

## **DILWYN PARISH COUNCIL**

*Clerk: Lesley Hay*

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### **Dilwyn Parish Council Meeting held on Monday 12<sup>th</sup> January 2026 starting at 7.30pm**

The Chairman welcomed those present to the January Parish Council Meeting.

#### **MINUTES**

**Present:** Cllr J Hall (Chairman); Cllr A Towler; Cllr M Thomas; Cllr J Clarke; Cllr D Barron; Cllr J Lewis; Cllr J Stirling-Brown; Cllr R Fellows (Vice Chairman) and Cllr P Preston. Also present: Lesley Hay (Parish Clerk); five members of the public.

**1. To receive apologies for absence:** Cllr D Stirling-Brown; Cllr E Jordan; Cllr M Griffiths; Ward Councillor Nick Mason; Glen White – lengthsman.

**2. Declarations of Interest:** All Councillors declared an interest in The Crown Public House as the Parish Council is the owner of the said Public House.

**Written request for dispensation:** The Clerk reminded members that written dispensation had been received from all Councillors in respect of The Crown Public House as the Council corporate is the owner. Without the dispensation, the number of persons prohibited by section 31(4) from participating in any business would be so great a proportion of the body transacting the business as to impede the transaction of business.

**3. Ward Councillor's Report** – apologies received. The Chairman read out the following report:

Main headlines are “Herefordshire” related:

- The good news is that Children’s Services has just been awarded a rating of “Good”, with leadership rated as outstanding. Councillors will remember that this was a huge problem a few years ago – with an expectation at the time that it would be taken over by Whitehall. This is a huge vindication of the big decisions, including some major changes of staff, that we took shortly after forming an administration at the local elections (including a lot of criticism of the costs of the staff changes).
- The bad news is that, as expected, the government has finalised its “settlement” which, despite their spin (which essentially assumes we increase council tax by 5% and that demand for services doesn’t increase), means we have to find a lot of further savings. More details will follow as we become clear as to what this means – but it will undoubtedly mean that our support for parishes will not be as fulsome as it has been.

Local updates:

- Repairs on Fields Place Lane (and other parts of the rat runs while the bridge was being repaired) are progressing at the moment. Including some liaison with

landowners to “never waste an opportunity” and improve drainage. The main repairs, about 50m of resurfacing outside the Homme, should complete this week.

- I’ve been able to get the Tyrrells signage project back on track – it is due to happen later this month. Frustratingly we couldn’t get it done while the road was closed for the bridges, but this will only be lights, not a full closure.
- I continue to beaver away (probably not the best turn of phrase) on the flooding around West View. The downpours just before Christmas were in their own way very useful in confirming some of our suspicions around exactly how the drainage works – but Mark and I also dug out some channels from the road into the field to ease the burden. As usual, we are indebted to landowners/farmers for their help.
- The repairs of the sewage system down by the pumping station on Dilwyn Common Lane seem to have worked, but there are still problems with the drainage away from the road, down to the brook. This has been raised again with drainage officers.
- Success with the roll-out of the “Dartnell” bridge and the nascent partnerships with both Weobley School and the NMITE University in Hereford for their students to get involved with the installation of the DW2 bridge and other similar installation projects throughout Herefordshire.

### **3.1 Open Session**

3.1.1 Underpass. Cllr P Preston confirmed that the presentation to Richard Bartholomew had been a great success and extended a vote of thanks to those who attended and to Maria from The Crown for her hospitality.

3.1.2 Underpass Plaque. The Chairman and Cllr P Preston have agreed the wording for a small plaque to be displayed in the underpass and Cllr Preston agreed to get this prepared and displayed.

3.1.3 Great House Orchard – village roadside hedge. The Clerk confirmed that she had been informed that each dwelling will be responsible for the maintenance of their section of the village hedgerow. The Clerk was also able to confirm that a local contractor has been asked to trim the roadside side of the hedge.

3.1.4 The Mill – flood gauge signage. Cllr J Clarke asked about installing the larger flood gauge sign and, after discussion, Cllr M Thomas agreed to liaise with the owner of Mill Cottage and the lengthsman with a view to getting the sign installed as soon as possible.

3.1.5 Parking of vehicles – the issue of residents parking on the unlit bend opposite the church had been raised by various residents and was discussed. Whilst it was accepted that the vehicles are not parked illegally – it was agreed that that residents should be encouraged to park sensibly and adhere to traffic regulations.

3.1.6 Watery Lane. Drainage works have started.

3.1.7 Cllr D Barron raised the subject of the recent icy road conditions around the village, in particular outside the school/village hall. There is a grit bin by the school and this is for the public to use as required. The Clerk confirmed that she had requested that the grit bins throughout the village are refilled – but there is huge demand at the moment

following last week's bad weather. Cllr Barron will liaise with the school and the Clerk will liaise with the lengthsman to see if he can get that particular bin refilled as soon as possible.

3.1.8 Village Hall. Mrs K Albini explained that there are currently opportunities to apply for Village Hall grant funding – via an 'Upstream Ill Health Prevention' scheme. The Village Hall Committee have agreed to circulate a simple questionnaire to all residents asking them to indicate what they would support if included in the Village Hall programme. Mrs Albini explained that the Parish Council is also able to apply for Village Hall grant funding via this scheme and it was agreed, in the first instance, that Cllr D Barron would liaise with Mrs Albini. Item to remain on the agenda.

### **3.2 The Chairman closed the Open Session.**

**4. To approve and sign the minutes.** It was agreed that the minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Monday 10<sup>th</sup> November 2025 were a true record and it was unanimously voted by the Councillors in attendance that they be adopted and signed.

4.1 At the last meeting, a copy of the Inventory and Valuation produced for insurance purposes in October 2019 had been made available for discussion. This document covered The Crown in detail and other assets at a broader level. It was not possible to update this document and it missed some key aspects expected to be included in an Asset Register. After discussion, it was agreed to maintain the existing valuation document for The Crown and to create a new Asset Register for other parish assets. Cllr A Towler offered to draft this new register along with an operating procedure. Once drafted, the Asset Register would need to be populated with details which might be completed by the lengthsman/Parish Councillors.

4.2 The Chairman circulated a copy of the current insurance policy covering The Crown. After discussion, it was agreed that the current policy adequately covered the value of The Crown given the sum insured had increased. When the policy is renewed in May, the Parish Council will need to take a view on the adequacy of the sum insured which is expected to be increased by the insurers.

4.3 The meeting discussed the ongoing production of the new Risk Register. It was agreed to hold a meeting on Monday 19th January in the Village Hall at 7.00pm to finalise the draft Risk Register and operating procedure and to identify any new risks. The aim of the meeting will be to identify the necessary actions required in order to be in a position to submit both documents for adoption at the next Parish Council meeting. All Councillors are welcome to attend the meeting on 19<sup>th</sup> January.

### **5. Finance**

5.1 It was unanimously agreed to pay the outstanding invoices for December 2025.

5.2. The Clerk confirmed she had received a half-yearly audit certificate as required within the adopted financial regulations.

5.3. The Clerk confirmed she had submitted the Precept application for 2026 and 2027; receipt has been acknowledged.

## **6. Highways and Environmental Matters**

6.1 Future storage of sand bags/flood sacks. It was agreed that indoor/central storage is difficult. Cllr J Stirling-Brown agreed to approach Mrs Munro with a view to possible storage in the disused barn. In the meantime, Cllr R Fellows will speak with the owner of The Great House with a view to finding some temporary storage.

The lengthsman will remove the existing damaged sand bags from The Forge; the Clerk will refrain from re-ordering until suitable storage has been agreed. In the meantime, the Clerk will try and find a possible alternative to the current sand bags – the bag coverings are disintegrating resulting in them not being fit for purpose.

6.2 Update on 2025–2026 Drainage Grant. The Clerk confirmed that, unfortunately, the original grant funding application has been significantly reduced. However, Cllr M Thomas and the lengthsman will be starting work on Wednesday with a view to completing drainage work which will be covered by the reduced grant funding. This work must be completed and invoiced before the end of this financial year.

6.3 Tyrrells signage – covered in the Ward Councillor's report.

6.4 Update on flooding issues – covered in the Ward Councillor's report.

6.5 Update on new development village road hedge cutting – covered in Open Session.

6.6 Kerb scraping and jetting. It was agreed that the Clerk will liaise with T & T Plant Hire of Brinsop for an inspection and quote. Item to remain on the agenda.

6.7 Orchard Close entrance and road surface – Ward Councillor Mason is looking into whether Orchard Close is an adopted road. Item to remain on the agenda.

6.8 Potholes – A4112 Dilwyn – Stockingfield – these have now been repaired.

## **7. Footpaths**

7.1 Installation of a new footpath bridge and reopening of the DW2. The Chairman was delighted to welcome Mr Steve Dartnell and Mr Geoffrey Peat (Weobley Footpath Officers) to the meeting. Mr Dartnell gave a short presentation on the processes involved in designing, producing and installing the bridge over the DW20 footpath – now linking Weobley and Dilwyn. Paper copies of drawings and costings were circulated.

It was acknowledged that this was a massive undertaking which had been successfully completed by a team of dedicated retired professionals and volunteers.

Mr Dartnell and his colleagues are now very keen to support Dilwyn in getting a similar bridge erected over the DW2. As there are time restrictions in place, the Clerk confirmed that she had already applied for and been successful in getting grant funding to cover the cost of materials – but that it will be necessary to call on volunteers to help with the installation. This work must be completed and invoiced before the end of the financial year.

After a question-and-answer session, it was agreed that the Chairman will put a short piece in The Dilwynner to ask for volunteers and will call a meeting in The Crown in early February to discuss the way forward – inviting the Weobley Footpath Officers, Dilwyn Footpath Officers, Councillors and volunteers.

The Chairman congratulated Mr Dartnell and his team on the excellent job done and thanked them for coming to the meeting and for their promised support with the Dilwyn project.

## **8. The Crown**

8.1 Update on replacement of the damaged pipe work. The Clerk confirmed that work had begun on the front car park drain but that the recent spell of bad weather had delayed work on the back yard drain.

8.2 Request to inspect and pollard trees on the village green. Mrs K Albini explained that The Friends of the Crown are planning an event on the village green in May and asked if the tree branches could be trimmed back to allow erection of a marquee/maypole etc. The Clerk confirmed that she had attended a site visit with Mr Thor Laslett – who had previously worked on the village green trees – and had negotiated a quote of £250 to include submitting the necessary planning application as the trees are in a conservation area. It was agreed to accept this quote and the Clerk will liaise further with Mr Laslett.

8.3 The Friends of The Crown Coffee Morning – 24<sup>th</sup> January 2026 (details circulated).

## **9. Play Park – Annual Report circulated.**

9.1 Cllr M Thomas reported that he had purchased all the required materials and is liaising with the lengthsman.

**10. Police Report** – no report available. The Clerk confirmed she had filled in the Community Police Charter – highlighting speeding throughout the village; Stockingfield speed limit and fly tipping (although not a police responsibility) as the main issues.

**11. Planning:** Full details of applications available on the Herefordshire Planning website.

11.1 Planning Consultation – 253699 – The Martins, Dilwyn, Hereford, HR4 8HL.  
APPLICATION TYPE: Works to Trees in a Conservation Area. DESCRIPTION: Felling and removal of stump of Holly Oak. After discussion – it was agreed that Cllr D Barron and Cllr J Stirling-Brown will arrange a site visit and report back to the Clerk.

11.2 Planning Consultation – 253567 – Land at Pitch Farm, Dilwyn, Herefordshire.  
DESCRIPTION: Variation of conditions 2, 4 & 5 of planning permission 212878. After discussion – no additional comments were recorded that differ from the comments made on the original planning application.

## **12. Christmas in Dilwyn 2025**

12.1 Update on village Christmas trees – all trees were sold and monies deposited.

12.2 The date for removal of Christmas lights from the village tree was agreed. A vote of thanks was extended to those who erected the lights and those who will now be taking them down for another year.

12.3 Update on Carols on the Green – this was, as usual, a great success despite unpredictable weather conditions. A vote of thanks had been recorded in The Dilwynner to all those who very kindly donated to the event. The collection of £319 has been presented to St Michael's Hospice.

The Chairman extended a vote of thanks to Glen White who again organised 'Christmas in Dilwyn'. It was suggested that a Christmas Committee should be formed later this year – not necessarily all Parish Councillors – who would meet in October. This was agreed and the Clerk will add the item to the September agenda.

**13. To raise issues for the next meeting of the Parish Council** (no discussion).

**14. Date of next Parish Council meeting:** this will be held on Monday 9<sup>th</sup> February 2026 at 7.30pm in the Village Hall.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 9.05 pm.

Signed:

Date: