

SUCKLEY PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

Held on Monday 8th January 2024 at 7.00 pm in Suckley Parish Church

Present: Cllr S. Gray (Chair), Cllr H. Ormerod, Cllr A. Lewis, Cllr A. Mansell, Cllr H. Philpotts, Cllr R. Lewis.

In Attendance: Mrs L. Butler (Clerk), Dist Cllr P Whatley.

One member of the public attended the meeting.

06/24 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Cllr Savage, Cllr Roper, Co Cllr K. Hanks and Dist Cllr S. Rouse

07/24 Declarations of Interests

- (a) Cllrs are reminded of the need to complete/update their Register of Interest form.
- (b) To declare any Disclosable Pecuniary Interests in items on the Agenda and their nature.
- (c) To declare any Other Disclosable Interests in items on the Agenda and their nature.

Councillors who have declared a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest, or any Other Disclosable Interest which falls within the terms of para 12(4)(b) of the Code of Conduct, must leave the room for the relevant items. Failure to register or declare a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest may result in the commission of a criminal offence.

None were received.

08/24 To consider Written Requests from Councillors to Grant a Dispensation (S33 of the Localism Act 2011) relating to items on the Agenda.

None were received.

The Meeting will be adjourned for Public Question Time/Participation. (The time allocated is at the discretion of the Council/Chairman). Residents are invited to give their views and question the Parish Council on issues on this Agenda or raise issues for future consideration at the discretion of the Chairman. Members of the public are reminded that by doing this, the matters for discussion may be included in public Minutes and should give their consent to this prior to any discussion. The Chairman will give members of the public the chance to withdraw from the meeting if they so wish.

Members of the public may not take part in the Parish Council Meeting itself.

09/24 The Chairman will invite members of the public present to make short presentations to the Council.

(a) Public presentation(s) (including planning applications representatives)

Planning (if on Agenda):-

- (1) The Council Chairman will ask the applicant/s or their representatives (if present) to put forward any points he/she wishes to make regarding their application
- (2) Other parishioners are then invited to put forward their comments
- (3) The applicant/representative then has the opportunity to respond to any points raised if he/she wishes to do so.

There were no planning representations or other presentations.

- (b) Report from County Councillor – Cllr Karen Hanks
Summary of WCC Budget Monitoring 2023/2024: Overall the Council is forecasting a £21.9 million cost pressure at the end of the financial year. Majority of overspend is in demand led areas of Adult and Children’s Social Care and Home to School transport. Savings are being made across the People Directorate and Worcestershire Children First. An amount of £7 million is likely to be required from reserves plus a further £2 million from reserves specifically earmarked for home to school transport. The planned increase in Council Tax for 2024/2025 will be 4.99%.
Other Council Decisions: At the previous council on 9th November 2023, Worcestershire County Council voted to support the Cross Party LGA view that disposable vapes should be banned.
Highways: On 24th November 2023, I attended a visit to Suckley with Harriett Baldwin MP, to hear the views of the Parish Council following a speeding survey conducted by Councillor Steve Gray. Harriett has confirmed that speeding in the villages is a constant feature of her residents’ communications (as they are in my own communications from residents) and has again presented the matter to the cabinet member for highways.
Re: Broken Marker posts outside Dalvingtons in Suckley – repairs in progress. The Loose kerb stone opposite Park House Entrance is due to be re-set in coming weeks.
Footway repairs between Damson Way and Woodland Road – have been funded.
Divisional Budget: I have been able find funding within this financial year to purchase 2 x picnic benches for Suckley Playing Fields. I ask the Parish to note that 24/25 funds will be available for release from April and to contact me to discuss any requests.
- Cllr R Lewis arrives.
- (c) Report from District Councillor - Cllr Peter Whatley
Business continues to be quiet at Malvern Hills DC. The Local Government financial settlement for 2024/25 was released just before Christmas. Each local council raises its own taxes and will not be capped, the Police and Crime Commissioners increase should raise by up to £13, the HW Fire and Rescue increase is capped - rate is not known yet. On 19th December there was a major planning announcement. Local authorities are to put forward further housing schemes for which they will get more ‘New Homes’ bonus from central government, but they still need to build to the governments formula. Assuming there is no change of government, MHDC will set the 2024/25 council tax during February/March. The new Head of Planning is due to start. The bottleneck of applications at the input end is starting to work its way through.
- (d) Lengthsman Report - Clerk
During October, November and December gully’s and verges have been cleared on Birchwood Lane, Blackhouse, Mouse Hole, Crews Hill, Longley Green and along the road to Knightwick including vegetation clearance at Whitehouse crossroads. During December flooding has also been cleared in the same locations including Acton Road.
- (e) Footpaths Report - Cllr Helen Philpotts
The footpath between Rectory cottages and the church, has been cleared.
Some residents have reported they have been unable to get their dogs over some stiles.
- (f) Local Police Report – report not available.
Cllr Gray reported that there had been a couple of accidents. There were no injuries but hedges were damaged. Police and ambulance were in attendance to the accident on Blackhouse Lane.
- (g) School report - Cllr Helen Philpotts
All is going well in the school. It’s been fairly quiet and not much is happening at the moment.

The Chair re-opened the Meeting

10/24 **MINUTES**

Minutes of Parish Council meeting on Monday, 13th November 2023 were approved on the proposal of Cllr Ormerod, seconded by Cllr A Lewis and unanimous.

11/24 **CO-OPTION**

It was agreed to co-opt the one remaining vacancy. The Clerk has consulted with the Elections Office at Malvern Hills DC who advised that a notice to request an election is not required. It was further agreed to advertise the vacancy. Proposed by Cllr Ormerod, seconded by Cllr Gray and unanimous.

12/24 **PLANNING - MHDC**

a For Consideration:

App Ref: M/23/01109/FUL
Location: Unit 4C, The Bruff Business Centre, Suckley, Worcs, WR6 5DR
Proposal: Revised plans to relocate the outlet flue, including retention of external doorway and maintenance walkway serving existing industrial enterprise (retrospective)

To discuss if any further comments are required **only on the additional information/amendments as described above.**

The parish council notes that the proposed location of the flue outlet has been amended, which was one of the points made earlier. Whether this is now adequate, bearing in mind the questions of its height and in particular the nature of the emissions, remains, in our view, to be demonstrated. We believe that further emission tests are needed to ensure air quality is safe for neighbouring residential properties. Until this is done, we must remain opposed to the proposal.

Proposed by Cllr Ormerod, seconded by Cllr Philpotts and unanimous that the parish council object to this amendment.

b Decisions – for information only

App Ref: M/23/00458/HP
Location: Worlds End, Longley Green, Suckley, Worcester, WR6 5DU
Proposal: Proposed oak glazed gable and new cladding with internal and external alterations.

Application has been Approved

Above decision noted by the Parish Council

13/24 **FINANCIAL REGULATIONS**

Latest NALC Model Financial Regulations 2019

Cllr Gray suggested this be deferred until the March meeting. Seconded by Cllr Mansell and unanimous. In the meantime, councillors are asked to read through the regulations.

14/24 **PLAYING FIELD**

- (a) The Monkey Challenge climbing wall is now installed on the playing field. Clerk was able to confirm that full payment has been received from The National Lottery.
- (b) The pathway between the car park and the pavilion needs some work to make it more accessible for everyone. Cllr R Lewis thought it would cost about £470 for new stones, slabs and some diesel and that it could be done this coming weekend. Proposed by Cllr Philpotts, seconded by Cllr Ormerod and unanimous to go ahead.
- (c) All weather pitch boarding – Cllr R Lewis thought approximately sixty sheets of 12.5 mm would be required. He agreed to get some prices.
- (d) Land Registry – Cllr Gray reported that he has not yet heard back with details of the playing field deeds.

- (e) Gutters and facias on the pavilion need replacing. Cllr R Lewis offered to get some prices.
- (f) Play bark – the bark around the play area needs replenishing. Cllr R Lewis agreed to get some prices.

15/24 HIGHWAYS & BYWAYS

- (a) Whitehouse Crossroads - visibility continues to be a problem for traffic turning from Suckley Knowle. A 20mph limit was suggested because its near a school but the problem is getting motorists to abide by the limit. Another suggestion was if 'SLOW' could be painted on approaches to the junction.
- (b) The newly installed culverts at the Knowle are not working and residents are having to clean them out. Cllr Gray is continuing to follow these up.

16/24 RISK ASSESSMENT

The online form is not meeting current needs as it corrupts when being constantly forwarded. The rota for 2023 has finished. It was suggested that one person be designated to manage the risk assessment process. Anyone interested should contact the Clerk.

Cllr Mansell agreed to produce a new rota to end of March and to circulate a new blank for with instructions on how to use it.

17/25 VAS CAMERA

Cllr Mansell had volunteered to manage the VAS camera/device. Following a handover from Richard Ashby (Alfrick), Cllr Mansell now has the software to download the speed data but is now looking for someone else to take on the VAS management. Suckley has one machine which is moved between three locations - Opposite Church Lane on the Knightwick Road, Bruff Bank in Longley Green and the 30 mph sign past village hall near Damson Way on the Knightwick Road. Anyone interested to take on the VAS should contact the Clerk.

18/24 COMMUNITY

- (a) Parish Map Board – Cllr H Ormerod to report
There still needs to be some agreement over what should go on the board.
Cllr Ormerod proposed, Cllr Mansell seconded and it was unanimously agreed that the project be put on hold until May 2024.
- (b) Village Signs
Two signs have been ordered and paid for and the parish council is waiting to hear when they will be installed.
- (c) Village Show
Cllr Gray was able to update the parish council. The BFG are to hold a show this year and a Village show will take place in 2025 then alternating. There is a meeting on 4th March.
- (d) Lottery
No update available.
- (e) History Society
Cllr Gray has tried to make contact with Sue Fellowes but has not had a response. The parish council understands the police have got in touch with her. She may or may not be in possession of artefacts. Cllr Gray is organising a meeting to look at starting a new History Society but he will not be involved.
- (f) Parish Survey
All surveys have been distributed. Notes to be placed on social media and website for any properties who have not received one to contact the Clerk who will arrange for one to be delivered.

- (g) Pollution from burning of garden waste
Homeowners are able to burn garden waste, however whilst there are local by-laws residents are asked to be considerate of their neighbours enjoyment of their property.
- (h) Notice Boards
Cllr R Lewis will ask if The Crosskeys will display parish council notices and Cllr Gray will ask at The Hopshed.
- (i) West Mercia Safer Roads Fund
No suggestions at present but Cllr Gray will reconsider.
- (j) Newsletter
There wasn't time to let everyone have a look before sending them out but they have all been distributed.

19/24 FINANCE

The following payments were approved:-

(a) Gen Fund:

R Wilks Lengthsman £558 - Oct & Nov 2023
 R Wilks Lengthsman £270 - Dec 2023
 L Butler £1,677.86 – clerks salary Nov & Dec 2023 – inc backdated pay award.
 HMRC - £366.23 tax Oct – Dec 2023
 PCC of Suckley - £30.00 for meeting 08/01/2024
 Good Neighbourhood Scheme - £86.40

All above accounts paid on proposal of Cllr Philpotts, seconded by Cllr Ormerod and unanimous.

(b) Playing Field A/c

Alpha CCTV - £ 250.00 for reposition of monitor and recorder box
 WaterPlus D/D for Nov & Dec 2023 - £7.50 x 2
 MidWest Electrical - £2,426.16 for replacement of consumer units and obsolete units on flood lights.
 MidWest Electrical – £482.65 for replacement new LED units on flood lights
 MidWest Electrical – £447.36 for isolators and conduits
 MidWest Electrical - £94.66 for electrical parts and time clock
 MidWest Electrical - £300.00 for general labour to complete remedial works.
 County Building Supplies – £18.51 for broom & dustpan
 County Building Supplies – £33.04 for stabilising solution.
 D Philpotts - £1,344 for vegetation clearance

All above accounts paid on proposal of Cllr Philpotts, seconded by Cllr Ormerod and unanimous.

(c) Interim Accounts to 30/11/2023 - previously circulated

the council noted the accounts and look forward to full review at the end of the financial year.

20/24 GENERAL COUNCIL PROCEDURES

(a) Meeting frequency

There is currently a lot of parish council business which needs to be discussed by all councillors with decisions agreed in a more timely manner. The Clerk advised that in both 2022 and 2023 there were six council meetings and three planning meetings. The Clerk suggested ten 'monthly' meetings, omitting August and December and that regular reports should remain with the original six meetings so the other four meetings are shorter. A later start time of 7:30 was also suggested by councillors. Proposed by Cllr R Lewis, seconded by Cllr A Lewis and unanimously agreed to try ten meetings starting at 7:30pm and commencing in February.

(b) Communication

To enable quicker responses councillors thought a WhatsApp group would be easier to get responses on day to day business. Proposed by Cllr R Lewis, seconded by Cllr A Lewis and unanimously agreed for Clerk to set up a group named Suckley PC.

21/24 MATTERS FOR FUTURE AGENDA

Meeting on 11th March 2024 to include Communication and Memorial Ground.

Next Parish Council Meeting: Monday 12th February 2024 at 7.30 pm in Suckley Parish Church