

DIDDLEBURY PARISH COUNCIL

Chairman: Cllr D Hedgley

Clerk: Mrs Jean de Rusett, The Grange, Leinthall Earls, Leominster, Herefordshire HR6
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MINUTES

**Of the Parish Council Meeting
held on Wednesday 20th January 2016, 7.30pm at Diddlebury Village Hall**

001/16: Present and apologies for absence

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

Apologies

Apologies were accepted from Cllr. M. Fowler and Cllr. S Povall

In attendance:

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

002/16: 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.

No declarations were made.

003/16: Public involvement session:

No matters were raised.

004/16: Approval of the Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting on 25th November 2015.

The Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 25th November 2015 had been circulated prior to the meeting. Cllr. K. Worthington proposed that the Minutes be approved as a correct record, Cllr. M. Thomas seconded the proposal: the members by a majority voted to approve the Minutes and they were duly signed by the Chairman.

005/16: Matters arising from the Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting of 25th November 2015 not dealt with elsewhere on the Agenda

131/15: Cllr. O'Boyle enquired about the screening for the new barns at Corfton Farm: has the screening/landscaping had actually commenced, and if not who would enforce it and would it also screen the proposed solar panels? In the absence of Cllr. S Povall these questions could not be answered, other than the Chairman said the Building Regulations

Officer would have to sign the whole scheme off and would not do so unless the screening works had been completed. Planning would follow up any concerns we had if informed, as usual. Cllr. S Thomas also asked if the lights around the barns could be lowered as they are very intrusive.

132/15/2: The Chairman attended the seminar on the Big Conversation where he made a useful LEADER funds contact re match funding for DVH car park, which he is pursuing: however any match finding has to come from sources other than DPC funds. No news about cardboard collections - the Veoila contract is still being negotiated.

133/15/1: The Chairman had tried to contact Chris Jackson about the unsurfaced portion of Mill Lane, Diddlebury, without success. It appears Mr Jackson may be unwell and not in work. He has an alternative contact number and person.

006/16 - Planning Matters

The Chairman advised no planning applications had been received, but he had received an informal call from the agents Balfours on behalf of a client. The client is minded to build two small housing developments in the Corfton area, one containing six houses, the other three, one of which would be an affordable home. Balfours sought an initial view from the Parish Council on the proposal. The Chairman confirmed that Corfton was part of the Community Cluster and had indicated willingness for some housing. After discussion it was agreed the Chairman and Cllr. Selina Thomas would re-visit the Place Plan to establish what type and numbers of housing Corfton had opted for. It was speculated the Corfton site may be the site of derelict chicken sheds and thus would be an improvement to the area. Unitary Cllr. Motley emphasised the advantages of CIL revenues for the parish. It was agreed the matter could not be taken forward until further details of the scheme were brought to the council.

007/16 - Reports

007/16/1 - Chairman's Report

The Chairman gave a round up on the parish council matters he had attended to during the past month. He and Mr Richard, the local farmer, had been involved in dealing with trees which had fallen in Bouldon. They had also been involved in dealing with a land slippage in Bouldon. He had contacted Highways to see if the proposed drainage work in April in Bouldon would include dealing with the land slippage.

He had printed off and displayed the notice about a forthcoming road closure in Peaton.

He had investigated at some length the closing of the 2Shrop.Net website and possible alternative Website providers with Sara Thompson. He had discussed the role of the HMO with Tony Capleton and Carol Byng, the Chairman of Culmington Parish Council and had prepared a report for this meeting. He had also attended the Big Conversation seminar. The Chairman gave Reports from RSN on faster Broadband for rural areas.

007/16/2 - Unitary Councillor's Report

Cllr. Motley commenced with a summary of the upheaval at the Shirehall following the resignation of the Leader, Keith Barrow who has been replaced with Malcolm Pate, previously a County Council member. Mr Pate has effected a radical reshuffle of Cabinet members: she has been awarded a new brief - Rural Services and Community Matters. Community resilience is the current theme.

There has been huge disquiet about the latest government budgets which yet again disadvantage small rural areas like Shropshire. There is now a vociferous pressure group in

Parliament - the Rural Fair Shares Group, which has 133 members, as against the government's majority of 12: it is hoped sufficient pressure will be brought to bear on the government to deal more equitably with rural funding.

Cllr. Motley spoke about a recent meeting with mobile telephone network operator: fury was directed at them over the poor signal coverage in Shropshire: they had retorted that all planning applications for additional 50 metre masts in Shropshire had been refused. The Chief Planning Officer responded he had never seen such a planning application during his five years tenure.

Cllr. Motley also spoke about the Big Conversation seminar and the results of votes taken on various services. It was noted that although 60% of people favoured self-help and community effort, only 7% indicated a willingness to get involved and volunteer their services. She felt the ethos of the Big Conversation was to get parish councils involved with the care of the elderly and vulnerable.

She urged members to respond to the survey circulated by Gill Gordon about the possible withdrawal of the ShropDoc service, to be replaced by a remote NHS111 service, probably based in Sandwell and Dudley: this topic was discussed at some length. It was agreed the Clerk would respond on behalf of Diddlebury, Munslow and Eaton/Hope Bowdler parish councils.

Finally Cllr. Motley spoke of the withdrawal of the 2ShropNet community website facility She felt that the HugoFox website builders might be a viable alternative.

007/16/3: Diddlebury Village Hall Report

Cllr. T O'Boyle confirmed that a grant of £570,000 had been awarded by the Big Lottery Fund. However, that leaves a short-fall of £55,000 if the building is going to be brought up to the specification envisaged in the plans in terms of kitchen fitting, equipment and seating. Fund raising initiatives will start shortly. A strict protocol is being drawn up for tendering for the work. It is hoped that work may actually commence in June 2016.

007/16/4: Flood Action Group

Cllr. O'Boyle reported on recent events and initiatives: he had attended a meeting in Diddlebury with the National Flood Forum: useful advice included:

- the importance of ensuring landowners kept watercourses and streams clear of debris
- That landowners be encouraged to allow surveys and water catchment systems
- That wardens be appointed in each hamlet to check on watercourses and to initiate action when needed, either by the HMO or the Highways Dept. At present wardens are needed in Bouldon and Peaton.
- That arrangements be devised for getting mechanical (JCB) assistance in emergencies, plus an emergency telephone number

Cllr. O'Boyle advised the FAG is in touch with landowners in Diddlebury and Piebrook to work out which areas can be utilized for flood alleviation scheme. Also, mapping of the watercourses in the Diddlebury and Culmington areas is proceeding.

The next meeting of the FAG is at Diddlebury Village Hall on the 16th February 2016 and anyone with any flooding issues is advised to attend.

008/16 - Highways - Highways Maintenance Officer - possible link with Culmington Parish Council

The Chairman reported he has spoken to Mrs Carol Byng, Chairman of Culmington PC and a councillor from Munslow about forming an alliance with a jointly appointed HMO. The following issues arise:

1. Tony Capleton confirmed his gardening business has taken off and he can't take on any more work, but is content to carry on doing what he can for Diddlebury.
2. Culmington's HMO is on the point of retirement.
3. Chris Jackson of Highways provided a JCB and driver when mechanical work was required. Chris Jackson believes his department may well be dismantled and its work outsourced.

Cllr. Motley advised the Highway's Dept, main contractor is Ringway, and their contract is not being renewed. She thinks parishes will need to make their own flexible arrangements.

The Chairman asked whether DPC should explore a joint venture with Culmington and Munslow: for all three parishes to obtain Highways & Environmental Grants, pool the funds and allocate the works as necessary between the parishes. Cllr. O'Boyle said it would be worth exploring, but that it will require greater monitoring between the parishes: there would need to be a sub-committee comprising a councillor from each parish to draw up work schedules and allocate the work evenly.

Cllr. Motley suggested it might be worth discussing this option with Chris Edwards or Chris Seddon from the Highways Department as their input might be valuable.

It was agreed that the Chairman would initially seek the views of Culmington and Munslow parishes.

Cllr. R Povall advised that the road between Westhope and Moorwood is in a very poor state: it was agreed he would take the matter up with Highways.

009/16 - Correspondence

The members considered the following items of correspondence:

1. 18.12.15 - notification that the SAMDev Plan has been adopted by Shropshire Council w.e.f. 17.12.15
2. 23.12.15 - Notification of road closure: 14th - 18th March 2016 B4371 from Longville to Easthope.
3. 05.01.16 - notification from Lisa Bedford of small grants available for youth activity schemes.
4. 06.01.16 - notification re planning application 15/00435/FUL - Ward Farm, Westhope, SY7 9JL for the erection of portable chicken sheds. Planning permission granted 06.01.16
5. 07.01.16 - notification of dates and venues for forthcoming Green Futures - 2016 Seminars.

6. 12.01.16 - notification from Clive Leworthy of forthcoming Voluntary & Community Forums, providing dates and venues.
7. Notification of free residential property flood protection assessment: contact flood@shropshire.gov.uk by email for details.
8. 12.01.16. - Notification of road closure:
Road to be closed: Timber cottages Junction, Peaton to Bouldon House Junction.
Dates: 25th April to 28th April 2016 for drainage works. Diversions will be sign posted.
9. 15.1.16 - email from Gill George, Chair of Shropshire Defend our NHS. It appears ShropDoc is under threat, to be replaced by a remote centralised telephone link based in Coventry or Birmingham.
Comments please by **22.01.16** to <http://tinyurl.com/111-outofhours-engage-survey>.
Better still: email of protests to tracy.eggby-jones@shropshireccq.nhs.uk

It was agreed the Clerk would write to Tracy Eggby-Jones.

010/16 - Review of the proposed reduction in the number of Parish Council meetings per year.

The Chairman outlined the issues:

1. Do DPC want to hold less than the current 11 meetings per annum?
2. If so, at what intervals do the members want meetings to held?
3. If the meetings are to be reduced, how does DPC deal with planning applications which come in and have to be responded to within 21days ?

How to tackle the above questions was debated at length. Planning applications could be covered by extensions, or direct contact with the involved parties or an extra meeting if possibly controversial.

The following Proposal was put by Cllr. R Povall, seconded by Cllr. M Thomas and voted on by a majority of members present, with one abstention: the proposal will be put the AGM in May 2016:

"There will be nine meetings per year instead of eleven. No meetings will be held in April, August or December."

011/16 - Review of the replacement of the current DPC Website

The Chairman advised that the 2Shrop.Net website which Diddlebury Parish Council currently uses is being closed by Shropshire Council from the end of March 2016. In order to comply with the Transparency Code an alternative site needs to be in place by the end of March. There are various alternative website hosting sites available: some are free and some have both joining and annual support administrative fees to pay. Those that are free have little or nothing in the way of support to turn to if the website crashes or malfunctions. The various options were debated.

Sara Thompson who kindly administers the website for Diddlebury, with minimal help from the Clerk, had concluded that Web Orchard was the best option for Diddlebury. It has a £200 joining fee and an annual administrative cost of £190 for support. The Chairman proposed that if it is the best option, then DPC would be willing to pay an annual website support cost: this was seconded by Cllr. R Povall and unanimously agreed by the members.

It was proposed that a sub-committee comprising the Clerk, Sara Thompson and Cllr. R Povall confer to decide which website suited our needs best and would bring their views back to the next meeting.

The meeting then considered a Grant Application which the Clerk, working with SALC, had prepared for DPC in order to fund the various provisions of the Transparency Code. The Grant (coming EU funds) included funds for the setting up and first year administrative costs of a website, the provision of an Internet connexion, a computer and a scanner/printer and associated training costs. In total the Clerk had drafted a claim totalling £2,004.

The members considered the Grant application. The Chairman proposed that the application be approved and submitted: the proposal was seconded by Cllr. R Povall and agreed unanimously by the members.

012/16 - Finance

012/16/1 - Finance Report for January 2016

Balance of Precept Funds brought forward from November 2015		£5,759.37
Less: cheques to be authorised for payment on 20.01.16		
1. Clerk's net salary for December 2015 & January 2016	£226.74	
2. HMRC – PAYE on Clerk's salary for December 2015 and January 2016	£ 56.60	
3. Mrs D Malley - pay roll administration, half yearly a/c	£ 22.50	
4. Mr D Hedgley - 1 x ink cartridge for printer (S.O 29 (b) ii.)	£ 14.40	
5. Clerk's expenses for December 2015/ January 2016 (itemized below)	£ 41.94	
Total deductions from Precept Funds for January 2016	<u>£362.18</u>	<u>£ 362.18</u>
Balance of Precept Funds carried forward to February 2016		<u>£5,397.19</u>

Clerk's expenses for December 2015/January 2016

1. December 2015/January 2016 contribution towards telephone and Internet expenses		£10.00
2. Lever arch files, file dividers, HP364 ink cartridge & A4 copy paper		£15.50
3. 6 x 2nd class stamps		£ 3.24
4. Travelling expenses claimed at 30p per mile 20.01./16 - Leinthall Earls to DVH - 44 miles		<u>£13.20</u>
	Total expenses claimed	<u>£41.94</u>

Total funds held by Diddlebury Parish Council

1.	Balance of Precept Funds c/fwd to February 2016		£5,397.19
2.	Highways & Environment Grant funds b/fwd from October 2015	£1,557.07	
	Less: December 2015 invoice from Mr T Capleton	<u>£ 30.00</u>	
		<u>£1,527.07</u>	£1,527.07
3.	Other ring-fenced sums held in Diddlebury PC's Account		
	• Corvedale Youth Club		£ 650.39
	• Diddlebury Stream Management Group		£ 128.75
	• Balance of Donations for War Memorial Appeal fund b/fwd from November 2015	£135.50	
	Less: D. Hedgley - 3x books for WW1 articles @ £12.50	<u>£ 12.50</u>	
		<u>£123.00</u>	<u>£ 123.00</u>
	Total of DPC funds c/fwd to January 2016		<u>£7,826.40</u>

Cllr. O'Boyle proposed that the Finance Report be accepted and the cheques authorised, seconded by Cllr. R Povall and unanimously approved by the members.

012/16/2 - Cash Book/ HSBC Bank Statement No. 277

The Reconciliation prepared by Clerk was verified by Cllr. R Povall

012/16/3 - Review of the Clerk's salary

The Chairman had circulated a paper prior to the meeting on this issue, which was then debated.

Cllr. O'Boyle proposed that the Clerk's hourly rate should be increased from £8.18 per hour to £9.20 per hour, and that her hours should be increased from 4 hours a week to 4.5 hours a week, increasing her salary from £1,770 p.a. to £2,152.80 per annum. (This takes into account the reduced work load when the number of meetings are reduced from 11 to 9 - excluding any EGM's which might to be called).

The proposal was seconded by Cllr. R Povall and was unanimously agreed by the members and will come into force on the 1st April 2016.

012/16/4 - Setting of the 2016/2017 Precept Budget.

A draft Precept budget was circulated to members on 11.01.16.

It revealed

- reserves of approximately £4,671 will be carried forward at the end of the 2015/2016 financial year.
- A minimum sum of £3,260 would be needed to finance the DPC's administration overheads for the financial year 2016/2017: This figure was subsequently increased to £3,642.80 as the Clerk's salary was increased from £1770 p.a. to £2152.80 pa w.e.f. 01.04.16, an increase of £382.80 p.a.
- Last year's Precept claimed was £4,449 which included a capital reserve. The Precept cost Band D ratepayers £17.54 each.

- This year (2016/2017) a Precept of £4,449 would cost Band D ratepayers £17.31 plus £0.39p for every additional £100 claimed over and above £4,449

As the information that the 2Shrop.Net website was being closed at the end of March 2016 had been received after the draft Precept Balance had been prepared, a further cost has to be built into the Precept budget in case DPC's website grant application is unsuccessful. Furthermore the capital reserves need to be increased for the eventuality of resurfacing of the DHV car park.

These sums were debated and it was proposed by Cllr. O'Boyle that the Precept should be set at £5,149, seconded by Cllr. Hedgley and unanimously agreed by the members.

013/16 - Appointment of auditors

013/16/1 - Appointment of Internal Auditor

The Clerk advised that Mr Farley had kindly agreed to act as Internal Auditor for the financial year 2015/2016. Cllr. R Povall proposed Mr Farley be appointed, seconded by Cllr. M Thomas and unanimously agreed by the members.

013/16/2 - Appointment of External Auditor from 2017/2018 onward

The Clerk had circulated an information sheet explaining the new regime which will come into force from 2017/2018 onwards re the External Audit/Annual Return. DPC needs to decide at this meeting whether to appoint its own external auditor or to join a Sector Led Body scheme operated by NALC.

The Chairman proposed that DPC joins the Sector Led Body Scheme, this was seconded by Cllr. O'Boyle and agreed unanimously by the members.

013/16 - Any Other Business (for dissemination of information only)

013/16/1 - Venue for DPC meetings after June 2016

As it is anticipated work will commence on Diddlebury Village Hall from June onwards, DPC will need a new venue for its meetings. It was agreed that the Chairman will approach the school and see if we can use a room at the school: failing that meetings will have to be held at Westhope.

013/16/2 - Request for a donation from the Corvedale News

The Clerk had received an email from the Corvedale News asking for a contribution towards their overheads. It was proposed by Cllr. O'Boyle that DPC makes a donation of £50, seconded by Cllr. Hedgley and passed by a majority vote (one abstention). A cheque was drawn and duly signed.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 10.05pm

Date and venue of next meeting:

7.30pm on Wednesday 24th February 2016 at DiddleburyVillage Hall.

MINUTES SIGNED BY D Hedgley

DATED 24 February 2016