

**DOULTING PARISH COUNCIL**

**MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON**

**TUESDAY 14<sup>th</sup> JANUARY 2020**

**VENUE AND TIME OF THE MEETING: THE PRESTLEIGH INN, PRESTLEIGH @ 7.30pm**

**Public Meeting**

**This part of the meeting is intended to allow public participation on a number of matters prior to the commencement of the Parish Council meeting proper.**

Forum:

The Chairman will allow a maximum of 15 minutes for public participation on matters included on the agenda and any other matters of information or concern. Members of the public are each allowed three minutes speaking time. Six members of the public were present.

The Chairman noted that a response to a list of questions tabled by a parishioner at the last meeting had been prepared and would be circulated by email to the parishioner and councillors.

Queries and comments were made by members of the public about a number of items including:

The Produce Show, the suggested additional councillor on the Parish Council, attendance at council meetings, the filling of grit bins, blocked drains around the parish, the request to display banners at Padfield Green, overgrown hedges in Church Lane and the fate of the collection for a Prestleigh defibrillator.

There was some discussion about the proposed safety barrier on Doultling Hill. Cllr Crewe had spoken to Highways who advised that this was not a priority and would be dealt with when planned works to Doultling Hill were carried out next year. Clerk to write to Cllrs Ham and Hayden about the matter.

Reports and Comments from County and District Councillors.

Cllr Hayden had advised of a delayed arrival and the Chairman adjourned the meeting at 9pm to receive his report.

Cllr Hayden reported on ongoing matters concerning Mendip's finances which had now been audited and where concerns had been raised about the services shared with five other councils.

He gave a detailed report on matters concerning changes made by the government which had negated the councils 5 year housing supply commitment making it easier for developers to obtain permission for developments and weakened the "weight" of the Local Plan. It was now likely that the council would be unable to refuse developments and that any refusals were likely to be overturned at appeal. These changes were likely to affect primary and tertiary villages as well as towns and city in the district. Cllr Crowcombe noted that there was a need to find additional sites although a review of the Local Plan Part 2 could take three years to accomplish. Cllr Crowcombe also noted the need for proper enforcement of unauthorised planning.

	<p>Members of the public commented that there had been a reduction in house completions due to a lack of buyers for the new homes and that there was a great need to ensure that infrastructure such as health facilities and schools were in place to cope with the increase in population.</p> <p>Cllr Hayden noted that the proposal for a Unitary Authority for Somerset had been raised by the Leader of Somerset County Council. He noted that the District Councils preferred some form of collaboration but that because of the financial situation at Somerset they saw the Unitary Authority as a way of improving their finances. He noted that cost saving in other areas which had converted to a Unitary Authority had not been proven. The process would likely take three years to complete and would involve a major re-organisation of local government in Somerset.</p>
	<u>Police Report</u> ; None received.
	<p><u>Planning Applications:</u></p> <p>Public comments on the following planning applications:</p> <p>i) Application 2019/3006/AGB – Prior Notification of proposed agricultural development at Merryfield Farm, The Lodge, Merryfield Lane, Doulling BA4 4RF. This had been determined as not requiring prior notification.</p>
	<b>Closure of public participation and Commencement of the Parish Council Meeting. Members of the public may not speak during the meeting unless requested to do so by the Chairman.</b>
	<u>Present:</u> Cllrs Paula Fidge (Chairman), Jan Crewe, Ann Crowcombe, Sarah Goff, John Shepherd and Ros Wilkins; also in attendance Cllr Francis Hayden (arrived during the meeting) and Alan Butcher (Clerk)
2001/1	<u>Apologies for absence.</u> None, all present.
2001/2	<u>Declarations of Interest:</u> None.
2001/3	<p><u>Confirmation of the Minutes of previous meetings:</u></p> <p>i) Meeting held on 10<sup>th</sup> December 2019 were agreed and signed as a true record.</p>
2001/4	<p><u>Matters from the Minutes of previous meetings:</u></p> <p>i) Parish Council “Brown Bin”. This would be ordered for the new council year in March.</p> <p>ii) Hearing loop. Cllr Crowcombe tabled a quotation for the proposed equipment covering the community room and the main hall. Cllr Fidge to speak to the school about the matter. It was agreed to seek additional quotations and to organise fund raising. Clerk to circulate the quotation received to councillors.</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>iii) Emergency Planning. Cllr Crewe had this matter in hand and was collecting information to include in the plan. Cllr Wilkins expressed concern about how the data would be stored and accessed. Cllr Crewe to seek advice from Somerset CC.</li> <li>iv) Fingerpost signs. There was a discussion about the extent of refurbishment and the possible costs. Cllr Fidge proposed that the council aim to refurbishment one post per year; this was agreed unanimously. Cllr Wilkins agreed to investigate funding for the works and matter to be noted during the budget discussions.</li> <li>v) Snow Warden training. The training event had been missed; Cllr Crewe to speak to Cllr Hayden about further training.</li> <li>vi) Parish Grit bins. It was noted that two bins had been cleared out before filling but the others had been filled on top of the existing solid material. It was agreed to clear out the remaining grit bins when possible.</li> </ul>
2001/5	<p><u>Parish Council Response to Planning Applications</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i) Application 2019/3006/AGB – Prior Notification of proposed agricultural development at Merryfield Farm, The Lodge, Merryfield Lane, Doulting BA4 4RF, This had been determined as not requiring prior notification.</li> </ul>
2001/6	<p><u>Parish Council Matters requiring a decision:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i) Safety Notice in Church Lane. Two signs would cost around £70 - £80. The agreement for the positioning of the signs and the wording was awaited.</li> <li>ii) Additional Parish Councillor for Doulting PC. There was a discussion about the workload of councillors and the need for a seventh councillor. Cllrs Fidge and Wilkins were in favour of adding another councillor, other councillors had reservations. Cllr Fidge made two proposals: a) that an application to add another councillors be made now or b) that the matter be reviewed in two years time. Two councillors were in favour of proposal a) and four councillors in favour of proposal b). The matter to be reviewed in January 2022.</li> <li>iii) VE Day celebrations – 8<sup>th</sup> May 2019. To remain on agenda.</li> <li>iv) Request to erect banners at Padfield Green from Shepton Mallet Sunday market for 12 monthly markets during 2020. This was agreed, a note to made about the priority of village events during the year when positioning the banners.</li> </ul>
2001/7	<p><u>Parish Councillors comments and updates relating to the following matters:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i) Highways and traffic – SCC <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Low kerb on A361 – in hand with Highways.</li> <li>Damaged wall on A361 – to be carried out before March 2020.</li> <li>Barrier on Doulting Hill – awaiting Highways although unlikely to be carried out before 20/21.</li> <li>Cutting back of hedges for highway safety. It was noted that was a considerable cost in obtaining licenses and traffic management to carry out any works. Clerk to write to Cllr Ham on the matter.</li> <li>School Lane sign. Cllr Crewe to source suitable “No Through Road” sign.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

	<p>Cllr Crowcombe advised that the drainage grips in Ball Lane still required clearing to prevent flooding. Cllr Fidge that there was still a problem with surface water at the top of Prestleigh Hill.</p> <p>ii) Footpath matters</p> <p>a) Parish Paths Liaison Officer. Cllr Crewe had contacted the new Somerset Rights of Way Officer and would be carrying out more path surveys in February. She was still seeking a volunteer to assist in path clearance.</p> <p>b) Cllr Fidge advised that the footpath opposite Prestleigh Lane to the Showground required clearing and the surface clearing and improving</p> <p>iii) Speedwatch. Cllr Crewe noted that three watches had taken place and that the police had new speed enforcement equipment. There was to be a Speed Watch meeting in February.</p> <p>iv) SID's – letter from SCC and response from SID's volunteers. The software to allow data to be downloaded was being sourced. The Parish Council liability regarding SID's was still unclear.</p>
2001/8	<p><u>Reports from Parish Council Representatives to Village Organisations:</u></p> <p>i) Village Hall and Social Group – Cllr Fidge advised that an open meeting would take place on 17<sup>th</sup> February commencing at 7,30pm. The committee were still awaiting a response for the school on some matters. She noted that the committee needed the support of the community to take all matters concerning the village hall forward for the future and that there was a need for support from the community and volunteers were required who had an interest in taking matters forward in a positive way. There was a need to draw a line under the past problems and to reset relationships for the future. She also noted that the school governors had an important role to play in the future of the hall.</p> <p>ii) Beacon Hill Woods Society. Mary New man advised about the forthcoming works along the road side of the wood.</p>
2001/9	<p><u>Matters relating to The Glebeland</u></p> <p>i) Report on Glebeland meeting 14<sup>th</sup> January 2020.</p> <p>ii) Cllr Crowcombe noted that a working party date had been set for 4<sup>th</sup> February and that the next meeting was planned for 14<sup>th</sup> April 2020.</p> <p>iii) A quotation had been received for the tarmac repairs totalling £600. An allowance for these works had been included in the current budget. This was agreed; clerk to place order for the works.</p>
2001/10	<p><u>Matters relating to Padfield Green.</u></p> <p>i) Replacement of Defective Equipment and safety surface – this was in hand.</p>
2001/11	<p><u>Matters relating to Prestleigh, Bath and West Showground and Waterlip.</u></p> <p>i) Waterlip matters – nothing to report.</p> <p>ii) Prestleigh matters – nothing to report.</p> <p>iii) Showground matters – nothing to report.</p>

2001/12	<p><u>Financial:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>i) Clerks salary and expenses. £364.03. This was agreed and a cheque raised.</li><li>ii) HMRC Quarter 3 Tax payment. £235.80. This was agreed and a cheque raised.</li><li>iii) Shepton Mallet Landscape invoice £2328.00. This was agreed and a cheque raised.</li><li>iv) Donation request from Mendip Community Transport. The clerk had circulated information received from MCT. Councillors felt that the residents of Doultong received little benefit from the service and it was agreed not to offer a grant.</li></ul>
2001/13	Quarterly Accounts to 31 <sup>st</sup> December 2019 and bank reconciliation. These had been circulated and the agreed; the bank reconciliation was signed by Cllr Crewe.
2001/14	Budget for 2020/21 and setting of 2020/21 Precept. Councillors reviewed the budget for 2020/21 which had been circulated and, after discussion, it was agreed to set the precept at £13,300.00
2001/15	<p><u>Matters of Report</u></p> <p>No matters were reported.</p> <p>Cllr Fidge thanked the Prestleigh Inn for the use of their premises for the meeting.</p>
2001/16	<p><u>Date and Time of Next Meeting:</u></p> <p>The next meeting will be on 11<sup>th</sup> February 2020, 7.30pm at Doultong Village Hall.</p>

**The meeting closed at 9.35pm**

**Alan Butcher,**  
**Parish Clerk,**  
**21<sup>st</sup> January 2020**  
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