

SUCKLEY PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

Monday 14th July 2025 at the Parish Councils Playing Field Pavilion, Suckley
Worcester, WR6 5DE

Minutes of the meeting are draft, until approved at the next council meeting.

Members Present.

Cllr R Lewis (Chair)
Cllr H Ormerod (Vice Chair)
Cllr D Clark
Cllr S Jew
Cllr A Mansell
Cllr H Philpotts
Cllr R Roper

In Attendance

Clerk L Cleaver
1 x member of the public

118. Chair's welcome and to record apologies.

The chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. Lottery prize draw numbers 37 first prize of £150, number 96 second prize £50. The chair wished to send a special thank you to Cllrs Mansell and Ormerod for their help and support for the summer event 5th July and to all those that helped make it a success.

Apologies recorded from Worcestershire County Councillor Chris McSweeney, District Councillors Sarah Rouse and Peter Whatley.

119. Declarations of Interests.

Disclosable Pecuniary Interests (DPI), Cllrs A Mansell and H Ormerod payments (129 e)

120. Consideration of any request for a dispensation.

Nothing considered

121. Public Participation

The chair adjourned the meeting for Public Question Time.

(a) **Public Question Time.** No questions to be considered..

(b) **Public Presentation Planning.** Nothing considered.

(c) **Report from County Councillor Christopher McSweeney.** No report for consideration at this meeting.

(d) Report from District Councillor Sarah Rouse. Read by the chair. Having seen Angela Raynor and Jim McMahon speak last week, house building is still their key priority in their reorganisation at any cost. So I would suggest that they will not be rowing back on funding NPD's.

Given their financial issues, us all paying more tax is likely, With the SWDPr now ineffective before adoption and thousand more houses needing to be allocated, an NDP would not change anything locally. Although you may get some CIL if you can find a suitable housing site in Suckley for a good number of new homes.

(e) Report from District Councillor Peter Whatley. He wished to reconfirm the SWDPr information sent round to all members recently.

(f) School report from Cllr Helen Philpotts. The school would be closing this week for their six weeks holiday period. A school play "Oliver" would be taking place at Bromyard tomorrow. Building work at the school is behind schedule.

122. MINUTES

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held 09/06/2025 proposed by Cllr H Ormerod and seconded by Cllr Mansell and agreed by all, that the minutes be signed as a true and accurate record. The chair signed the minutes accordingly.

123. PLANNING – MHDC

(a) Nothing for consideration.

(b) Decisions (for information only) nothing for consideration.

124. PLAYING FIELD WORKING GROUP (PFWG)

(a) **New Electricity Tariff – Pavilion** – Cllr Mansell found the process of moving suppliers (as the PC not a charity nor a limited company) problematic. Current providers fixed contract ended 20th June 2025. Annual estimated costs: currently £416.16, current providers new tariff £869.16
The parish council used Worcestershire CALC's partnership scheme, Clear Utility Solutions to obtain quotations. Best offer fixed 36 months from Valda Energy. Estimated annual cost £465.51 an increase of £49.33 for the year or 11.85%. The parish council pleased with that result and a direct debit mandate signed accordingly.

(b) **Bark Removal Quotations** – three quotations sent for the work to be carried out. Only one quotation received £2079.70 plus vat, one contractor confirmed too busy, no reply from the third. Due to the cost, this placed on hold and the clerk asked to speak to a play specialist with regards the current rubber matting and bark topping and revert to the parish council in August.

(c) **Fire Risk Assessment** – presented by Cllr Mansell for consideration. The action plan to be progressed by the chair Cllr Lewis over the next 12 months which was agreed by all.

125. REPORTS

(a) **Chairman**

HSE Enquiry /Workplace Concern.

Chairman noted his concern that this workplace alleged issue, submitted directly to the HSE without any discussion with the parish council, therefore it was unanimously agreed to contact HSE, an FOI enquiry with regards the date this matter was brought to their attention.

Summer Event 5th July 2025 A big thank you to all those who helped and those who attended the councils first event, especially Gareth and Brad for their help mending the play

equipment and Brad and the team from the Nelson for supplying the bar. Amanda, Jackie and Dawn who organised the walks and quizzes for us on the day. It was a wonderful day, the council will be holding the same event next year.

Chairman's Allowance

This subject discussed and would be added to the future budget for further consideration. Any allowance would need to be placed through payroll.

Playing Field

The current grass cutting contractor asked not to attend this week as no grass to cut due to the dry weather conditions.

(b) Clerks

Create A Healthy Heart District". Trauma/Bleed Kit terms of the grant award agreement signed by the parish council, awaiting receipt of payment from WCC.

Ward Budget Grant Application. Following Mays Parish Council Meeting, Ward Grant Application submitted for £495 towards an unlocked cabinet to position the Bleed Kit that had just been awarded by WCC (as above). Confirmation, the award grant to be £100. Awaiting receipt of payment from MHDC. To note the new cabinet price £220

County Councillor – Financial Support Request. 16th June a request to Worcestershire County Councillor Chris McSweeney for any financial support regards the shortfall for a cabinet for the Bleed Kit. Kind offer received of £150. New cabinet price £220 plus vat so funding for the new cabinet reached.

CPR & Defibrillator Training. Contact made with Heartstart of Malvern, who previously delivered training at Suckley village hall and happy to do so again. Training would be completely free (subject to a minimum of 8 people per session) each session would last for 90 minutes. Maximum number 20 people per session. Agreed date for training 31st July 2025. Location- Suckley Church. First session 3.30pm , second session 5.15pm. Details published on the councils website, FB and notice boards and also at the Church, attendees on a first come, first serve basis. MHDC will be offering 'Train the Trainer' courses later in year which will be followed up.

Community Facility Legacy Grant Scheme. Confirmation of submission 29th May 2025, no further update ahead of the meeting.

HSE Enquiry /Workplace Concern. Councils reply sent to HSE 10th June 2025. Confirmation received on 23rd June. The information the PC had submitted to the HSE to be suitable. and satisfactory and the concern closed.

Clerks Gathering at Droitwich – Worcestershire CALC Thursday 3rd July 2025- 5 Key Points

- 1) The My Parish Website currently supported by Worcestershire County Council may not continue. Further details to follow later in the year. Future financial budget consideration for the councils own website & to incorporate gov. email system.
- 2) Discussion around the elections due 2027, cost consideration for the budget.
- 3) Members allowance consideration. Figures will be based on current parish population. Only for none co-opted parish councillors. Any payments awarded would form part of the precept and must be paid to members via the council's payroll system.
- 4) Tree survey consideration following the news of a reported death from a branch failing.
- 5) Discussion for parish and town councils to put forward a motion for a resolution calling on the Government to provide dedicated funding for Neighbourhood Plans which was unanimously agreed to do.

Backup Required. The councils Seagate portable drive, needs to be backed up. Suggested a USB storage stick high speed. Up to 450 MB/s Read Speed. Retractable, costs no more than £20, agreed by all for the clerk to purchase.

126. COMMUNITY - PROJECTS/ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION/UPDATE

- (a) **Summer Event 5th July.** Cllr Ormerod reported that instead of the event making a small loss of £100 that he was pleased to report a net profit of £109 from the event itself with 45% coming from very generous donations. Help and support from the Nelson and Cllr Roper. £109 would be banked in the playing field account. With such a success the summer event would be held again next year on 27th June 2026.
- (b) **Atlas Tower Mobile Mast.** Cllr Mansell. Coverage from the Suckley playing field did not get into Longley Green. Atlas Tower still progressing matters. Longley Green and Riley Hill are locations under consideration.
- (c) **Salt Bins.** Stocks, Visibility, bin Labeling details as circulated from Cllr Lewis following a concern raised by a member of the public.
The weeds are covering the bins so no longer visible, after a discussion it was agreed that it makes sense to leave the weeds until everything died back. No need to have the Lengthsman to cut back at this time. Once the weeds have died back the salt bins should once again be clearly visible when needed for the winter. The salt bin at Blackhouse Lane, was the location appropriate. Discussed and agreed that the bin in that location for about 10 years. It must have been decided upon at the time of installation to be the most appropriate location and therefore to leave as is.
The filling of the salt bins discussed and for the clerk to review and revert in August agreed by all.
- (d) **Neighbourhood Plan.**
(d1) **Update by Cllr Jew.** Good news that the design for the Neighbourhood plan has been accepted. The bad news, that any funding considerations from MHDC had been withdrawn which may have cost up to £13,000. Cllr Jew felt the plan should still be progressed and may help with future housing say. Agreed by all for Cllr Jew to still progress this topic and see where he gets without any budget.
- (d2) **Neighbourhood plan Roadmap** a 35 page report had been circulated to all with no further comments.
- (d3) **Resolution calling on Government to provide dedicated funding for Neighbourhood plans.** Future of neighbourhood planning support needed, agreed by all to send a letter from the parish council calling on the Government to provide dedicated funding for Neighbourhood Plans.

127. GRANT APPLICATIONS FOR CONSIDERATION

Grant application to the Football Foundation (75%) for a pair of junior goals, (25%) funded by the parish council to a maximum amount of £400 plus vat. Only to be applied if 100% grant could not be obtained. Cllr Roper provided a update on this matter, addresses being problematic. A review to be considered by the council in August.

128. CO-OPTION

Council members considered Damian Clarks letter together with the councils co-option policy.

Agreed unanimously his co-option and that candidate Damian Clark to join the membership of Suckley Parish Council with immediate effect. Damian Clark signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office, the Acceptance of Electronic Summons and Acceptance of the Code of Conduct and was duly elected and took office with immediate effect.

129. FINANCE

(a) **Bank Reconciliation** to the end of May 2025 scrutinised by all, balance of funds carried forward, £23,416.96 general account and £5230.63 playing field account. With no further comments, the reconciliation signed by the chairman.

(b) **Budget v Actual** figures to the end of May 2025 scrutinised by all, no other comments other the VAT return. Spend so far £6873.67, income £13,365.61.

(c) **Asset Register** considered by all as presented by Cllr Ormerod for insurance valuation purposes, new total £214,660

At the council meeting on, 9 June, Cllr Ormerod explained that the proposed revised version was incomplete because of the difficulty in identifying a replacement cost for the climbing frame. This item represents one of the biggest single items (by value). Councillors will recall that as the insurance policy, in common with most, does not include a “new for old” replacement claim values, the values are assessed on the basis of the items’ current values (the Depreciated Replacement Costs)

The age of the remaining items is not known so with much help from councillor Mansell, assessed each, assuming that they are, on average halfway through their lives. The net result is to increase the aggregate value of all items from £139k to £215k and the majority of this has been driven by the increase in value of the pavilion which, at £18k, would have been seriously undervalued. The values shown as Depreciated Replacement Costs on the attached spreadsheet £214,660 are to be used for the next declaration to the insurance company, which was agreed by all with immediate effect providing no increase in cost to the PC. Cllr Mansell mentioned Zurich do not charge an extra admin fee.

(d) APPROVAL OF PAYMENTS

Proposed by Cllr Jew and seconded by Cllr Roper and agreed by all to make the following payments two signatures required:

Playing Field account:

£ 54.00 Cheque 0308	MHDC. Rates due 1 st August 2025 - Pavilion
£150.00 Cheque 0309	August lottery draw, Cllr Ormerod to be reimbursed.
£150.00 Cheque 0310	County Building Supplies – Chinese Mesh Trailer Plywood
£264.00 Cheque 0311	Smart cut. Football pitch only cut and let fly 9 & 23/6
£528.00 Cheque 0312	Clerk L Cleaver reimbursement(June chq307) signature issue.
£184.80 Cheque 0313	The Safety Sheep Store 4 signs (po 25264)
£ 27.47 Cheque 0314	H Ormerod, reimbursement brackets, movement larger set of swings
£ 44.68 Cheque 0315	Cllr Mansell reimbursement – Splitter assemble, bin liners & toilet tissue

General funds account

£645.85 Cheque 1199	L Cleaver clerks June 2025 - salary
£ 34.34 Cheque 1199	L Cleaver clerks June 2025 - expenses
£659.82 Cheque 1200	HMRC 2 nd quarter PAYE
£336.00 Cheque 1201	Lengthsman RW April work
£ 42.00 Cheque 1202	Worcestershire CALC – Training Cllr Lewis
£130.00 Cheque 1204	Transfer-playing field account ref St. Johns Football May

General funds –From Ear Marked Reserves - Defibrillator

£1538.34 Cheque 1203 WEL Medical Defibrillator B package

(e) PLAYING FIELD ACCOUNT

Noted by all, direct debit payments taken May 2025. Water Plus £11.65 & EDF £0.00
Zero as the council received a refund for none attendance meter read.

(f) PARISH COUNCIL GENERAL ACCOUNT

Noted by all, automatic monthly receipts May 2025, St. Johns Football Club £130.00, bank interest £18.35 To note that the £130 into this account from St Johns Football club to be transferred into the playing field account as noted above.

To note other payments – MHDC Precept £9701.00, grant payment (defib) from WCC £2500

(g) EAR MARKED RESERVES. Agreed by all to make the following reserve.
General funds £2500 grant award -payment received WCC defibrillator.

130. MEMBERSHIPS CHANGES

(a) The Councils Facebook Playing Field Administrators to be John Sutton, Paul Bradley and Lee Woodcraft (all none council members) and for the Playing Field Articles/Publications Cllrs Mansell, and none council members Paul Bradley and Lee Woodcraft. Agreed by all.

(b) John Palmer Educational Foundation, Cllr Roper will continue with Cllr D Clark to replace Anne Lewis. Agreed by all. Memberships updated and presented on the councils e-services website.

131. ON LINE BANKING

Considered by all the proposal as circulated for on line banking

Both the PC and PFWG bank accounts are traditional branch based accounts with no online access and therefore it is not possible to make BACS payments or view recent transactions. The only way to pay vendors is by issuing cheques which entails several 2 of the mandated councillors to physically sign the cheques (we experienced problems paying Alpha for CCTV maintenance by cheque).

Received payment to be seen immediately before allowing a hire or issuing a lottery ticket for instance (several people have said it was difficult to sell lottery tickets because we were only accepting cash and most people do not carry cash and wanted to pay online). Both the "Shadow" Treasurer for the Playing Field Account and Clerk/RFO are not a bank signatories and do not have access to bank statements.

The Parish Council must ensure that it maintains robust controls on payments as an integrated part of its overall financial control system. Councils must never relinquish the "two member" signatories control over cheques and other orders for payment.

The Clerk to set up and manage the accounts online as the main user (administrator only) , they would operate a "create and submit only " authorization, and be able to transfer funds between accounts held at the same branch.

Wherever possible, payments will be made using online banking, following agreements at parish council meetings (payments to be included on the payment schedule at each parish council meeting supported by supporting documents). Payments by cheque to be an exceptional circumstance. The Council to make payments online as the default position. The Clerk will be the only authorised person enabled to a set up a beneficiary or a payment.

The Bank Mandate approved by the Council shall identify a minimum of four Councillors as Signatories who will be authorised to "approve only" transactions on those accounts.

Playing Field Account – Cllrs Roper and Lewis – primary

General Funds accounts Cllrs Mansell and Ormerod – primary

No employee or Councillor shall disclose any PIN or password, relevant to the working of the Council or its bank accounts to any person not authorised in writing by the council.

New beneficiary details and changes to beneficiary details used for internet banking must be supported by a hard copy or email notification for checking and supported by hard copy authority for change signed by the Clerk and a Signatory.

Agreed unanimously the following:

- 131 (1) The parish clerk allowed to investigate the implications and restrictions of changing both bank accounts to have online access.
- 131 (2) If conditions are as we expect and have agreed, to allow the parish clerk to change the terms of our 2 current bank accounts to allow online access and allow the above process to be implemented.

132. DEFIBRILLATOR INSTALLATION

Details as circulated

- (a) Agreed by all for the Clerk to be given delegated powers to receive three quotations for the installation and to accept the lowest suitable quote for this installation once the council have received written acceptance for its installation and providing a contractor not found who would provide the necessary works free of charge.
- (b) Agreed by all for Cllr Mansell to act on behalf of the council to receive written acceptance from the site for its installation together with the provision of free electricity which would be agreed and signed by both parties..

133. TO RECEIVE REPORT OF PARISH COUNCILLORS

Cllr Mansell on behalf of the Playing Field Working Group would like to see a "report" form part of every council meeting. The grant already applied for, information if successful or not should be made available in September. Working specifications still to be agreed. On 14th June a tidy up group at the playing field took place, a thank you to all who came especially Gareth. Following the very successful summer event, the event would be held again next year.

Cllr Mansell had been approached by a neighbour and a parishioner if a dog bin could be positioned at Backhouse Lane.

134. MEMBERS TO RAISE ISSUES FOR DISCUSSION AT THE NEXT MEETING

Cllr Mansell - a report from the Playing Field Working Group

Cllr Ormerod – VAT supplier reclaim

Cllr Jew - VAS information.

With no further business, the meeting closed at 9.30pm

Signed R Lewis Chair,Dated 11th August 2025

SUCKLEY PARISH COUNCIL MEMBERS: _

Cllr Richard Lewis Chair, Cllr Howard Ormerod Vice Chair, Cllr Damian Clark, Cllr Simon Jew, Cllr Andrew Mansell, Cllr Helen Philpotts, Cllr Rebecca Roper.