

## DIDDLEBURY PARISH COUNCIL - PRECEPT BUDGET FOR 2021/2022

**This budget focuses purely on the PRECEPT and does not include Grant income/payments nor third party or ring-fenced funds**

<u>Admin. items budgeted for</u>	<u>Precept Budget figures claimed for 2020/2021</u>	<u>Estimated or actual sum spent as at 31.03.21</u>	<u>Suggested Precept figure for 2021/2022</u>
1. Subscriptions: SALC	£ 285.00	£ 300.00	£ 350.00
2. Insurance	£ 350.00	£ 352.85	£ 360.00
3. Donations	£ 250.00	£ 250.00	£ To be agreed – See Note 1
4. Administrative expenses inc. Broadband/telephone, stationery, postage, ink cartridges, Clerk's travel @ 45p per mile	£ 650.00	£ 650.00 (estimate)	£ 650.00
5. IT support/expenses	£ 30.00	£ 20.00	£ 400.00 - See Note 2
6. Hall hire for meetings	£ 200.00	£ 50.00 - estimate	£ 200.00
7. Contingencies/misc. items. inc. Councillor's expenses	£ 200.00	£ 72.00	£ 100.00
8. Asset maintenance	£ 400.00	£ 265.87	£ 250.00 - See note 3
9. Training courses	£ 50.00	£ 60.00	£ 50.00
10. Clerk's gross salary (inc. PAYE)	£2,642.00	£2,642.00	£ 2,980.00 – See Note 4
11. Payroll administration	£ 80.00	£ 73.00	£ 95.00
12. Audit fees	£ 125.00	£ 125.00	£ 135.00

13. Data Protection fees	£ 50.00	£ 40.00	£ 40.00
14. Book – “Arnold Baker Local Govt. Administration”	£ 140.00	Not yet purchased	£ nil
14. Purchase of SmartWater kits	<u>£1,500.00</u>	<u>£2,306.88 inc VAT</u>	<u>£ 806.88</u>
Sub-total	£6,952.00	£7,207.60	£
<b>Additional items to be discussed for 2021/2022 Budget</b>			
15. Further funds for DVH Car Park resurfacing			To be agreed – see Note 5
16. Purchase, installation and training for defibrillators			To be agreed - See note 6
17. Fund towards cost of the May 2021 Election			nil – see Note 7
18. Financial assistance to Westhope Village Hall Committee with the purchase of the freehold of the hall as a community asset	<u>£ nil</u>	<u>£nil</u>	<u>£ to be agreed – see note 8</u>
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<b>Total Precept for last year</b>	<b><u>£6,952.00</u></b>	<b><u>Est. £7,207.60</u></b>	<b><u>£ to be agreed</u></b>

### Notes to the Precept Budget

**Note 1: Donations.** S.137 LGA allows parish council to claim £8.32 per person on the electoral roll - DPC has approx. 536 on the Roll

making an available total of £4,459.52. The money can be used for a variety of things including donations to organisations/projects which are of benefit to the community, as churchyard maintenance. DPC has traditionally claimed £250 per year. Perhaps this figure needs to be increased as:-

- It is the sole source of funding for the Flood Action Group.
- It has been used to help support the Buzzard, the Clover Club, a local hospice and local organisations.
- Westhope Village Hall needs extensive renovations and could use help from the wider community
- DPC is being asked to financially assist the Louise Powell Alms houses in Ludlow (information is still awaited)

**Note 2: IT Support/Expenses: A figure of £400 is suggested.** To date the Website Hosting fee of £228 p.a. has been paid from the remains of the Transparency Code Grant: only £96.49 remains in the fund so the Precept must now fund the balance of £131.51. A £100 contingency is built in to the £400 for the possible replacement of the DPC printer (purchased in Feb. 2018). The scanner has stopped working and the printer is making curious noises when printing. The remainder of the £400 is to go towards IT support for malfunctions, renewal of virus protection, etc.

**Note 3: Asset Management:** To date the funds for environmental maintenance and asset management have been kept separate for accounting reasons. The Clerk proposes to amalgamate the remaining funds at the end of the financial year and transfer them into precept funds. £750 remains in the environmental fund and approximately £134 in the asset management fund - £400 was claimed last year, making a total of £884. Further claims may be made on these sums prior to the end of the financial year. The Clerk suggests a figure of £250 for the 2021/2022 precept, which would provide £1,113 for 2021/2022: councillors may consider this too low.

**Note 4: Clerk's salary.** The Clerk's salary was not reviewed last year. She is paid for five hours a week at a rate of £10.16 per hour. The pay rate places her almost at the bottom end of the NALC pay scales (SCP 7), despite her 11 years experience as a clerk. She requested that her hours be increased to six per week in January 2018 but DPC only agreed to five hours (up from 4.5 per week). The Clerk has never claimed over-time despite frequently working substantially more than five hours a week. She suggests her pay scale should be at least SCP 11 - £11.30 per hour. **At the meeting on 25.11.20 councillors agreed an increase in the Clerk's salary from 01.04.21 to £2,934 per annum gross.**

**Note 5: DVH car park re-surfacing fund.** The bulk of DPC's reserves (£5412.29) were transferred into a Reserve Fund for re-surfacing the Diddlebury Village Hall car park in June 2017. In the intervening three years, despite significant efforts being made, no success has occurred in funding the resurfacing of the car park via grants or via DPC's CIL entitlement. £481.80 has been spent to date on temporary repairs, reducing the fund to £4,723.39 and more work and materials are needed. DPC might want to consider utilizing the Precept to progress this matter for the benefit of the community.

**Note 6: Defibrillator:** It has been suggested that DPC purchases a defibrillator for community use. In total the purchase of a defibrillator, installation and training costs are likely to cost around £1,200.

**Note 7: May 2021 Elections.** The May 2021 elections are for the first time to be funded entirely by parish councils. The best estimate of the cost Shropshire Council can give to date is £1600 if the election is contested, £100 if it is not. In past years DPC has built up a fund towards the election cost. **Councillors felt at the meeting on 25.11.20 that this could await the 2022/2023 precept.**

**Note 8: Financial assistance for the Westhope Village Hall Committee towards the purchase of the freehold of the village hall and associated legal costs.** Since the first draft of the precept budget was circulated and discussed at the 25<sup>th</sup> November 2020 meeting, the committee of Westhope Village Hall – which is a charity – have negotiated the purchase of the freehold of Westhope village hall (for a very modest figure). Solicitors have been instructed to proceed with the purchase. The committee have approached DPC, at the behest of Mr Graham Betts, the Community Buildings Advisor at Shropshire Council, to seek financial assistance towards the cost of the purchase. Mr Betts stated “I would expect nothing but enthusiasm from DPC as having a charity owned village hall (in Westhope) will certainly enhance the community”. DPC is not being asked to get involved in the administration of the village hall, only to assist with the purchase costs. Any sum between £1,000 and £2,000 would assist with the purchase. The Clerk has taken advice from DPC’s auditor, who confirms that DPC has powers under Section 133 of the Local Government Act 1932 to make a donation to a charity to “acquire and furnish community buildings for public meetings and assemblies”. Westhope Village Hall needs a lot of renovation work: the committee are unable to access any grants as it only has a tenuous rolling lease: it needs to hold the freehold to access grant aid. The WVH Committee therefore request assistance from DPC towards the freehold purchase.

### **GENERAL NOTES TO THE PROPOSED 2021/2022 PRECEPT BUDGET**

**Reserves:** The Clerk will provide an up-to-date Reserves calculation at the January 2021 meeting.

In 2020/2021 the Precept of £6,952 resulted in a Band D charge of £26.08

A 2021/2022 Precept of £6,952 would result in a Band D charge of £25.51. Every additional £100 would cost £0.37, every £1,000 - £3.67.

#### **Recent Precept history**

2020 – 2021	£6,952
2019 - 2020 -	£5,552
2018 - 2019 -	£5,128
2017 – 2018 -	£5,128
2016 - 2017 -	£5,149
2015 - 2016 -	£4,449
2014 - 2015 -	£4,449 (plus £234 Council Tax Support Grant)
2013 - 2014 -	£3,449 (plus £201 Council Tax Support Grant)
2013 - 2013 -	£2,650

J. de Rusett- Clerk/RFO - 10<sup>th</sup> January 2021