

SUCKLEY PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

Held Monday 10th November 2025 at the Parish Councils Playing Field Pavilion, Suckley, Worcester, WR6 5DE

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

Members Present.

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

In Attendance

Clerk L Cleaver
Members of the public x 4

176. CHAIRMANS WELCOME AND TO RECORD APOLOGIES

The chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting. Lottery prize draw winning numbers for that evening, first prize £100 ticket number 38, second prize £50 ticket number 103.

Apologies received from Worcestershire County Councillor Chris McSweeney and District Councillor Peter Whatley.

It was noted no apology received from Cllrs Bradley and Philpotts.

177. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

Councillor Ormerod declared a (DPI) Disclosable Pecuniary Interest with regards the lottery prize cheque payment.

178. GRANT A DISPENSATION

Nothing considered

179. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

The chairman adjourned the meeting for public question time.

- (a) Questions raised and answered with regards to the new defibrillator to be located at Lower House Dairy which is being discussed (agenda item 9 e) minute 184 e. They also wished to thank the parish council and in particular Cllrs Andy Mansell, Rebecca Roper and the clerk for their support.

- (b) No public presentation planning.

- (c) To receive a report from and ask questions:-

c 1 County Councillor Christopher McSweeney

News from county, fresh from an 8.5 hour council meeting!

On LGR, county has published its report recommending One Worcestershire - link for anyone who is struggling to get to sleep!

The chaos of the situation is illustrated by us getting update sheets in the meeting which I can't find online – the report linked there had underestimated the financial benefits of two new unitaries.

As discussed in the meeting, the recommendation you get depends on what question you ask – it would be easy to get a recommendation for two new unitaries (north and south) which is what MHDC and 4 other district councils are asking for.

Here is their 2 council recommendation for comparison

<https://moderngovwebpublic.redditchbc.gov.uk/documents/s56148/Appendix%201%20-%20Local%20Government%20Reorganisation%20Report%20-%20Final%20Draft%20For%20Council.pdf>

More generally on LGR, as a Parish Council you need to be ready to take on more responsibility – it is a way to save services from cuts which will be an inevitable feature of the new unitary council.

Lots of the meeting taken up by discussion of cuts. We voted down ill thought out proposals by the council leadership which proposed amongst other things cuts to Special Educational Needs funding and local highways improvement funding (which is a way we as councillors can enable local improvements in our areas). The full council meeting also rejected proposals to cancel the building of a new school in Worcester, which is desperately needed to provide capacity for increasing demand. The leadership proposal is to bus children from Worcester to Malvern! As a council we have to find money savings, but not by cutting essential services and facilities and we need to have a sensible plan to increase school capacity.

I'm looking into the issue raised at the last meeting regarding the execution and duration of roadworks. The informal feedback I have is that there are wider concerns about the pricing of current contracts and value for money, but I'm not sure there is awareness at the higher levels of the issues raised by Cllr Mansell. I will continue to chase this.

c 2 District Councillor Sarah Rouse

No report

c 3 District Councillor Peter Whatley

For information, I have no new updates on any matters affecting Suckley since October's meeting. Unless something comes out of the woodwork later this week, I don't expect there will be material development until MHDC's budget setting meeting later in November.

c 4 School report Councillor Philpotts

No report

180. MINUTES

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held 13/10/2025, proposed by Cllr Mansell and seconded by Cllr Roper and agreed by all that the minutes be signed by the chairman as a true and accurate record.

181. PLANNING – MHDC

(a1) M/25/01651/HP. Mousehole Farm, Stocks Road, Alfrick.WR6 5HD
Ground floor and first floor extensions and various internal alterations
No objection to be submitted

(a2) M/25/01647/HP. Crown Cottage, Suckley. WR6 5EH
Single-storey extension and alterations to an existing garage outbuilding to form a single storey annexe.
No objection to be submitted

(b) Decisions for information only – none.

182. PLAYING FIELD WORKING GROUP (PFWG)

(a) Report Cllr Ormerod.

The terms of reference for the PFWG were adopted at council meeting 10th February 2025 when the composition was 3 councillors and 6 members of the public. Changes, particularly to the membership since then suggest that it was time to review and agree the document.

At the last meeting of the PFWG, a change of chairman agreed from Cllr Mansell to Cllr Bradley and noted the “loss” of two other members. The net effect is to increase the number of councillors on the group from 3 to 4 although the number of voting councillors remains limited to 3. In order to maintain the overall complement at 9, to reduce the number of members of the public from 6 to 5; even so there remains a vacancy in this latter category. The other key change is to defer the effective “shadow” budget operation until FY 2026/27

It was agreed that the frequency of meetings should be reduced to one every two months but the next one was planned for 6 November

The existing system of allocating risk assessments to PFWG members on a rota basis has not been a total success. To provide cover until a revised system can be agreed would be Cllrs Mansell and Ormerod to undertake the necessary checks.

Agreed by all, the following changes to the PFWG Terms of Reference as outlined above.

(b) Bark for the play area.

Costs considered, ranging from £175.00 for a 1000L bag up to £310.00. Chairman Lewis had been quoted £95.00 for 1000L bag of play bark which was by far best value for money. The area would be raked over. Agreed by all for Cllr Lewis to place an order for 5 bags at £95.00 each for delivery in January.

(c) Fire Risk Assessment

Reviewed by all the 6 point action plan with the following agreement, that action plan point 2 “warning in case of fire” for the bin to be moved away from the building and retained by the gate, Cllr Lewis would address.

(d) Waste Removal.

Quotations x 4 reviewed and considered by all. Agreed unanimously to accept the best value for money quote £11.28 x 26 weeks = £294.00 per year. This figure set into the budget for 2025/2026. Payment for services to be made by direct debit.

(e) Playing Field Improvement Project /MHDC Legacy Grant Scheme

As at late October, 6 invitations to tender had been issued to those who had expressed an interest in the work. The closing date for replies 10 December. The planning application for the external toilet will now not be required until January.

Work has begun on the last part of the grant application as required by MHDC’s conditional offer letter.

As there is no pc meeting in December, a means of assessing tenders in December would be useful soon after 10 December so that the completed grant application document can be submitted to MHDC as soon as possible. Although the initial plan was to ask for comprehensive quotes, the work has been packaged in sections to allow for more interest by smaller contractors. Out of all interests noted, just one contractor so far had sought a request to see the area.

A key condition of the grant is that work must start by the end of March. It is therefore hoped to submit the final part of the application as soon as possible after receipt of tenders, noting that, MHDC would still need time to assess that submission before any grant could be offered. Although this submission cannot be completed until the tenders have been received and assessed by us, it would be helpful for councilors to review the incomplete document together with the questions asked (as circulated 1st November) so that any changes or corrections can be agreed and made at this meeting. Any interest in

any tendering contractor will be declared beforehand and will not take part in the assessment process. Having considered the above the following agreed by all:-

- e 1 Noted by all the position on tenders, no further comments made.
- e 2 The alternative consultancy quote to be deferred until January's meeting.
- e 3 No further comments received in relation to the draft document as circulated 1/11
- e 4 In order to progress the tenders (as no meeting in December) to achieve the tight deadline, delegated powers given to the PFWG on the selection of the preferred tender, overseen by Cllr Clark independent to the group so it can be included in the submission by MHDC.

183. REPORTS

(a) Chairman.

No report for this month.

(c) Clerk.

Trauma/Bleed Kitt. Confirmation of payment received £102.44 from WCC under the grant award scheme and £300 for an unlocked and durable cabinet.

(b) 1 Agreed by all for the clerk to organise its purchase and installation at the school (by the school defib).

Online Banking (July Agenda 2025) Enquiry made to the councils bank 1st August, still no application form received. The clerk visited the bank on Tuesday 21st October to raise concern. Having received the form, the clerk as not a bank signatory is unable to progress the application.

(b) Agreed by all for Cllr Ormerod to include the clerk as a bank signatory in order to progress matters.

The My Parish Website. Currently supported by Worcester County Council. Support will not continue as previously discussed. Four possible website compliant providers contacted 24th October (following Worcestershire CALCs advice). One already at full capacity so cannot be considered. Three others being progressed in terms of their offers and web design and have been asked to provide examples of their recent work.

(b) 3 The Council agreed its domain name as suckleyparishcouncil.gov.uk

As previously mentioned this year's (AGAR 2025/2026) will include a new assertion around Digital and Data Compliance, one of the requirements must be to have one generic email account (at the minimum hosted on an authority owned domain

(b) 4 Agreed the email address should be clerk@suckleyparishcouncil.gov.uk

Electrical Installation Condition Report- Pavilion The annual certificate was issued and no progression made with regards its change.

(b) 5 The clerk will progress with an alternative contractor, to the cost of no more than £200. CPR & Defibrillator Training. Free Training with Malvern Heat Start. Three names have been provided so far (min requirement 8) It has been suggested that the parishioners who have donated funds to the new defibrillator at Lower House Dairy may wish to take advantage of this free training event.

184. COMMUNITY - PROJECTS/ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION/UPDATE

(a) Atlas Tower Mobile Mast.

Talks continued between Atlas Tower and Cllr Mansell. Responses not forthcoming so all avenues exhausted outside of the AONB. Cllrs Lewis and Mansell have been invited to an online meeting November 20th, both will attend to see how matters can be progressed. Cllr Mansell thanked for all his hard work.

(b) Neighbourhood Plan.

Update provided by Cllr Jew following the letter sent from the parish council relating to grant support that MHDC could provide towards preparing a neighbourhood plan. Confirmation received that their Executive Committee on 18th November will be considering a recommendation from officers to provide a grant that matches that previously given by the Government of £10k. The clerk thanked for their efforts on this.

(c) VAS Information.

Update provided by Cllr Jew following a meeting at the police station with PSCO members which drew a blank with regards speeding stats. The clerk had contacted Alfrick pc to see what information/help could be provided. From older stats it was clear speeding a concern. The clerk asked to contact the Lengthsman with regards the movements of the VAS. A discussion took place with regards looking at an up-to-date report and what it would bring to the council. The police would need to see stats in order to consider speeding further.

(d) West Mercia Police Community Charter.

Reviewed by all the top 3 community issues identified December 2024, 1) Speeding, 2) Fly Tipping, 3) Rural Theft. Agreed no changes to be made as these remained the parish councils top properties.

(e) New Defibrillator for site Lower House Dairy

Suckley parish council agreed a resolution to manage and maintain up to a maximum of 5 defibrillators funded by parishioners in the village and then placed on the "circuit".

Carole Price & Annette Savage from the Suckley Knowle & Suckley Green areas have taken this resolution and in principal have pledged for funds to locate a defibrillator at Lower House Dairy by the kind permission and agreement to provide electricity of Doug & Becky Roper. They have currently been given pledges equal to the value of £1,300 to cover the cost of an iPad SP1 fully automatic defibrillator and 'lockable' DefibSafe 2 external cabinet. Barry Kearney has again kindly agreed to install the defibrillator FOC . The residents would own their defibrillator and address any associated insurance required. Monetary donations are being collected (including £200 from Worcestershire County Councillor Chris McSweeney) However residents are having concerns over insurance matters, therefore a change to the original resolution sought, if the £200 from WCC slow in receiving, the parish council would accept the offer in the short term from parishioners to cover the cost and risk until funds from WCC arrived.

Agreed by all to keep the management & maintenance of up to a maximum of 5 defibrillators with the parish council as originally agreed.

However the change considered and agreed by all, that the parish council pay for the defibrillator and therefore own it, record on the councils asset register, with insurance cover. Donations still to be received from residents to cover the net cost. The council would reclaim any associated VAT.

The total cost for the equipment is circa £1,550 a 30 day fixed price quotation same supplier as Nelson defibrillator.

The following points agreed:

(e) 1 – the clerk to purchase the items as per the quotation but with a unlocked cabinet, only when payments to the parish council reached to satisfy the quote net value, then adding it to the councils Asset Register. Delivery to Cllr Ropers property

(e) 2 - the parish council agreed to its maintenance, registration and management going forward making sure its availability on the circuit, including the cost of insurance cover

(e) 3 – Budget review discussed to ensure insurance and ongoing maintenance costs covered.

185. GRANT/DONATIONS - APPLICATIONS FOR CONSIDERATION

a) Football Foundation. Grant application update by Cllr Roper. The Football Foundation application had progressed, a second person must be added which would be the clerk. Further update in January

b) Suckley Church. Grant application request was considered by all, alongside the councils Grant Policy. In line with said policy grants only awarded if the parish council has sufficient budgeted funds which at present stood at £50.00
Therefore an award of £50 agreed by all at this time (cheque 1220). Funds become available in the new financial year April 2026 when new applications can once again be considered.

186. FINANCE

- (a) **Bank reconciliation including Ear Marked Reserves** to the end of September 2025 scrutinised by all. The council's general bank account £31,703.16 of which ear marked reserves still appropriate £1218.05 & £100. Playing field bank account £ 3670.38 of which an ear marked reserve of £2700 still appropriate.
- (b) **Budget v actual.** Scrutinised following the changes agreed last month to the budget and actual now presented to 14th October. Budget spend £25,331 v act spend £16,374. Budget income £25,331 v actual income £26,391.
- (c) **Budget v projected spend/income to end March 2026** considered by all as circulated. Budget spend £25,331 v projected spend £26,472 (increase spend £1141). Budget income £25,331 v projected income £27,223 (increase in income £1892). Overall a projected positive change figure £751.

(d) APPROVAL OF PAYMENTS

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

Playing Field account:

| | | |
|---------|-------------|--|
| £ 54.00 | Cheque 0326 | MHDC. Rates due 1 st December 2025 – Pavilion |
| £ 54.00 | Cheque 0326 | MHDC Rates due 1 st January 2026 - Pavilion |
| £150.00 | Cheque 0327 | December lottery, Cllr Ormerod prize draw |
| £150.00 | Cheque 0327 | January lottery ,Cllr Ormerod prize draw |
| £132.00 | Cheque 0328 | Smart Cut – Football pitch cut and let fly 2/10(26953) |
| £264.00 | Cheque 0328 | Smart Cut – Football pitch cut /fly 14 & 27/10 (27061) |

General funds account

| | | |
|----------|-------------|---|
| £ 807.53 | Cheque 1215 | L Cleaver clerks October 2025 salary |
| £ 33.46 | Cheque 1215 | L Cleaver clerks October2025 expenses (as circulated) |
| £ 100.72 | Cheque 1215 | L Cleaver reimbursement poppies& wreath (po 25270) |
| £ 672.00 | Cheque 1216 | Lengthsman RW Aug & Sep (worksheets circulated ahead of the meeting |
| £ 140.00 | Cheque 1217 | Transfer to playing field account (St Johns Football as below ref (e) |
| £1500.00 | Cheque 1217 | Transfer from general funds to Playing Fields Account. |
| £1218.05 | Cheque 1218 | WCC , Defib grant under spend (ear marked reserve) |
| £1531.14 | Cheque 1219 | WEL Medical. New defibrillator |

(e) PLAYING FIELD ACCOUNT

Noted by all, direct debit payment taken, Sept- Water Plus £9.93. Valda Energy £23.69

(f) PARISH COUNCIL GENERAL ACCOUNT

Noted by all the following:-

Automatic monthly receipt bank interest £21.19 Sept

St. Johns Football Club payment £140 (should be the Playing Field Acc).

Precept 2nd payment £9701.00.

VAT refund from HMRC for the year ending March 2025 received £1192.66.

£200 from Worcestershire County Councillor Chris McSweeney towards the trauma/kit cabinet.

(g) EAR MARKED RESERVES.

Agreed by all to make to following changes.

Addition - £200 trauma kit cabinet

Reduce the reserve £1218.05 chq 1219 funds to be returned as not spent.

187. MEETING DATES/TIMES/LOCATIONS FOR 2026

Considered and agreed by all, that the location, time and dates should not change for the year 2026. Details would be posted on the council's website.

188. BUDGET 2026/2027

Reviewed at Octobers parish council meeting were councillors were asked to further consider the figures presented for another two weeks with additional suggestions to be presented to the clerk together with the reason supporting said changes.

The final version presented and agreed by all at the meeting with a proposed modest increase in the precept at 3% which was considered required and reasonable. The income from the lottery contribution an essential element of the budget, with a modest but sustained increase to general reserves to fall in line with the requirement for smaller authorities to have closer to 12 months expenditure. The £400 allocated to planning/consultancy moved tree surgery accrual. The budget therefore for the year 2026/2027 agreed £28,984 and would be presented to councillors in January together with band D rate and final precept figure.

189. POLICY DOCUMENTS

Considered and agreed by all, publications made available on the councils website.

- a) Facebook Communications Policy, agreed without further change.
- b) WhatsApp Communications Policy, agreed to make the following change, the clerk may use this communication platform to send urgent alerts or urgent questions to council members, that may otherwise be delayed if using the councils email system.
- c) Safeguarding Policy, agreed without further change.

190. CLERKS DELEGATED POWERS

Agreed by all to allow the clerk to have delegated powers for addressing any planning, payments, online banking application, progression of the new website, not limited to, to ensure the smooth running of the parish council as no meeting in December.

191. TO RECEIVE REPORT OF PARISH COUNCILLORS

Cllr Ormerod – he and councillor Mansell would be up at the crack of dawn to ensure the memorial ground ready for the Remembrance Day event.

Cllr Ormerod - a thank you to the Lengthsman for doing a good job cleaning the area and to the clerk for ordering the wreath and poppies. A member of the public had sadly glued a poppy onto one of the "silent soldiers" at the memorial ground which has led to some of the powder coating being removed when the poppy taken off which would now have to be rectified.

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

Meeting closed at 9.25pm

Signed Chairman R Lewis.....Dated 12th January 2026

Notes:- Cllr Philpotts sent an apology which was received after the meeting.

SUCKLEY PARISH COUNCIL MEMBERS:

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