

SUCKLEY PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

Held on Monday 13th March 2023 at 7.00 pm in Suckley Parish Church

Present: Cllr R Hill (Chairman), Cllr P Whatley, Cllr L Devenish, Cllr A Lewis, Cllr A Mansell, Cllr H Ormerod, Cllr R Hooper, Cllr P Griffiths, Co Cllr K Hanks (arrived shortly after meeting started)

In Attendance: Mrs Lynn Butler (Clerk),

Six members of the public attended the meeting.

22/23 APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from:
Cllr C Luton and District Cllr S Rouse.

23/23 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

- (a) Cllrs were reminded of the need to complete/update their Register of Interests**
- (b) Declaration of any Disclosable Pecuniary Interests (DPI) in items on the Agenda – or -**
- (c) Declaration of Other Disclosable Interests in items on the Agenda falling within the terms of para 12(4)(b) of the Code of Conduct.**

Cllr Whatley stated that as a District Councillor he would not take part in any discussions relating to planning items on the agenda.

24/23 GRANT A DISPENSATION

To consider written requests from Councillors to Grant a Dispensation (Sec 33 of the Localism Act 2011) relating to items on the agenda.

No written requests had been received by the Clerk.

25/23 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

The Chairman then adjourned the Meeting for Public Question Time/Participation (including planning applicant/s or their representatives)

- (a) 1. Planning**
Mr Paul Bradley, the applicant for Riddings Farm was in attendance. He stated the application is to replace the existing barn structure with a new barn which complements existing barns and will use complementary materials.
There were no further planning comments
- 2. Other Public Comments**
Mr Steve Gray stated he had been looking into how parish councils are run. The recent issue of draft minutes and their publication has been addressed and, he felt, should not happen again. Standing Orders show that normally votes taken in meetings should be by a show of hands. Mr Gray felt that by holding a written ballot for co-option purposes the parish council is breaching its own rules. Decisions relating to correspondence are not minuted. High levels of insurance have previously been referred to but is subjective. These reflect views and concerns of some members of the parish.
The Chairman, in response to Mr Gray's comments, stated that the words 'prohibitive expenditure' has not been used in a previous meeting. There is more to organising events than monetary costs. The parish council is risk adverse. Skill and knowledge

of documenting and managing risk in addition to managing training needs for volunteers is an essential requirement.

Cllr Lewis stated she has also looked in to the organisation of events and the requirements to be adhered to by a parish council as a public body are different to those required for a private event.

Mr Mark Armstrong asked why is the parish council not meeting in the Village Hall? As its being used by Fledglings Nursery have we lost the Village Hall? and the new fence is an eyesore.

The chairman responded to Mr Armstrong's comments. Mr John Sutton would say that without more bookings the Village Hall only had a lifetime of two years. It had no income and was in need of repair. Fledglings were looking for a new place. The works carried out are to a high standard, the hall now has regular income and will be in good repair for another ten years. It will be used as a polling station in the upcoming elections.

Cllr Whatley stated the hall is open for bookings. MHDC has received a complaint regarding the new fence outside Suckley Village Hall which has been referred to its enforcement team for potential action.

(b) Report from County Councillor – Cllr Karen Hanks

Cllr Hanks updated the parish council on the recent speeding petition from residents in the Suckley Knowle area. The petition includes 91 residents but whilst some are outside the parish area, it provides a strong view of the residents involved. These views have been passed to Cabinet Member for Highways, Mike Rouse. There has been a delay in getting speed data. It will be undertaken by the Data collection Team and should be completed in the upcoming weeks. It should be taken at a suitable spot in the Suckley Knowle area. Cllr Hanks will update the parish council once the speed data is returned. Mr Armstrong also commented that whilst speeding is an issue, so is visibility at junctions, especially at the White House crossroads.

The collapsing bank at the foot of Blackhouse Lane is being monitored weekly by the County Council. Highways have checked this week and there has been no further deterioration. If further deterioration occurs consideration will be given to additional measures to protect the road user. In the meantime, the Structures Team are looking for a permanent solution.

(c) Report from District Councillor - Dist Cllr P Whatley reported to the meeting: Council tax has been set as previously discussed. Everything else is quiet at MHDC. Purdah - the pre election period - starts on 20th March 2023

(d) Lengthsman Report

The Clerk reported the Lengthsman continues to clear gully grates, flooding and debris in the parish. Flooding has been cleared specifically in Crews Hill, Birchwood, Blackhouse Lane and Suckley Road. Excess flood debris at Birchwood has been cleared using a digger.

(e) Footpaths Report (*Mrs Helen Philpotts*)

Mrs Helen Philpotts reported some broken gates and stiles on a couple of paths. Two requests for new footpath gates to replace stiles had been received and will be passed on to WCC. Clerk will seek further details and report to the County Council.

(f) Local Police Report (*Cllr R Hooper*)

Cllr R Hooper updated the parish council on a recent speed survey undertaken by local police. They undertook a survey outside the village hall. Out of 20 cars that went through the check, only two were over the limit of 30mph – one was 32 and the other was 38. The latter driver was spoken to. There is nothing else to report on local community incidents.

The Chairman re-opened the Meeting

26/23 MINUTES

The Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 9th January 2023 and the Minutes of the Planning Meeting held on 6th February 2023 were both approved and signed. Proposed by Cllr H Ormerod and seconded by Cllr A Mansell

27/23 PLANNING – MHDC

App Ref: M/23/00230/AGR
Location: Riddings Farm, Longley Green, Suckley, Worcester, WR6 5EF
Proposal: Prior notification for proposed replacement agricultural building

Having discussed the application the parish council unanimously agreed it had no comments. This would be passed to MHDC.

28/23 HIGHWAYS & BYWAYS

Blackhouse Lane has been updated in item 25/23 (b) County Councillors report. There were no new items reported.

29/23 VAS/SPEEDING ISSUES

- (a) Stats up to 30 Dec 2022 - were e-mailed to Cllrs on 06/03/2023
- (b) Volunteer to manage VAS data.
Richard Ashley who currently downloads the data, will not be continuing to do so. Cllr Mansell offered to talk to Mr Ashley to get some more information. The Chairman wished to record the Parish Councils thanks for the work Mr Ashley has previously undertaken. Clerk to pass on those thanks.
- (c) Police speed report.
Covered in item 25/23 (f) but agreed to ask police to repeat the survey at a more appropriate time and with a more significant sample following the increase in vehicles turning into Damson Way to visit Fledglings Nursery.

30/23 CHARITY REPORTS

- (a) Brookes Memorial Fund
- (b) John Palmer Trust

As both these charities meet once a year, there is nothing further to report. Cllr Whatley stated Suckley Charities are to meet in April. They are seeking a grant and could this be included on the May Parish Council agenda. This was agreed.

31/23 COMMUNITY - Projects/items for discussion/update:-

- (a) Parish Map Board
Cllr Ormerod reported he has contacted 14 of the existing 16 locations. Most are happy to remain and there are other businesses to contact but it's too soon to get a final number for the meeting. Discussing current wording with Worcestershire CC.
- (b) Village Hall inc. fencing - Cllr R Hill to report
Update of building works has been provided in item 25/23 Public Participation. There have been adverse comments on the newly erected fence. Cllr Hill has received a letter from Mrs B Price who asks if the current fence can be removed and replaced with something more sympathetic to the existing building. Cllr Lewis commented that other residents don't like what they see, the physical appearance is not good. The Village Hall is a historic building of note which is now obliterated by the new fence. Cllr Hill stated the Hill Trust were aware of the building works undertaken but not of the design of the fence. Clerk to write to Mrs Price sharing her concerns that the parish council also consider the fence is too high and of inappropriate design and that it has been reported to MHDC enforcement.

- (c) Classic Vehicle Event on the Playing Fields
Nothing to report
- (d) Suckley Nine Mile Run – Quarter Marathon.
This event is on Sunday 21st May 2023 and will start and finish at the Hop Shed. Profits will go to Suckley School and Space Charity. Cllr Luton has supplied some details to date in an email which has been circulated to councilors. Cllr Luton is requesting the parish council consider a donation of £200. It was proposed by Cllr Whatley, seconded by Cllr Griffiths and unanimously agreed to donate £200 from Parish Council funds, but also to approach Cllr Karen Hanks to see if she might contribute additional funding.
- (e) Small Society Lottery
Nothing to report and agreed to remove from future agenda.
- (f) Kings Coronation celebrations – update
Cllr Hill - The meeting on 13th February had a disappointing attendance but there was productive discussion on certain matters. The issues of the parish council holding a function and its insurance were discussed.
It appears there are events on each day of the Coronation weekend: Suckley Church will be showing the Coronation on 6th May, Hammonds are holding a private function on 7th and on 8th there is a 'help out day' at Mosewick Farm by Reset Charity which is open to all to see what they do.
Chairman will co-ordinate all events into one piece of publicity and requested details by March 24th. Possibly to go in Sphere or flyers with the postman
- (g) Village Hall – wall hangings
The Roll of Honour could be located in the church but Cllr Lewis will obtain its dimensions before a decision can be made.
- (h) Future Meeting Venues
The main hall in the Village Hall now has a divider and can be used. The smaller committee room can also be used.
- (i) Suckley Wombles – next litter pick Sat 18th March
This will start at the Hop Shed at 11am. Risk assessment has been received by the clerk and filed.
- (j) Possible Parish Survey
The chairman advised the last survey was in 2012 when it went to every householder. It was suggested its time to redo after the election. The council was unanimous to progress with it.

32/23 FINANCE

The following payments to be approved :-

(a) **Gen Fund:**

R Wilks – Lengthsman Jan & Feb 2023 £582

L Butler £1,319.05– salary £1,219.20 Jan & Feb 2023 & expenses £99.85

Suckley PCC £30 - Church rental for January meeting

All payments approved. Proposed by Cllr Griffiths, seconded by Cllr Hooper

(b) **Playing Field**

RoSPA – Annual safety report £111.00

Adam Cross £89.00 – mole control

EDF £11.43 - 5th to 23rd Jan.

Sign Direct Debit mandate for future EDF payments – not signed due to receipt of £150 UK Government Alternative Fuel Payment putting account in credit. Review Direct Debit when credit is reduced.

WaterPlus D/D for Dec to Feb - £11.14 x 3. Already paid but for approval.

All payments approved. Proposed by Cllr Lewis, seconded by Cllr Devenish

33/23 PLAYING FIELD

Cllr C Luton has emailed a report.

The basketball hoop has been purchased and is planned to be installed during week commencing 27/3/2023. There are currently moles on the field but they are being dealt with.

The RoSPA annual Safety Inspection of Suckley Playing Field was completed on 1st March and the report has been circulated to councillors. The report seems to be much the same as usual. Two volunteers will look at the bolts which were identified as needing some attention.

34/23 SUCKLEY CHURCH

Cllr A Lewis reported the toilet and kitchen should be finished by Easter. Crowd funding is closing soon. It started as a plan by Julian Wilkins to achieve £1,000 to improve Wi-Fi, but moved on to achieve funding for Warm Wednesdays and ending with £5,500 so it will also include the accessible path down to the school. The local police now come along to the Warm Wednesdays.

One minister currently covers fifteen churches. Advertising is in place for another minister.

35/23 SUCKLEY SCHOOL

Cllr L Devenish reported that school staff have recently been affected by Covid. Pupil numbers are good for September. The children are planning on making tiles to create a mural for the Kings Coronation.

The Chairman read a letter from Head Teacher Mrs Helen Field thanking the parish council for the recent donation towards repair/replace of their notice board.

36/23 RISK ASSESSMENT

Report on any negative inspections of Bus Shelters, Playground Equipment, Skateboard Facility, Sports Equipment, Trees in Quarry, Map Board

Cllr Hill reported nothing there was noting adverse for the bus shelter, quarry and map board.

See item 33/23 for Playing Field.

37/23 MATTERS FOR FUTURE AGENDA

Suckley Charities – request for funding.

In closing the last full meeting before the election, the Chairman expressed his thanks to all Councillors for their support and the work they have done for the community as volunteers.

Meeting closed at 9pm.

Date of next meeting – Annual Parish Council Meeting on Monday 15th May 2023 at 7.00 pm in Suckley Parish Church.