This is Item 18 in the budget.

In total, 18 items of expenditure were set out in the Precept Budget for the councillors’ consideration. A copy of the Precept Budget is annexed to these Minutes

Items 1 – 14 were agreed in the total sum of 6,666.88. This sum included £806.88 utilized from reserves in 2020 to purchase the 288 SmartWater kits: only 160 kits had been budgeted for in the 2020/2021 Precept

Item 15 – Further Precept finance for DVH car park resurfacing fund: This was discussed at length. The advice from the Chairman, Cllr. Woodhouse and Cllr. Motley was the CIL funds

due to DPC are sufficient to pay for the work: drawing down funds via the Precept merely gives SC a reason to withhold the CIL money. It was therefore agreed no claim will be made.

Item 16 – possible provision of a defibrillator. One defibrillator would be insufficient for a widespread parish like Diddlebury. It was agreed grant funding will be investigated and no claim will be made on the Precept this year,

Item 17 – a fund towards the cost of the May 2021 elections. It had been agreed in November that no sum will be added to the 2021/2022 Precept for this.

Item 18 - financial assistance to Westhope Village Hall Committee for their purchase of the freehold of the hall and the vendor's associated legal cost – a sum of £2,000 is sought.

The Clerk had established from DPC's auditor that DPC was authorised by the provisions of the Local Government Act 1972, section 133 to make a donation to the WVH Committee on the basis the donation is intended for use by the charity for acquiring and furnishing a community building.

The Chairman had circulated to councillors on 26/01 an email setting out issues DPC needed to consider before committing taxpayer's money to this request, which included:

1. The long-term sustainability of WVH
2. The cost of the upkeep of its fabric and the availability of funds to do so.
3. The charitable status of the hall
4. Identification of any covenants which affect the purposes to which the hall can be put.
5. Is this a loan or a one-off grant
6. Is it practicable to have two village halls in the parish in this day and age.
7. What are the long-term plans for the hall if it cannot be supported or the committee collapses.

Cllr. Watson, in her role as Chairman of Westhope Village Hall Committee, produced a detailed response to these questions.

1. Prior to the lockdown, WVH hosted many social events which were well attended by both locals and people from the surrounding area. In some cases the events at WVH were the only social interactions some people had. The hall was built in 1924 to commemorate WWI, it is an iconic part of Westhope's history and has served its community for almost 100 years.
2. The WVH committee carefully researched the cost of the upkeep of the hall and its viability before embarking on the option to purchase the freehold. They have received advice and support from the Community Buildings Advisor at Shropshire Council, Mr Graham, Betts, throughout. From its own revenue a new electricity supply has been installed and a new range cooker, a large fridge/freezer, new lighting, an upgrade to the heating system and new curtains. In time the roof will need substantial work and Mr Betts has advised the committee to obtain the freehold, as this will give it access to grants and loan – such as DVH obtained - which are not available whilst WVH just holds a tenuous rolling lease. Since October 2018 the hall's income was £11,355.
3. The hall is a registered charity – reg. no. 522585. All returns and accounts are up to date.
4. The vendor has not indicated there will be any adverse covenants attached to the purchase of the hall. The contract is awaited.
5. The WVH committee are seeking a one-off donation from DPC of £2,000 to cover the cost of the freehold - £1,000 plus £1,000 towards the associated legal costs and disbursements.

6. Diddlebury Parish has a long history of having two viable village halls: this fact alone should confirm it is practicable and possible for them both to be sustained into the future.
The vendor of the hall, Mss Ann Dyer, is very keen for the hall to remain a community building.
7. The hall currently has a vibrant and committed management committee, and new people coming into the community are actively supporting the hall

Following Cllr's Watson response, the matter was debated at length by councillors, assisted by members of the WVH committee in attendance at the meeting, including the Treasurer Cllr, Worthington and the secretary, Mrs Betty Manley.

Concerns were expressed that a contract document was not made available for scrutiny, so DPC could consider any covenants and ensure that it contained long-term provisions for the management of the hall should the committee collapse, as had happened following the death of Tom Hall in 2018.

Cllr. Woodhouse felt very strongly that Diddlebury Parish could not sustain two village halls, and he disputed the income figures WVH committee had given the Charity Commissioners. Cllr. Worthington challenged this assertion.

Mr Rainsford (a Westhope resident) remarked that there may be historical covenants concerning the plot which could not be excluded, it is only new ones which will have to be negotiated: also he could not support the idea that Diddlebury Parish could not sustain two village halls when it so obviously had done so for many years.

Cllr. S Povall, Cllr. R Povall, Cllr. O'Boyle supported DPC giving assistance for the hall to be purchased as a community asset.

The following **Resolution** was **proposed** by Cllr. Robert Povall utilizing the powers given by the Local Government Act 1972, s.133, namely that DPC should make a donation of £2,000 to the Westhope Village Hall Committee for the purchase of the freehold of Westhope Village Hall and that the £2,000 will not be released to the WVH Committee until DPC has seen documents satisfying the council that it is an unencumbered freehold which is being transferred to WVH Committee.

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

Vote: Of the seven councillors in attendance, three, Cllrs. Woodhouse, Watson and Worthington had all made declarations of interest and could not vote.

The Chairman and Cllrs, S Povall, R Povall and T.O'Boyle voted in favour of the proposal, so it was adopted by a majority.

The Chairman stated DPC is committed to ensuring that both village halls work for the benefit of the community. Mrs Manley thanked the councillors for their support.

Following this vote, £2,000 was added to the 2021/2022 Precept Budget, making a total Precept Requirement to be submitted to Shropshire Council in the sum of £8,666.

The Chairman **proposed** that the 2021/2022 Precept Requirement be set at £8,666

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

Vote: Six in favour, 1 abstention.

012/21 – Any Other Business (for dissemination only).

It was agreed that the next meeting, 24th February 2021, be held via Zoom in view of the on-going Covid lockdown provisions.

There being no further business to conduct, the Chairman closed the Zoom meeting at 9.27pm and thanked everyone for their attendance.

The next meeting is on Wednesday 24th February 2021 at 7.30pm and will be held via Zoom.

Please refer to the Agendas posted on the parish website or notice boards – information on how to join the meeting will be displayed on the Agenda.

Minutes signed by: David Hedgley - Chairman

Dated: 24th February 2021