**DIDDLEBURY PARISH COUNCIL**

**Chairman: Cllr D Hedgley**

Clerk: Mrs Jean de Rusett, The Grange, Leinthall Earls, Leominster, Herefordshire HR6 9TS Tel: 01568 770640 "e" mail address: diddleburypc@gmail.com

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**MINUTES**

**Of the Parish Council Meeting**

**held on Wednesday 28th September 2016, 7.30pm at Westhope Village Hall**

**107/16: Present and apologies for absence**

 Cllr. D Hedgley, Chairman, Cllr. T O'Boyle, Cllr. M Thomas, Cllr. R Povall, Cllr. K Worthington, Cllr. S Thomas, Cllr. S Povall

**Apologies**

Apologies were accepted from Cllr. M Fowler and Cllr. A Watson

**In attendance**:

 The Clerk Mrs J de Rusett, Unitary Cllr. C Motley and 10 members of the public.

**108/16: Declarations of Interest relating to this meeting.**

Members are requested to declare any Disclosable 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.

Cllr. Selina Thomas and Cllr. S Povall both declared interests in Agenda Item 6 - the two planning applications and took no part in the voting on the applications.

**109/16: Public involvement session:**

No matters were raised at this juncture. Some members of the public were present in respect of the planning applications and will raise their views or give assistance under planning.

**110/16: Approval of the Minutes of the Parish Council Meetings on 27th July 2016 and 25th August 2016.**

110/16/1 - The Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 27th July 2016 had been circulated prior to the meeting. Cllr. O'Boyle asked for an amendment to be made to the 4th line of item 100/16, changing the word "close" to "safe guarding the site" and to the 6th line, 2nd paragraph in 093/16/4, changing the word "leaning" to "leaking". The Chairman duly made the amendments. Cllr. Worthington **proposed** that the Minutes be approved as a correct record, Cllr. O'Boyle **seconded** the proposal: with one abstention the members voted to approve the Minutes and they were duly signed by the Chairman.

110/16/2 - The Minutes of the E.G.M Parish Council Meeting held on 25th August 2016 had been circulated prior to the meeting. Cllr. R Povall **proposed** that the Minutes be approved as a correct record of the meeting, Cllr. Worthington **seconded** the proposal, and with one abstention the members voted to approve the Minutes and they were duly signed by the Chairman.

**111/16: Matters arising from the Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting not dealt with elsewhere on the Agenda**

**111/16/1**: Minutes of the 27th July 2016

093/16/3: The Chairman asked where the village hall notice boards had been stored for safety. Cllr. O'Boyle will check and let him know.

094/16: The Chairman advised he had not yet had an opportunity to discuss extending the speed limit on the B43678 from Diddlebury through Corfton. He will report to the October meeting.

095/15/5 and 095/16/6: Responses are still awaited from the planning department.

**111/16/2:**  Minutes of the EGM on 25th August 2016

The Clerk reported the Deed of Easement had been completed and was awaiting registration by the Land Registry.

**112/16 - Planning Applications**

112/16/1: 16/03699/FUL Application by Mr P J Wrigley for the erection of a single detached dwelling with separate triple garage with store room and office/games room above, on land adjacent to Shepherd's Barn, Lower Corfton.

The Chairman summarised both the recent history of planning applications on this site and the objections to this application which had been lodged with the planning authority. The objectors present were given an opportunity to explain their objections to the members and Mr Stevenson, the applicant's agent, responded to the objections. Whilst the objectors were grateful that the scheme had been scaled down from three houses to one house and were grateful that Mr Stevenson had held a site meeting with them to discuss the applications, there remained concerns at the size of the house, particularly at the size of the triple garage with office/games rooms and store room, concerns about loss of privacy and concerns about the flood potential posed by the scheme on the rest of the hamlet.

After considerable debate the Chairman **proposed** that the Parish Council supports this application but with a recommendation that the size of the proposed house and garage be reduced and that the issue of drainage is examined in detail by a technical officer.

**Seconded** by Cllr. R Povall and **carried by a majority vote.**

112/16/2: 16/03628/FUL Application by Mr P J Wrigley for the demolition of the former poultry units and the erection of eight detached dwellings on the former poultry unit site at Lower Corfton, SY7 9LD.

The Chairman summarised both the recent history of planning applications on this site and the objections to this application which had been lodged with the planning authority. All objectors were unanimous that eight houses were too many for the size of the site and many other concerns were raised. The objectors present were given an opportunity to explain their objections to the members and Mr Stevenson, the applicant's agent, responded to the objections.

After lengthy debate, the Chairman **proposed** that the Parish Council does not support this application and objects to it on the basis that it is over-development of the site. The **proposal** was **seconded** by Cllr. Worthington and was **passed by a majority vote with the Chairman's exercising his casting vote.**

Cllr. O'Boylesuggestedthat a caveat be added to the above proposal, namely that the Parish Council is not against the development of the site, nor are the population of the settlement but they are concerned about the sheer size of the proposed development. The Chairman **proposed** this suggestion be adopted as part of the Parish Council's response to the application: the proposal was **seconded** by Cllr. O'Boyle and **passed by a majority vote.**

**113/16 - Reports**

113/16/1 - Chairman's Report

The Chairman reported on his parish council activities for the past month. He had spent a deal of time on the Lower Corfton planning applications, liaising with the resident and the planning authority. He had also had discussions with John Farley and David Hardwick about the proposed improvements to Footpath No, 20 which links The Moors and the school. He had had a meeting with Mr Ulyatt, the EMO, about works needed around the parish. He had sent a card of congratulations from the Parish Council to Cllr. Amie Watson on the recent birth of her son Bailey. He had reviewed the RSN's articles on housing costs and council tax.

113/16/2 - Unitary Councillor's Report

Cllr. Motley spoke about the impact the re-shuffled government's strategy is having on local authority funding. The initial indications are they are seeking to back-track from George Osborne's austerity measures to reduce the country's deficit: it is hoped their thinking will become clearer following the Conservative's Conference next week and may result in more funding for rural areas.

She spoke of a letter circulated during the week by SALC indicating that the government is considering subjecting any town or parish council which increases their Precept by more than 2% or £5 per head to a referendum. This comes against a background where town and parish councils are being asked to greatly increase their precepts to fund amenities such as leisure centres and libraries. She felt the only council to be affected by the referendum issue is Bridgnorth as it has large pool of reserves. However, she will monitor this issue.

The indications are that the Environment contracts/grants will continue at least until April 2018. She will continue to hold her regular Chair's meetings: the one last night covered much information about planning.

113/16/3 - Diddlebury Village Hall Report

Cllr. O'Boyle reported that work has now commenced and is progressing well on the village hall refurbishment.

113/16/4 - Flood Action Group

Cllr. O'Boyle advised that work had been undertaken to clear some of the stones and gravel which had accumulated under the bridge in Mill Lane.

**114/16 - Highways & Environmental matters**

114/16/1 - Agricultural machinery use in parish lanes

Cllr. O'Boyle thinks the maneouvering of huge agricultural machines on the narrow parish lanes poses danger and inconvenience to other road users, especially at peak commuting and school collection times: harvest time particularly brings chaos to the lanes as the machinery is almost as wide as the lanes. He enquired whether the farmers couldn't communicate with parishioners such as by publicizing the start of the harvest season, and by moving their machinery at off-peak times.

The matter was debated: the farmer's view is that farming, especially harvest, is an activity entirely dependent on the weather and the availability of the necessary contractors and machinery, a combination which restricts the giving of any time-tabling system. They also felt they were not the only culprits in causing traffic congestion and difficulty in Diddlebury: weddings and funerals at the church and activities at the school also generated a lot of congestion in the roads. After discussion, with was agreed Cllr. R Povall will consider putting some information on the website and in the Corvedale News at times when intense faming activity is due to take place which will affect parishioners. He would welcome it if the church could do likewise. He will also consider a notice warning walkers to avoid walking through fields containing suckler herds.

114/16/2 - Highways problems in Bache Mill

Cllr. Fowler had sent an email outlining various highways problems the residents of Bache Mill are facing. The Chairman agreed to send the email to the EMO, Mr Ulyatt, to see if he could remedy any of the problems, failing which they would be referred to Highways .

114/16/3 - Village entry point signs for Corfton

Mr Shaw, Highways Engineer, had not yet received a firm quote for village entry point signs for Corfton, but indicated a pair would normally cost around the £300 plus VAT.

Of the Corfton residents present, only one indicated a desire for such entry point signs. Councillors felt there was an unnecessary proliferation of road signs already in the area plus no one was sure where Corfton started and ended. What councillors were being told by Corfton residents is they really want an extension of the 30mph speed limit and this issue is being pursued.

Cllr. R Povall **proposed** a resolution that there are already too many road signs in the parish and it is was un-necessary to have village entry point signs for Corfton, the proposal was **seconded** by Cllr. O'Boyle and **passed by a majority vote.**

The Chairman said if the residents of Corfton felt strongly about entry point signs, they could fund raise the £300 and the Parish Council would organise their ordering and installation.

114/16/4 - Report on Environmental Maintenance Officer

The Chairman had given Mr Ulyatt a list of works around the parish but had not heard from him on their progress, nor had the Clerk received any time sheets or claims for expenses. Mr Drake had seen him working, but he was not wearing a high-vis jacket nor using traffic cones. Cllr. R Povall will contact Mr Ulyatt and ask for better communications and request that he uses a high-vis jacket and uses traffic cones when necessary.

**115/16 - Report on the re-surfacing of foot path No. 20 connecting The Moors and the school**

The Chairman reported he had spoken to John Farley and to David Hardwick. The situation is all the stiles will be replaced with kissing gates; the two landowners involved have refused permission for hardcore or stones to be laid in muddy areas of the path, and the school are continuing to refuse to re-open the gate which links with the footpath: Mr. Ulyatt will be asked to keep the footpath edges strimmed.

Cllr. S Thomas asked what advantage there was in replacing stiles with kissing gates - it still prevented mums with buggies from using the path. Cllr. M Thomas responded that gates are unsuitable because if left open, stock would wander. The members asked the Chairman to raise again the issue of opening the gate with the school, especially as Cllr. Watson believes there are members of staff who are happy to attend to opening and closing it. John Farley will also be asked by the Chairman to approach the landowners again to see if they would allow hardcore to be laid just in the gateways.

**116/16 - Correspondence and Communications**

The members considered the following items of correspondence:

1. 10.08.16 - email from SALC inviting parish councils to take part in a survey on developing capacity in smaller councils to find out how devolution will affect smaller councils. Responses to survey needed by 30th September - via http://www.nalc.gov.uk/our-work/working with smaller councils.

2. Documentation pack concerning the May 2017 elections.

3. 16.09.16 - email from SALC re Council Tax referendum principles: it states, inter alia, that the government is aware that increases in precepts continue to concern local tax payers and it is therefore prepared to consider extending referendums to ALL parishes. Referendums currently take effect if a council proposes an increase

 of 2% or £5 per annum, whichever is higher.

 (NB - this comes against a background of parish councils being asked to increase their Precepts to fund libraries, leisure centres etc.)

4. 27.09.16 - SALC press release re funding available for voluntary and community sector research

5. Notification that the War Memorial has been designated a Grade II listed building of special architectural or historic interest.

6. Planning application decisions:

 16/02751/OUT. Proposed open-market dwelling and garage adjacent to Sun Inn, Corfton. Permission granted 09.08.16

 16/02443/FUL. Application for the erection of an agricultural building at Holly Bush Farm, Clee St. Margaret. Permission granted 10.08.16

 16/02604/FUL. Application for the erection of a storage building and formation of additional parking at Old Hen & Ferret Cottage, Great Sutton, Stanton Lacy.

 Permission granted 12.08.16

7. Agenda for SC & SALC Town and Parish Council Working Group - 2.30pm - 4.30pm Council Chamber, Shirehall on Thursday 29th September 2016.

Item 2: It was agreed it was too soon yet to display the Elections poster on the website.

**117/16 - Finance**

 117/16/1 - Finance Report for September 2016

Balance of **Precept Funds** brought forward from 25th August 2016 £8,070.75

**Less: cheques to be authorised for payment on 28.09.16**

1. Clerk’s net salary for September 2016 £143.60

2. HMRC – PAYE on Clerk’s salary for September 2016 £ 35.80

3. Clerk’s expenses for September 2016 (itemized below) £ 35.30

Total deductions from Precept Funds for September 2016 £214.70 £ 214.70

**Balance of Precept Funds carried forward to October 2016 £7,856.05**

**Clerk's expenses for September 2016**

1. September 2016 contribution towards

 telephone and Internet expenses £ 5.00

2. 12 x 2nd class Postage stamps £ 6.60

3 1 x HP364 XP black ink cartridge £ 8.00

4. 1 ream copier paper & 1 pkt file dividers £ 2.50

5. 28.09.16 - travelling expenses to Westhope for PC Meeting

 - 44 miles @ 30p per mile £13.20

 Total expenses claimed £35.30

NB: The Clerk seeks an increase in her telephone/Broadband provision for the

Parish Council to £10.00 per month: matter to be debated by the members on

 28.9.16

**Total funds held by Diddlebury Parish Council after this meeting**

**1.** Balance of Precept Funds c/fwd to October 2016 **£7,856.05**

**2.** Highways & Environment Grant funds

 b/fwd from August 2016 - no payments claimed in September **£4,527.07**

**3.**  Other ring-fenced sums held in Diddlebury PC’s Account

* **Corvedale Youth Club** **£ 650.39**
* **Diddlebury Flood Action Group**  **£ 77.56**
* **Balance of Donations for** **War Memorial**  **£ 105.13**
* **Balance of Transparency Code Funding Grant**  £ 840.20

Add: Further Grant payment rec'd 20.09.16 £ 531.20 **£1,371.40**

 **Total of DPC funds c/fwd to October 2016 £14,587.60**

The Clerk advised that since January 2016 she has paid BT £444.65 for telephone and Broadband expenses, towards which DPC had contributed just £45, although it generated use in excess of one-third of all her email traffic plus numerous telephone calls. She asked for either a dedicated connexion exclusively for DPC's use funded by DPC, or an immediate increase from the £5 per month she currently receives. After discussion, Cllr. R Povall agreed to investigate the Clerk's BT package to see if it could be obtained more cheaply. It was **proposed** by Cllr. R Povall that the cheques be authorised for payment and that the Clerk should receive an immediate increase to £10 per month for Broadband & telephone provision: **seconded** by the Chairman and **unanimously agreed by the members.**

117/16/2 - Bank statement/Cash Book verification

Cllr. R Povall verified the Reconciliation of the Cash Book with the HSBC bank statement no. 287 dated 14th September 2016.

117/16/3 - report on the conclusion of the Annual Return & Audit for 2015/2016

The Clerk reported that the 2015/2016 audit was now completed and the statutory notices signifying the conclusion had been displayed on notice boards and the website.

Regrettably she had mistakenly put an incorrect figure in the Governance Statement and the form had been returned to her for correction. This may incur an audit fee.

**118/16 - Any Other Business (for dissemination of information only)**

The Chairman has been approached by a resident about the highways road marking at Heath Bank, which have just been re-done: they have been placed as to now present a motoring hazard. The Chairman will take the matter up with Highways and report back to the next meeting.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 9.50pm

Date and venue of next meeting:

 7.30pm on Wednesday 26th October 2016 at Westhope Village Hall.

**MINUTES SIGNED BY**

**DATED**