

# 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 23rd September 2015, 7.30pm at Westhope Village Hall**

### **102/15: Present and apologies for absence**

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

### **Apologies**

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

### **In attendance:**

Two members of the public, Unitary Cllr. C Motley, Mrs A Watson - candidate for the councillor vacancy, and the Clerk Mrs J de Rusett.

### **103/15: 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.

### **104/15: Public involvement session:**

Mr. Peter Drakes indicated he had matters he wished to raise under the Agenda Item "Highways Issues".

### **105/15: Approval of the Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting on 19th August 2015.**

The Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 19th August 2015 had been circulated prior to the meeting. Cllr. S. Povall 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.

### **106/15: Matters arising from the Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting of 19th August 2015 not dealt with elsewhere on the Agenda**

084/15/3: The Chairman had been contacted by Mr Smythe of Milford House, who pointed out that the references to an enforcement *notice* were incorrect: it should be referred to as an enforcement query. It was agreed this is how the matter will be referred to henceforth.

### **107/15: Report on the selection process of a co-opted councillor and to deal with any associated procedures.**

The Chairman reported that at the closing date for applications to be accepted - 18th September - only one candidate had applied, Mrs Amie Watson of 11 The Moors, Diddlebury. He and Cllr. Worthington had interviewed Mrs Watson prior to this meeting and were happy to advise that she was a suitable candidate. He therefore proposed that a vote be taken on Mrs Watson's co-option onto Diddlebury Parish Council; the proposal was seconded by Cllr. Worthington and passed by an unanimous vote. The Chairman welcomed Cllr. Watson to the Parish Council and she duly signed the Declaration of Acceptance and completed her DPI form.

### **108/15 - Planning Matters**

108/15/1:  
15/04596/ENF

The enforcement query relating to Milford House, Diddlebury remains outstanding. Unitary Cllr. Motley is asked to progress the matter with the case officer, Ms H Bradley.

#### 108/15/2 - The empty houses at Bouldon

The Chairman reported that he and Cllr. Motley had attended a meeting at Shirehall with Mrs Julia Preston, the Empty Homes Officer. He had emphasised that this is a matter Shropshire Council should pursue and it is not an issue which will disappear. It was clear that Shropshire Council at present lacked the structure to resolve the matter by enforcement, but rather would pursue a line of mutual support, mediation and encouragement. Cllr Hedgley indicated that this had always been our preferred option. Cllr Motley agreed to investigate Shropshire Council's lack of structure regarding enforcement whilst at the same time encouraging officers to engage with Mr. Povall and provide him with guidance and advice. It was felt that the Povalls had received some poor inconsistent advice in the past which was a possible reason why the matter remains unresolved. We understood his frustration regarding mixed messages.

Cllr. Motley advised that following the meeting Mrs Preston had been in touch with Mr Povall who appeared to indicate a willingness to try and resolve the matter: however it will be difficult to put anything practical in train before next spring due to the ecological factors., but hopefully discussions over the winter could lead to action in the spring. It was agreed that the Parish Council will take no further steps in the matter regarding direct communications with Mr. Povall but would leave it at present with Mrs Preston to negotiate progress, but would appreciate up-dates from Mrs Preston.

The Chairman thanked Cllr. Motley for her help throughout, and for initiating and attending the meeting.

#### 108/15/3 - Building works at 12 Corfton Bache

On behalf of Cllr. R Povall, Cllr. S Povall reported that Cllr. R Povall had visited the site and spoken to the owner. He was satisfied that the works were within permitted development parameters and that building regulations permission had been granted. Cllr. O'Boyle was surprised that planning permission was deemed unnecessary, as the property is in the AONB. Cllr. Motley agreed to look into the matter.

### **109/15 - Reports**

## 109/15/1 - Chairman's Report

During the past month the Chairman had visited Mrs McIntosh at 2 The Moors to discuss her problems with the B4368 and had discussed them with Mr Shaw, the Highways Engineer. He had written to Mrs Preston, the Empty Homes Officer and had then attended the meeting referred to above. He has spoken to Cllr. M Thomas about representation on the flood action group to represent Bouldon and Peaton. He had also liaised with Cllr. M Thomas when, as a result of a storm, fallen trees had blocked the Peaton/Diddlebury Road. He thanked Cllr. Thomas for dealing promptly with the fallen trees - the road was re-opened by lunchtime. He had completed the Annual Crime Survey. In responding to their question "How do you think the Police are doing in your area" he had responded that we hardly ever see them. He also indicated that the biggest problems in the parish are speeding on the B4368 and thefts from rural properties including from oil tanks. He had investigated a flooding issue at Bache Mill and commented on various issues raised by RSN, including on the lack of rural Broadband provision, the cost of post-16 student travel costs (it currently costs £690 p.a. to send a student to Hereford).

He commented on various items raised by the West Mercia police including mud on rural roads, burglaries from farms - especially of older tractors and farm equipment, and local scams - including one involving an Irish pair selling generators.

## 109/15/2 - Unitary Councillor's Report

Cllr. Motley reported on her activities over the past month. She had attended a very informative RSN conference at Cheltenham where an NFU delegate advised the meeting that rural crime was on the increase and cost £800m last year. Modern agricultural machinery is not the main target as the deadlocking systems and laser marking were making crime harder, but older farm equipment was being especially targeted. As the police presence in rural areas was rare, farmers are urged to operate neighbourhood watch type vigilance in their communities.

Additionally she has attended meetings in London on the Arts Council, at DEFRA and an all-party Parliamentary Group on Rural Affairs, chaired by Graham Stuart MP.

Cllr. Motley also commented on the work of a committee set up by the Cabinet Secretary involving the Treasury and DEFRA, with a remit to explore the challenges facing rural communities and how to make them more productive. They apparently have a 10 point plan to boost rural incomes, the thrust coming from the Treasury. The committee (the Horizon Scanning Team) had competing visions about rural communities, some seeing them as serving no purpose other than to produce green corridors and places for urban workers to live. Others viewed them as resilient and efficient food producers, others as economic areas offering tourism and agricultural diversity.

Cllr. Motley has spent some time looking at EU funding options for rural development. The LEADER funds are still not available due to difficulties with DEFRA, but it is hoped funds may be available from November 2015: however, they will not be for community led projects as previously hoped, rather the thrust now is on projects which will stimulate local economies including tourism.

## **110/15 - Review of Highways Issues**

### 110/15/1

Mr Peter Drakes advised he had taken the issue of the poor standard of the road surfacing of Mill Lane up with Mr Chris Jackson of the Highways Department, who had visited and was

disgusted with the standard. He confirmed that a large hole adjacent to his drive had now been filled in. The foot path remains to be surfaced. Discussion ensued as to whether the foot path should be extended. The Chairman agreed to make an informal enquiry about extending the footpath.

#### 110/15/2 - highways complaints from Mrs McIntosh, 2 The Moors, Diddlebury.

The Chairman reported on his meeting with Mrs McIntosh. Her house is adjacent to the narrow bridge on the B4368: she fears that due to the speed of vehicles on the bridge one might plunge over the edge and into her garden. She is also concerned by the traffic noise and the dangerously narrow pavement which pedestrians have to use to get into the village - occasionally vehicles nearly touch pedestrians.

The Chairman discussed the issues with Mr Shaw, who had also visited the site. Crash barriers are not an option as the bank is too weak to support them. The most he could offer was a speed awareness sign as and when his budget will allow it: this the parish council had requested in its Community Concerns Response.

The members debated the issue at length and concluded that perhaps the most successful way to deal with the issue is by the creation of a pinch-point over the bridge, limiting traffic to a single lane. The Chairman will write to Mr. Shaw indicating that is the will of the parish council. Cllr. M Thomas feared a pinch-point on the bridge would create even more noise in The Moors.

#### 110/15/3 - Mrs C Harvey, Stoneycroft, Bache Mill

Mrs Harvey had contacted the Parish Council as a gutter drain on the B4368 is regularly blocked, causing flooding down her drive and into her garage, covering everything in detritus and mud. The Chairman reported that Chris Jackson of Highways and Tony Capleton, DPC's Highways Maintenance officer, had met at the property and are putting steps in place to resolve the problem.

### **111/15 - Correspondence**

The members considered the following items of correspondence:

1. Notification from Planning Department re application 15/01599/FUL - The Lodge, Corfton, for the erection of a glazed single storey extension to the front elevation. Planning permission granted 11.9.15
2. Notification that the next LJC meeting will take place on Wednesday 11th November, 2015 - 5.30pm - at The Discovery Centre, Craven Arms. Meeting to have an economic focus, working with Craven Arms Business Network.
3. "e" mail 31.8.15 from Peter Simmons, Peaton, advising of an opportunity for outlying businesses and homes to access up to 30mbs Broadband via a radio link being set up by Secure Web Services with masts at Upper Dinchope, Ditton Priors and Shipton. Business can claim grants of up to £3,000. Cost is between £18 to £48 per month. Contact [www.websecureservices.co.uk](http://www.websecureservices.co.uk) for more information.
4. Poster for Flood Action Group Meeting - Diddlebury Church Hall, Tuesday 13th October 2015 at 6.30pm.

5. "Connecting Shropshire" September 2015 update
6. Notification of The Shropshire Housing Alliance AGM - Friday 16th October 2015, 11am - 12.15pm, Council Chambers. Shirehall, Shrewsbury
7. 15.09.15 - letter from Cllr D Evans, Chairman LJC seeking information what youth activities the council contributes towards, and whether the council would consider contributing towards the funding of youth activities. Views sought by next LJC meeting.

Item 3: To be sent to the Corvedale Magazine for wider dissemination. Cllr. Motley advised there had been a positive response to this in Rushbury parish.

Item 7: The application for a contribution was considered: DPC has already supported the local Brownies. It was felt best to retain the youth funds we have pending the outcome of the bid for renewal of Diddlebury Village Hall.

### **112/15 - Finance**

#### **112/15/1 - Finance Report and cheques to be authorised**

Balance of Precept Funds brought forward from August 2015		<b>£6,142.85</b>
<b>Less: cheques to be authorised for payment on 23.09.15</b>		
• Clerk's net salary for September 2015	£113.27	
• HMRC – PAYE on Clerk's salary for August 2015	£ 28.40	
• SALC - Inv. 8325 - for copies of the Good Councillor Guide	£ 6.00	
• Clerk's expenses for September 2015 (itemized below)	<u>£ 29.32</u>	
Total deductions from Precept Funds for September 2015	<u>£176.99</u>	£ 176.99
Balance of Precept Funds carried forward to October 2015		<b><u>£5,965.86</u></b>

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#### **Total funds held by Diddlebury Parish Council**

<b>1.</b> Balance of Precept Funds c/fwd to October 2015	<b>£5,965.86</b>
<b>2.</b> Highways & Environment Grant funds b/fwd from August 2015	<b>£1,637.07</b>
<b>3.</b> Funds ring-fenced for Projects c/fwd from August 2015	<b>£ 147.18</b>
<b>4.</b> Other ring-fenced sums held in Diddlebury PC's Account	
• Corvedale Youth Club	<b>£ 650.39</b>
• Diddlebury Stream Management Group	<b>£ 150.00</b>
• Balance of Donations for War Memorial Appeal fund	<b><u>£ 155.50</u></b>
<b>Total of DPC funds c/fwd to October 2015</b>	<b><u>£8,706.00</u></b>

#### **Clerk's expenses for September 2015**

- September 2015 Contribution towards Broadband
  - & tel. expenses
- £ 5.00

• Stretton Print: 1 x HP364 black ink cartridge	£ 8.60
• Postage for items sent to councillors	£ 2.52
• Travelling expenses – claimed at 30p per mile	
23.09.15 - from Leinthall Earls to WVH for meeting	
– 44 miles @ 30p	£13.20
Total of expenses claimed for August 2015	<u>£29.32</u>

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Cllr. M. Thomas proposed the Finance Report be adopted and the cheques be authorised: seconded by Cllr. K. Worthington and unanimously agreed by the members.

#### 112/15/2 - Cash Book/Bank Statement reconciliation

The Cash Book/ HSBC Bank Statement No. 274 reconciliation prepared by the Clerk was checked and verified by Cllr. Worthington.

#### 112/15/3 - Transparency Code

The Clerk reminded members that the Parish Council had to be compliant with the Transparency Code by the 1st July 2015, which was achieved. It was not until the 4th September that she had been notified of a scheme whereby parish councils with budgets of under £25,000 could obtain financial help with the costs of compliance. She outlined the items of funding available.

It was agreed that she should apply for a computer, printer and website costs.

#### **113/15 - Review of Flood Action Group activities: appointment of a councillor to represent Diddlebury Parish Council on the Flood Action Group.**

The details of a meeting on the 13th October 2015 had been circulated to all members and advertised on the website and notice boards.

It was agreed that Cllr. O'Boyle will represent Diddlebury on the Group and Cllr. M Thomas will represent Bouldon and Peaton.

It was agreed that the Flood Action Group should represent the whole of the parish and not just Mill Lane.

#### **114/15 - Any Other Business (for dissemination of information only)**

Cllr. Worthington advised that the Corvedale Magazine needs more articles, reports and items of general interest to fill up its pages and to keep it interesting and relevant. Any members with newsworthy items are asked to contact the Editor.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 8.40pm

Date and venue of next meeting:

7.30pm on Wednesday 28th October 2015 at Diddlebury Village Hall.

**MINUTES SIGNED BY Mandy Fowler**

**DATED 28th October 2015**

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