

## **SUCKLEY PARISH COUNCIL**

### MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

Held on Monday 12<sup>th</sup> September 2011 at 7.00 pm in Suckley Village Hall

Present: Cllr A W Huband, Cllr J Green, Cllr P Griffiths, Cllr L Devenish,  
Cllr A Grieve, Cllr R Harward, Co Cllr C Smith, Dist Cllr Anthony Warburton  
Apologies: Dist Cllr David Hughes, Mr Richard Harward & Mr Peter Markins (Footpaths  
Wardens)  
In Attendance: Mrs D Taylor (Clerk)

**Declaration of interests – None declared**

**Public Question Time/Participation -**

**Report from County Councillor** - Co Cllr Clive Smith reported that budget cuts were still ongoing throughout the County Council. The purchase of the VAS camera (from Cllr Smith's budget) was in progress. This camera would be shared between Suckley, Alfrick & Lulsley, Knightwick & Doddenham and Leigh & Bransford (four parishes).

**Report from District Cllrs** – Dist Cllr Anthony Warburton reported that the restructuring of senior management within the District was continuing, and numbers were being reduced. The South Worcestershire Development Plan proposals would be available for public consultation from 26<sup>th</sup> September to 18<sup>th</sup> November. A roadshow/exhibition would be touring around the area including Suckley.

**Lengthsman Report** - Cllr J Green reported that the Lengthsman was doing very well. No problems.

**Footpath Wardens Report** - Cllr Mrs R Harward read out a report from the Footpath Wardens. Richard Harward and Peter Markins went to inspect the path from Mill Coppice to Archenhills Cottage and found to their surprise that a notoriously bad length of footpath had been cut back to a high standard. The Wardens' attention had been drawn to a hazardous place where the footpath from Chapels Farm crosses the brook on to Stocks Farm. A spring loaded pedestrian gate was all that prevented cattle getting across into the Stocks Farm hopyards. Using materials supplied by Mr Capper they made a double compartment so that if a beast got through the gate it would still have to jump the stile to reach the hops! On or around 23<sup>rd</sup> August damage to finger posts up Crews Hill on the Baston Hall estate. Direction posts had also been pushed over and left lying on the ground. Delivery of replacements was now awaited.

**Local Police** – The Clerk read out an e-mailed report from Sarah Ransome-Williams as follows :- During the summer holidays the village remained peaceful. The Police received two reports of anti-social behaviour during the period July – early September. Both incidents related to neighbour disputes and were not youth related. CSO Davies had recently joined Thames Valley Police. It is not yet known when a replacement will be recruited. Support is being maintained by Upton's CSO's, Sarah Hide and Sally McPherson.

The Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 11<sup>th</sup> July 2011 were approved and signed. Proposed by Cllr J Green and seconded by Cllr Mrs R Harward.

### **79/11 COMMUNITY PLAN**

Cllr A Grieve reported that he had sent an e-mail to Co Cllr Clive Smith regarding funding for the Community Plan in the longer term. He would be putting together a budget for the November meeting, but a figure of around £1K would be needed. Dist Cllr Anthony Warburton felt that the input of the Community Plan would be very helpful for the South Worcestershire Development Plan.

### **80/11 WOODLAND ROAD**

The Clerk reported progress on Woodland Road. Work would commence on 3<sup>rd</sup> October for about three weeks. E-on Power would be doing the cable diversion on 6<sup>th</sup> October, with hopefully no interruption of power. Trenching works across the car park would start on 4<sup>th</sup> October. Paul Bingham had written to all the residents regarding the work schedule. The Clerk was asked to write to former Cllr Mike Jackson informing him of this successful outcome after all his hard work. Paul Bingham would be letting the Clerk have a costing list to help pick out items for the £2K held by the Council. The Council felt that the residents of Woodland Road should have a say in how their £2K was spent.

### **81/11 CO-OPTIONS ONTO THE COUNCIL**

The Council went into "closed session" to vote for two new Councillors to join the Council. Five excellent applications had been received. After a series of votes, the successful candidates were Mr Barry Kearley and Mr Peter Whatley. The Clerk to write to all candidates.

### **82/11 HIGHWAYS & BYWAYS**

- (a) Footpaths – no further items.
- (b) Lengthsman – no further report
- (c) Grit/Salt Bins – The Clerk reported that because of cutbacks the County Council was unable to provide any further salt/grit bins. Our application did not meet their criteria. However, they were now proposing that the Parish Council could purchase their own bins (which would be green to differentiate them from Highways yellow bins). The cost would be £175.00 per filled bin, delivered to sites within the parish. Proposed sites were each side of Knowl Bank; and Stocks Cross Roads. These sites had to be digitally photographed and then approved by the Highways Department. The Parish Council would also be required to arrange for supplies of 1 tonne bags of salt/grit to be safely stored for "topping up" and road use during the winter. The Council agreed that three "green" bins could be ordered. However, this would be subject to clarifying that the sites would be where local people wanted them to be, identifying a local site for storage, the cost of topping up supplies and how the County Council would deliver these supplies. The Clerk to make further enquiries. Yellow Highways Bins are sited at the Bruff and outside the Village Hall car park.
- (d) Dumping of fridge in Blackhouse Lane (Ref 4285276). Cllr J Green had reported this to the Clerk, and the fridge had now been removed.
- (e) Two drains between Batchelors Bridge/Bruff Business Centre. Covers removed, leaving dangerous holes. Ref No 42907890. Cllr J Green reported that this had now been dealt with.
- (f) AONB Survey of grass verges - the Clerk reported that MHDC AONB Department were carrying out a survey of grass verges (i.e. how many species of wild flowers etc.) in the area.

### **83/11 SPEEDING**

The Clerk reported that she had received further complaints re speeding in the area, some of which were just outside the parish boundary – Little Tundridge/Bank Farm, Leigh and Lulsley Loop (by the lake). She had contacted the persons concerned and explained about the VAS camera plan. The VAS camera could only be sited on roads with a 30 mph speed limit, and these sites had to be approved by the Highways Engineer. Four sites within Suckley were identified by the Council – the bank by the Bruff; Knightwick Road (village hall); Longley Green (Grove Hill Drive); Holloways (school turn in from Knightwick Road).

### **84/11 CHARITY REPORTS**

No meetings to report.

### **85/11 FINANCE**

- (a) The following cheques were authorised for payment :- Proposed by Cllr P Griffiths and seconded by Cllr A Grieve. **General Fund** – Clerk’s expenses July/August 2011 £55.33; Clerk’s Office overheads 1<sup>st</sup> April – 30<sup>th</sup> September 2011 £125.00; Graham Computer Services (car park sign) £42.00; HMRC PAYE July/August/Sept 2011 £264.60; The Hill Trust (hall hire April 2010 - March 2011) £117.00; MHDC Election charges May 2011 £37.31; CPRE Subscription 2011 £29.00; Worcs CALC Training £7.00; J Green Lengthsman Management April-Sept 2011 £144.00; LCCA Ltd (Linda Cotterill Auditor) £48.00; BGS Lengthsman July 2011 £204.00 (already paid, but to be approved); BGS Lengthsman August 2011 £174.00; BGS Lengthsman September 2011 (to be advised). **Playing Fields** – DJR Farm Services (mowing) £212.00; NPower £47.07 (paid 31.07.11) but to be approved; J Green – Repairs to All Weather Pitch £88.00.
- (b) The Accounts to 31<sup>st</sup> July 2011 were approved and signed. Proposed by Cllr P Griffiths and seconded by Cllr A Grieve.
- (c) Financial Regulations - The Clerk had circulated all Councillors with a full copy of the Financial Regulations which had last been adopted in September 2007 and needed to be reviewed. An amendment to the Regulations was approved by the Council - Reg 5.3 to read “Two members of the Council/authorised signatories.” (for cheque signing). The Regulations were then adopted by the Council. Proposed by Cllr A W Huband and seconded by Cllr J Green.

### **86/11 RISK ASSESSMENT**

- (a) Cllr J Green had completed all the Risk Assessment forms. No problems to report.
- (b) Broken concrete Memorial Seat – near Village Hall car park entrance. The Clerk had made enquiries but the seat was not covered by the Parish Council insurance, as it was not listed. (The Clerk not being aware that it was owned by the Parish Council!) The Clerk was asked to contact Festival Housing to see if they might repair it, or perhaps a new seat could be purchased to celebrate the Queens Golden Jubilee in 2012.

### **87/11 PLAYING FIELD**

- (a) Cllr J Green reported that a clean up had taken place, but the laying of a new floor was still outstanding. Cllr J Green had apprehended a man and his son who had unloaded mini motorbikes from a white van. They then started riding the bikes round the playing fields. The last football team to use the pitch had left the pavilion door open.
- (b) Queen Elizabeth II Playing Fields Challenge - The Clerk drew the attention of the Council to this initiative to protect outdoor recreational spaces around the country as a

permanent living legacy of this event. Funding for improvements may be available. The Challenge has the potential to be the basis of celebration throughout the UK during the summer of 2012 with "Have a Field Day" – a cross between a village fete and a school sports day – to take place on QEII sites. The Clerk to e-mail the details to Cllr A Grieve.

#### **88/11 THE OLD QUARRY**

Cllr J Green reported on the missing Old Quarry Notice Board, which had in fact broken. The Council agreed that a new notice board was essential, to include the words "the use of this facility is at your own risk" as well as indicating the ownership and maintenance of the Old Quarry by the Council. The Clerk and Cllr J Green to liaise on this.

#### **89/11 PLANNING**

- (a) The Council noted the following refusals/permissions/Appeals (MHDC)
- (i) **Planning Appeal Against Refusal of a Householder Application**  
Proposal: Removal of existing pig sty and pig pen, replacement with single Storey stone built extension and conservatory and covered link between new structure and existing kitchen/diner  
Location: Bush Bank Cottage, Suckley, Worcs WR6 5DR  
Appellant: Drs C & S Price  
Planning Inspectorate Ref: APP/J1860D/11/2157919  
An Appeal has been made to the Secretary of State against the Council's Decision to refuse planning permission for the development proposed above.
- (ii) Proposal: Removal of existing greenhouse and timber stable. Erection of greenhouse, gates, walls and railings and landscaping of gardens.  
Location: The White House Cottage, Suckley, Worcs WR6 5DF  
Householder Planning Permission **APPROVED.**
- (b) The Clerk circulated a draft consultation proforma on planning applications from Duncan Rudge, MHDC Planning. The proposed tick boxes would be marked - Recommend Approval, Recommend Refusal and Other Comments. The "No Comment" box had been deleted.

#### **90/11 SUCKLEY SCHOOL**

- (a) The Chairman, Cllr A W Huband, reported on the actions of Worcestershire County Council who had registered the site of Suckley School with the Land Registry in 2005. As he understood the situation, they had obtained Absolute Title to the land. This was an outrageous move on the part of the County Council as the land on which the school stood had been left to the Parish back in c1875/6 when the school was originally built. This was a repeat of the actions of the County Council when they acquired the land for Alfrick School over 20 years ago, but in that case the Parish Council had been able to prove that the land belonged to the parish (after a five year struggle, with an Appeal going to the House of Lords) . A financial settlement had eventually been made with Alfrick , and Alfrick Educational Trust had been set up with this money. Cllr Huband had seen a deed held by the Holloway family which laid out the details of the land left to the Parish. Mrs Diana Holloway, Chairman of the Governors, was trying to locate this deed. The Chairman proposed that he and the Clerk meet with the Legal Department of Worcs County Council to discuss the ownership of the land. The Council agreed to this action, subject to the Chairman/Clerk finding out more details if possible. Proposed by Cllr P Griffiths and seconded by Cllr J Green. Co Cllr Clive Smith asked the Clerk to send him details and he would look into the matter also.

- (b) Cllr L Devenish reported that Suckley School was now an Academy School from 1st August. This was an exciting time for the school, and there were lots of new curriculum ideas taking shape. The pupil numbers were 59, the highest recorded for over 20 years. The school still has some grant funding from the LEA, but it is in control of how it is spent.

**91/11 VILLAGE HALL CAR PARK**

- (a) Car park sign - The Clerk reported that this sign was now ready for collection.
- (b) Further sign – Cllr J Green proposed that an additional sign should be displayed in the car park, stating that cars and their contents were parked there at owner's risk, otherwise the Parish Council might be held liable. The Council agreed to this proposal, which was seconded by Cllr P Griffiths. The Clerk to finalise the wording and arrange for the sign to be made.

**92/11 VILLAGE FACILITIES SURVEY**

The Clerk drew the attention of the Council to this Survey which was being carried out in conjunction with the South Worcestershire Development Plan. There was a problem with gathering information on internet speeds and the Clerk was asked to try and find two residents who would be prepared to complete the internet broadband speedtest.

**93/11 THE WORCESTERSHIRE AGREEMENT**

The Clerk had circulated the salient points of this agreement to all Councillors present, who did not feel they had any comments to make.

**94/11 CORRESPONDENCE**

All correspondence was available for viewing.

**95/11 MATTERS FOR FUTURE AGENDA**

- (a) 2012 Jubilee Medals for the schoolchildren. Clerk to circulate details to all Councillors for consideration at the next meeting.

**DATE OF NEXT MEETING – 7.00 pm Monday 14<sup>th</sup> November 2011. This date may have to be moved as the Clerk will be going into hospital for a knee operation (date of op not yet known)**