

DIDDLEBURY PARISH COUNCIL

Chairman: Cllr D Hedgley

MINUTES

of the

ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

**Held at Diddlebury Village Hall on Wednesday 24th May 2023 at
7.30pm**

150/1: Present and apologies for absence

Present: Cllr. D Hedgley, Chairman, Cllr. A Watson and Cllr. C Martyn

Apologies were received and accepted from: Cllr. R Povall, Cllr. S Povall, Cllr. A Rattu, Cllr. R Morgan, Cllr. T Pardoe, Cllr. T. O'Boyle

In attendance: The Clerk and Unitary Cllr. C Motley

151/23: Confirmation of Notice Convening the Annual Parish Meeting

In accordance with statute. The Notice convening the Annual Parish Meeting has been duly published on the parish notice boards and on the parish council's website.

152/23: Annual reports of the Parish Council and other groups/committees for the year 2022 - 2023. These reports will not be read out at the meeting. Copies will be available at the meeting and on the Parish Council's website. Questions are invited at the meeting.

- (a) Chairman of the Parish Council
- (b) Cllr. Cecilia Motley, Shropshire Council
- (c) Westhope Village Hall
- (d) Diddlebury Flood Action Group
- (e) Mrs Sara Thompson, DPC's website manager
- (f) Diddlebury Charities including Louise Powell Almshouses
- (g) Mr Ian Davies, PPSG

No report was received for Diddlebury Village Hall.

152/23/1 - Chairman's Report

Following his resignation and sad death Cllr Neden was replaced in an unopposed election by Cllr Clive Martyn. We also sadly lost Peter Drakes a regular attendee at council meetings.

Main Issues

Place Plan Critical

1.DVH Car park At long last DVH car park /school playground have been resurfaced and line marked. Donations from Corvedale School and the DVH Committee along with our own use of Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funds enabled us to go ahead with the work in

August. At the last minute Shropshire Council (SC) confirmed that they would pay us the CIL money owing to us from them. In agreement with DVH Committee and the Corvedale School a fund of £150 from each per year has been agreed upon to go towards a fund for future sustainable work. The car park will now cease to be a Place Plan objective.

2. Broadband Provision. We continue to press for acceptable broadband reception throughout the parish liaising with and investigating Government funding as it is promoted. Our influence on this is limited with the providers and SC calling the shots.

Place Plan Priority.

3. Flood control measures. We manage and financially support these through the work of the Flood Action Group led by Cllr Martyn.

Place Plan Key

4. Measures to control the speed limit through Diddlebury and other road safety measures.

DPC is working with other Corvedale Parish Councils to influence SC Highways and police on measures to make the B4368 in particular safer to both pedestrians and motorists. This included a Highways Study of the B4368 by SC.

DPC has to assist this purchased a second Speed Indicator Device. In addition we purchased signs asking people to slow down to go on the side of wheelie bins and erected pedestrian walking signs and horses warning signs in lanes. We also continue to raise pothole concerns with highways.

5. Parish Plan-fresh review.

We will shortly be asked to review our above place Plan objectives as part of the Craven Arms Place Plan in order to bid for future CIL funding. As opposed to our original 2012 Parish Plan which sought parishioners views across a variety of future aspirations we will this time be asking parishioners views on possible future infrastructure needs via the Google group and Corvedale News in early July. We are time critical on this due to SC imposing a 12 week window for consultation from the 25th April. Most local parishes are challenging this ridiculously short consultation period.

A complete Parish Plan review similar to the original one is under consideration.

Non place plan Issues

6. Crime. We are aware of concern over crime in the parish and are working closely with the police to combat this. We complete and update a Community Police Charter every 3 months with community theft, speeding and scams being our 3 priority areas at present.

7. Environmental Maintenances Officer (EMO) . Yet again we have had to consider recruiting another EMO and review the funding and operations of their role. A decision was taken not to employ an EMO but to tender for individual jobs as they arose. This year has again seen an increase in voluntary work being undertaken by Councillor's and members of the public which has saved the parish a lot of money and we would like to encourage the expansion of this.

Diddlebury Parish Council Precept 2022-23

Following the council meeting on the 24th January the precept for the next financial year was set at £6,660. This is an actual decrease of £1,195 on last years. .

The council made a conscious decision to try and keep the precept low. By accessing our Neighbour Fund during the last financial year to pay for infrastructure work we have been able to reduce the amount used to top this up. We have also reduced costs here by work on the local infrastructure again being undertaken by councillors and local people volunteering their help. We are always happy to accept such volunteering with painting, light repairs and cleaning of assets.

We will however have further increase to the clerks salary in line with recommendations. We continue to financially support our village halls, local charities and work such as the Flood Action Group. A full copy of the precept can be found on DPC web site.

Responses to Consultations.

Empty Homes -Connexion
Police Community Charter
Community Governance review
SC Highways Study B4368

Public Meetings/ External Meetings attended.

South Shropshire Planning Committee x 2
Shropshire Council CIL briefing on how CIL is now applied.
Shropshire Council Place Plan Briefing

Planning applications.

17 planning applications have been received this year as opposed to 21 last year. All but 2 which included reapplications were supported as compared to 3 not supported last year.

Within the 17 applications 1 was related to tree work against 4 last year.

There were no enforcement enquiries from DPC again this year but the council was notified of a number received from the public within the parish.

A number of site visits were undertaken by councillors.

Sample of other topics arising and activities undertaken.

Lobbying for better traffic diversion measures
Provision of dog litter bins signage.
Collapsed river wall in Bouldon
Attendance at Remembrance Day ceremony. Queens Platinum Jubilee/Coronation Signage

Over the last year the parish council has yet again continued to work closely with the Flood Action Group, the village hall committees of Diddlebury and Westhope and the Parish Plan Steering Group. As Chair I would like to thank my colleagues for the work they put in within a voluntary role, the hard work of our Parish Clerk Jean, Sara Thompson for her excellent web site work as well as Councillor Motley for her continued unstinting support.

Cllr. D Hedgley - Chairman 2022 - 2023

152/23/2 - Unitary Cllr. C Motley's Report

Annual Report to Corvedale Parishes May 2022 – May 2023

What a topsy-turvy year!. We watched in bewilderment as Prime Ministers and Cabinet Members came and went; the war in Ukraine rumbled on; fuel and

energy prices rocketed and consequent high inflation brought on a cost of living crisis. Industrial action is still affecting part of the Public Services Sector and doesn't look like ending any time soon.

Local Government has worked hard through all this and Shropshire Council has had some successes not least with the rollout of extra recycling bins, a positive result at last with one of our Levelling Up Bids which will help the redesign of the Riverside in Shrewsbury; and the recent introduction of the Shared Prosperity Fund. Performance in highways (mending potholes) improved and FixMyStreet has generally been welcomed. We've also been ploughing through the new Local Plan Inspection process which has been tortuous at times and is likely to be concluded at the start of next year.

Despite a more generous financial settlement than expected, we are still facing an historic debt of £50m which has to be cleared by the end of the new financial year. This is largely due to high social care costs in both adults and children's services. Last year we set up the Shropshire Plan 2022-2025, based around the four pillars of Healthy People, Economy, Environment, and Organisation.

Everything the Council does feeds into one or more of these pillars and gives us the clarity to improve our communication, financial tracking and efficiency exponentially. We have involved transformation partners PwC who are helping us completely redesign service areas to drive down costs and improve efficiencies.

Over the winter the Council worked to help people in hardship through the Social Task Force and the Warm Welcome initiative by using community buildings for people in need of a warm space and social contact. The Corvedale parishes have been brilliant - opening up village halls to welcome people in for coffee or a hot meal and organising extra events. The Council has issued a lot of information through the website and leaflets for people struggling with the cost of living to help them get extra financial help from the government.

There's also been help for children with the Holiday Activities Fund.

I started the year with continuing portfolio responsibility for culture, leisure tourism and communities. In late 2022 I moved to another busy role: adult social care, public health and wellbeing and the Integrated Care System healthcare partnership between ourselves, Telford & Wrekin Council, The Shropshire & Telford Acute Health Trust, the Voluntary Sector and Healthwatch. This is at times fairly intense particularly as new healthcare arrangements are still settling in. I also have responsibility for co-chairing the Shropshire Health & Wellbeing Board and sit on a number of related Boards.

We are making good progress with discharging patients from hospital, relieving bed-blocking, supporting carers and working closely with primary care networks on programmes to reduce obesity, smoking and mental health problems through social prescribing. We also have more patients able to return home with domiciliary care packages after a hospital stay rather than needing residential care.

I retained responsibility for Communities, and with this hat on I have regular meetings with Shropshire Association of Local Councils and am leading on the Community Governance review of Towns and Parish boundaries. I am really

grateful for all the input on this from the Corvedale parishes which have come up with some sensible ideas for straightening out anomalies in their boundaries. Last year the Local Government Boundary Commission announced a review of Shropshire Council's divisional boundaries. This was the first review we have had since the unitary authority was formed in 2009 and some parts of the county have had a lot of development since then. The Commission's guideline was that the number of seats and population per division should remain as they are now. We put forward proposals to allow for expanded population numbers, but the Commission has rejected our proposal and come back with their own version which would involve changes to almost every division in the county, some of them in rather strange configurations which ignore the new parliamentary boundaries. We are not satisfied with their conclusions and are working on revised plans, working to a deadline of 10th July

One of the Commission's proposals was that the Corvedale, notwithstanding its size, rurality, topography and number of existing parishes, should take on an extra parish - Cardington - from Burnell division.

I am reserving judgement until I have had a chance to discuss this with all 10 Corvedale parishes but it will obviously add an extra administrative burden to the second largest division in the county. The LGBC appears more interested in parity of electorate per division rather than the best communities of interest. I am meeting the Corvedale parish Chairs and Clerks shortly to talk it through and prepare a response.

The Commission's proposals are on their website and Shropshire residents can add comments and counter-proposals until July 10th. I hope Corvedale residents will study the maps and let the Commission have their views.

I stood down as Chair of Rural Services Network last November, after 8 years in the role, but am still an active member of the RSN Executive so keep in touch with all their excellent work in supporting rural areas. The new Chair is Cllr Roger Philips from Herefordshire who is extremely experienced and a great ambassador for RSN's work.

Finally I would like to thank the Corvedale parishes for their brilliant work over traffic calming measures such as lower speed limits and vehicle activated signs. I know it has been a frustrating process to bring to fruition and there is still uncertainty about the different responsibilities of the police, Council and parishes. I am now chairing a SALC Working Group to help tackle these issues and I am hopeful we will be able to clarify responsibilities in the near future.

Cecilia Motley
Councillor, Corvedale Division
April/May 2023

152/23/3 - Westhope Village Hall Report
Annual report for Diddlebury Parish Council 2023

Bringing people together
Registered charity number: 522585

Summary

Thanks to helpful advice and financial support from the government and local Parish council, the village hall has come through the covid pandemic, during this last year (2022/2023) covid has sometimes seemed like a distant memory.

Activities have been fully resumed within the hall for some time now. Most of the users were attending regularly again, but to be expected some people at the start of 2022 were still a little weary due to covid numbers picking up over the winter of 2021. By the second half of the year it was business as usual and with the hard work and dedication of the committee we held another fabulous year of activities.

The financial position of the hall is good, we are all well aware that rising costs, especially utilities, will impact us and a review of our charging regime is going to be inevitable for the year ahead.

The major refurbishments of the hall is going well, with the new roof completed and three new doors installed, we have turned our attention to inside the hall. The new kitchen is planned and due to be installed in the summer along with updating of the toilets. These refurbishments would not be possible without the grants received from the National Lottery and the Parish council, we are extremely grateful to both. Going forward it is hoped that these planned refurbishments will improve the hall's resilience and reduce utility costs.

Objectives

The objectives of the village hall and its trustees as set out in the governing document remain unchanged.

The Year

The local mother and toddler group "Corvedale tots" take residence at the village hall. We were honoured to offer this long standing group with a safe place to meet.

Our monthly bingos, a highlight in the calendar. Its always a great evening supported by many and lots of fun is always had.

Our annual harvest supper was once again a huge success, this is thanks to people supporting the event and the people who put so much work into ensuring runs as it does.

We have held successful rummage sales, the hall has been full to bursting. It was lovely to see people catching up over tea and cake and grabbing a bargain at the same time.

The coronation event had a wonderful turnout and hopefully we did the King Proud. Young and old had a great time coming together and marking this historic event.

Our regular events of Whist drives, yoga, clover club are all back up and running and are being well attended.

Financial Situation

Our financial situation remains stable, again thanks to grants received allowing us to complete refurbishments.

The year ahead

The year ahead will see the completion of all our planned refurbishments.

We will continue to investigate grant applications to enable us to fulfil our goal of further refurbishments.

We will continue to advertise the hall and ensure that groups and activities are well attended, it will remain the mission of Westhope Village Hall to "Bring people together"

Issues

There are no significant issues, complaints or disputes to report.

Amie Watson

Chairman and Parish Council representative.

152/23/4 - Flood Action Group report by Cllr. C Martyn

Annual Review 2022/2023 – Flood Action Group

Chair of Flood Group

I, Clive Martyn, took over from G.Neden in May 2022 as chair of the group.

Flood Action Group

Currently there are 36 members, 12 of which are core members.

Flood Alerts

Fortunately, no serious floods occurred during the 12 months, however we must keep vigilant. Climate changes seem to be bringing more sudden heavy downfalls of rain. Events of this are typical of the events that cause local issues of fast rising waters followed by a quick receding in levels.

Timeview Telemetry

The TimeView water level monitors are available to view using the following details -

<http://www.timeview2.net/>, Username:

DiddleburyFAG, Password: diddlebrook123.

When a monitor reaches an alarm state 6 members

have been asked to be notified automatically



Multi Agency Meetings with National Flood Forum

These are carried out and facilitated by the National Flood Forum, and invitees include The Flood Action Group, the Environment Agency, Shropshire Council Flood Manager, and Shropshire

Highways. This year 2022/23 our meetings were carried out in May 2022, October 2022 and March 2023. At each meeting our action plan was discussed, updated and redistributed to FAG members. No new items were added

Our Flood Resilience Document

This was reviewed in September 2022 and distributed to all FAG members for comments. Updated contact details, and current officers.

Web Survey

A web survey to invite our community to express their interests was initiated in February 2023, unfortunately the web address was wrongly edited in the Corvedale magazine, so the survey details were reissued in the March 2023 edition. The information was also put out on the Corvedale Google Group and to all FAG members. Only 5 responses were received.

THE CORVEDALE NEWS

Awareness articles were published in the Corvedale News over the winter months.

Site visits

A number of site visits were made in response to FAG members concerns.

- Visit made to the location of Bouldon gauge on Pye Brook. This gauge was out of order for a number of weeks, back in action 28th March 2023. The gauge gives an indication of rising waters of the Pye Brook.
- Visit made to inspect the wall collapsed at Bouldon. An issue that has been an ongoing discussion with highways from last year 2021/2022.
- Visit to Corfton, Middlehope and Peaton to inspect local concerns
- Observational visit made to inspect the 'leaky dams' on the tributary running from Middlehope to Diddlebury. These were generally found to be in good condition after 4 years since their installation.



Shropshire Highways

Numerous reports made to the highways department via FixMyStreet and directly to A.Kirkland with varying levels of success.

Stream Clearance in Diddlebury

The autumnal clearance was carried out by volunteers in October 2022, removing weeds along its edge that could slow the flow and therefore raise the water level in the stream.

Clive Martyn

FAG Chair and Parish Council Representative.

May 2023

152/23/5 - report from Ms Sara Thompson, DPC's website manager

Update on Diddlebury Parish Website – May 2023

The Diddlebury Parish website has been well established for more than six years and continues to provide a valuable community resource. The website is an effective way of getting information quickly to a large group of people, together with the Google group run by Martin Jones and various village hall Facebook pages.

The Parish Council continues to fund the annual costs and hosting fees of the website. Alongside information on the Parish Council the website includes details of church services, local events, Flood Action Group and Diddlebury Parish Plan articles and news. This information is useful for existing residents, newcomers to the area and members of the public alike.

Over the 12 months to 30 April the website had 2,300 users, which was a slight decrease over the previous 12 months. The average session time remained at around one and a half minutes. The most popular pages remain the home page, news, meetings, and planning. Sixty-five percent of users access the website via a desktop computer, followed by mobile device and then a tablet computer.

The 'Corvedale Google Group' continues to grow, and now has 230 members (2021 - 221 members). Martin Jones has done a sterling job of taking over the running of this group from Geoff Neden.

Sara Thompson 22 May 2023

152/23/6 - Report from Mr. Ian Davies, PPSG

DIDDLEBURY PARISH PLAN STEERING GROUP

Report to Diddlebury Parish Council May 2023

The Diddlebury Parish Plan was refreshed in 2013. The action points from the plan have now been largely implemented and the Parish Council has been regularly appraised of progress. Due to the delivery of the action plan, there was little activity during the year - the focus being the placing of the speed indicator advice at various locations in the parish. The Parish council has now purchased a further device to enhance coverage.

I announced my intention to stand down as Chair at last year's Annual General Meeting.

Councillor Anil Rattu agreed to take over the position but asked if this could be delayed until

this year due to business commitments. Due to personal circumstances, he has now decided that he will not be able to undertake the role so a new Chair will need to be appointed.

Ian Davies

Chair DPPSG

May 2023

152/23/7 - Report by Cllr. R Morgan on the Louise Powell Almshouses

Since carrying out substantial maintenance and repairs last year to properties 1 and 3, this year has been a little quieter. All long-serving tenants remain, with no issues to report. Property 3 has been noted to have some damp and mould when carrying out inspections. All information is recorded and action will be taken in due course. The Clerk and the tenant are working to resolve the problem.

Future planning to replace exterior drainage to the properties is being carried out and resurfacing the pathways. An application to the Charity Commissioner will be made later in the year with plans to amalgamate the four housing trusts in Ludlow to help with the shortage of trustees and volunteers. Each group of properties will be will be managed and run separately. The Louise Powell almshouses will still prioritize helping our parish.

Richard Morgan 22nd May 2023

153/23 - Place Plan Review

The Chairman had sought input on possible projects from parishioners but to date had received no responses. At the June meeting he proposed reviewing thereafter seeking responses by an article in the Corvedale News, and perhaps on GoogleGroup. He felt a playground and affordable housing were infrastructure issues which could be explored.

There being no further business to conduct, the Chairman closed the meeting at 7.45pm

Minutes signed by: David Hedgley

Dated: 28th June 2023