

SUCKLEY PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

Held on Monday 12th MARCH 2012 at 7.00 pm in Suckley Village Hall

Cllr A.W. HUBAND

Present: Cllr J Green, Cllr P Griffiths, Cllr L Devenish, Cllr A Grieve, Cllr R Harward,
Cllr P Whatley, Dist Cllr A Warburton, Dist Cllr D Hughes
Apologies: Cllr C Luton, Mr Richard Harward (Footpaths Warden)
In Attendance: Mrs D Taylor (Clerk)

Declaration of interests – Cllr P Griffiths declared an interest in item 7**(b)** on the Agenda

Public Question Time/Participation -

Mr & Mrs Tingey attended the meeting, they also represented Mr & Mrs Mifflin. They wished to draw the attention of the Council to the usage of the Cherry Orchard field, owned by Mr Derek Philpotts. This field used to be an orchard, but the trees had been removed and the field was being used as a dump for bricks, rubble, gravel, JCB diggers and other general rubbish. It was a complete mess, and they were hoping that the Parish Council could bring pressure on the owner to tidy it up, as it was agricultural land. Dist Cllr David Hughes agreed to speak to the Enforcement Team at MHDC Planning, as this could be interpreted as “tipping.”

Mr John Lowe attended the meeting to speak on the speeding issues along Knightwick Road. Traffic was speeding from Stocks corner into the Foss Way at speeds up to 60 mph. He felt that the VAS camera at the village hall was totally ignored. A high percentage of the traffic was cars/four wheel drives on the school run/juggernauts/lorries/cranes/tractors and diggers. The speeding traffic was a serious danger to all, especially the school children. He wanted to see calming measures introduced, including speed bumps, rumble strips, 20 mph signs, community enforcement signs and a police presence with speed cameras. There should be a limit to the size and weight of vehicles along this village road which were not designed to carry this increased amount of traffic. The Chairman thanked Mr Lowe for attending and assured him that this would be discussed by the Council later in the meeting.

Report from County Councillor - No Report

Report from District Cllrs – Dist Cllrs Anthony Warburton and David Hughes reported to the meeting. MHDC was in the middle of a strategic review of all its functions, examining if it was “fit for purpose.” This was proving to be a useful exercise, and should be completed by the Autumn. The forthcoming Localism Bill would have a huge impact on Local and Parish Councils, and information sessions about this Bill would be arranged. Some Councils have already started to look into the advantages of bulk buying for heating oil. The question of improved rural broadband was raised by Cllr P Whatley. Dist Cllr David Hughes said that Martley was running a pilot scheme for Broadband. He would find out more information on this and let the Clerk know.

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

Footpath Wardens Report - Mr Peter Markins reported that he and Mr Richard Harward had a successful annual appraisal with Tracy Sutton, the Area Countryside Officer. She was very pleased with their work. They had replaced various signs and posts and cleared fallen trees blocking footpath 685, also branches overhanging the bridleway 680. They had also spent some time sorting out stiles and signs on the land above Lower Tundridge.

Local Police – No Report

The Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 9th January 2012 were approved and signed. Proposed by Cllr J Green and seconded by Cllr P Griffiths. The Minutes of an additional Parish Council & Planning Meeting held on 6th February 2012 were approved and signed. Proposed by Cllr A Grieve and seconded by Cllr P Whatley. The Minutes of the Planning Meeting held on 6th March 2012 were approved and signed. Proposed by Cllr J Green and seconded by Cllr P Griffiths.

20/12 WOODLAND ROAD

The Clerk reported that she had been chasing Severn Trent re the ditch from Knightwick Road to the sewerage works. However, the problem appeared to be that they had to be sure the ditch/land was owned by Severn Trent. Gerry Brienza was also in contact with Festival re the culvert under Knightwick Road. Cllr J Green had met with a representative from Severn Trent, and he had promised to put the request into the correct department. Dist Cllr David Hughes had also been liaising with Gerry Brienza and Highways, who had established that it was Severn Trent land. It was agreed that we would continue with this pincer movement in an effort to get the ditch cleared. The Clerk was asked to contact Gerry Brienza and Severn Trent to try and arrange a site meeting.

21/12 HIGHWAYS & BYWAYS

- (a) Footpaths – no further items.
- (b) (i) Lengthsman – The Clerk reported that she had spoken to David Hunter at County re paying the extra hours for the Lengthsman. He had agreed to pay the invoices for December and January, and possibly for February and March, depending on his budget. Cllr J Green reported that most of the drains had now been cleared. The VAS camera was now in place near the Bruff.
- (ii) Lengthsman Contract – The Clerk reported that she had spoken to the Clerk at Hartlebury re pay rates. Hartlebury had decided to keep the hourly rate to £12 per hour. The Council agreed to renew the contract with Barry Bennett for a further 12 months from 1st April, at the hourly rate of £12. Proposed by Cllr P Whatley and seconded by Cllr P Griffiths.
- (c) Grit/Salt Bins – Cllr J Green reported that the plastic labels for the grit/salt bins were unsuitable for fixing to the bins, so the Clerk had ordered the stick on labels.
- (d) The Clerk reported a further delay in the replacement of domed metal cage at the bottom of Birchwood Lane (at the side of the water depth gauge). The problem was a BT duct running across the front of the drain inlet which would have to be lowered by BT before any work could commence. Gerry Brienza was now planning to construct a dished concrete apron at the entrance to the drain, and a brick manhole with access cover and open grid inlet. Ref 4430212

22/12 SPEEDING /NOISE ISSUES

(a) Cllr J Green had previously reported that the VAS camera was now in place by the Bruff. In the first seven days of operation, it had recorded 1,274 vehicles exceeding 32 mph. Another VAS camera had been erected by the Village Hall along the Knightwick Road, but this had been put in place by the County Council. The issue of speeding in the parish was discussed by the Council. Cllr P Whatley reported that there were no repeater mph signs in place, and he felt that some sort of road narrowing might be more effective than speed bumps and rumble strips. The Clerk was asked to write to Gerry Brienza at County and arrange a site meeting to look at the various options.

(b) The Clerk reported that she had received a complaint about the lorry noise around mid night and again at 4.0 am in the morning coming from Griffiths Coldstore. Cllr P Griffiths who had expressed an interest in this item on the Agenda then left the meeting while this problem was discussed. The Clerk reported that she had been advised by Environmental Health that the person complaining should write to them and they would send log sheets to be filled in giving details of the noise over a period of time. They would then investigate if they felt this was necessary.

She had passed this information on to the resident concerned. After some discussion, it was proposed by Cllr A Grieve and seconded by Cllr P Whatley that the Clerk should write to the owners of the Coldstore asking them if they could try and deal with this problem. She should also inform the person complaining that this action had been taken.

(c) Speedwatch - The Clerk reported that she had obtained details of a Community Speedwatch operation which the residents of Baydon in Wiltshire had started to try and combat speeding through their village. This scheme had been supported by Wiltshire Police who had supplied the training and speed cameras. She had written to West Mercia Police to see if a similar scheme could be taken up in Suckley, but West Mercia was not prepared to underwrite any scheme in their area.

23/12 CHARITY REPORTS

Cllr R Harward reported on the Alfrick Educational Trust. They had not received any requests for help. Two letters of thanks had been received from people who had received £500 each from the Trust. Cllr A W Huband reported on Suckley Charities meeting held on 29th February. Suckley School had received £200. The next meeting would be held in September.

24/12 COMMUNITY PLAN

Cllr A Grieve reported that the Group were working hard on the survey. They were hoping to have a full report to give to the Annual Parish Meeting in May. The Clerk reminded the Council that the Plan headed up by Cllr A Grieve should be called a Parish or Community Plan, not a Neighbourhood Plan as this was a completely different type of plan (mostly related to planning development) and could only be produced by the Parish Council. A Neighbourhood Plan was the follow on from the Community Plan. The Clerk reported that she had received an e-mail from Geoff Brewin, the Clerk at Alfrick. They were starting a Neighbourhood Plan (they had already finished their Parish/Community Plan). This Neighbourhood Plan might have some impact on the boundaries of the Parish, and they would keep us informed.

25/12 DIAMOND JUBILEE 2012

(a) Jubilee Mugs – the Clerk reported that she had received the 108 Jubilee Mugs, printed with Suckley Parish Council. The Council now had to decide where and when to give them to the children of the Parish.

(b) Future Events – Cllr A Grieve confirmed that a Jubilee Celebration event would take place on Monday 4th June on the Playing Fields. It would take the form of a Family Sports Day, with teas and a Barn Dance in the evening. Further details yet to be released.

26/12 AREA CALC MEETING

No Report.

27/12 FINANCE

- (a) The following cheques were authorised for payment :- Proposed by Cllr A Grieve and seconded by Cllr L Devenish. **General Fund** – Clerk’s expenses Jan/Feb 2012 £34.82; Lengthsman Jan 2012 £186.00 (already paid but approval required); Lengthsman February 2012 £192.00; Lengthsman March 2012 (to be advised); HMRC PAYE Jan/Feb/March 2012 £264.60; Clerks Office 1st Oct 2011 – 31 March 2012 £125.00; Communicorp £662.52 (Jubilee Mugs) already paid but approval required; J Green – Lengthsman Management 1st Oct 2011 – 31st March 2012 £144.00; J Green – Cleaning Bus Shelters 1st April 2011 – 31st March 2012 £60.00
Playing Field - NPower £69.15 (already paid but approval required). DJR Farm Services (D Reynolds) – Mowing Playing Field £80.00
- (b) The Accounts to 31st January 2012 were approved. Proposed by Cllr A Grieve and seconded by Cllr R Harward.
- (c) Public Works Loan – The Clerk reported that she had looked into the repayment of the Public Works Loan. She had been informed by PWL Department that we could repay the loan earlier, but there would be a redemption fee to be paid, and we would not really gain anything from this. The rate of interest was fixed for 25 years from the time the loan was taken out. They did not operate like a Bank.
- (d) The Clerk confirmed that Dr Linda Cotterill (Chartered Accountant) had agreed to undertake the internal audit of the Council’s Accounts for 2011/12.
- (e) The Chairman signed the Internal Audit Review which had been circulated by the Clerk and scrutinised by the Council.
- (f) The Clerk reported that she had received an e-mail from Mr Derek Richards of The Washing Pool, Suckley asking for an explanation regarding the increase in the 2012/13 precept. The Clerk was asked to write to Mr Richards outlining the reasons for this increase which was largely due to the Parish Council having to bear the costs of payment/storage and refilling of extra grit/salt bins; increased lengthsman costs linked to the VAS speed camera, supporting community projects/facilities/grants.

28/12 RISK ASSESSMENT

- (a) Cllr J Green had completed all the Risk Assessment forms. No problems to report.

29/12 PLAYING FIELD

- (a) Cllr J Green reported that he had shifted three bags of rubbish from the Playing Field, and a new load of conifer cuttings had been dumped on the Field. He recommended that the mowing agreement with D J Reynolds be renewed for the coming year, as Mr Reynolds had done an extremely good job over the previous 12 months, at the charge of £40 per mow. The Council agreed to this, and to Mr Reynolds also doing some chain harrowing of the Field. Proposed by Cllr P Griffiths and seconded by Cllr A Grieve.
- (b) Annual Safety Check – No report
- (c) Annual Inspection of Playing Fields – The Clerk confirmed that Mr J Hicks would be doing this Report some time in March.
- (d) Gate Notice - Playing Fields. The Clerk reported that she and Cllr J Green had agreed to the cost of a metal sign £50 plus VAT. The sign had been ordered.
- (e) Contact Information Details re Playing Fields – no report

30/12 PLANNING

The Council noted the following information/refusals/permissions/appeals made by MHDC Planning :-

- (a) App Ref: 11/01694/HOU Proposal: Replace existing workshop building with new workshop and annexe; Accommodation over for dependant relative
Location: Lingen, Suckley, Worcs WR6 5DG Applicant: Mr Alan Curtis
Planning Permission **REFUSED.**
- (b) App No: 11/01589/HOU – Proposed two storey extension. Location: The Steps, Suckley, Worcs WR6 5DL. Applicant: Mr & Mrs J Avis. Planning Permission **APPROVED.**
- (c) Tundridge Stud – Enforcement Action. The Clerk reported Paul Clements had confirmed that the mobile home had been removed.
- (d) Complaints re usage of Cherry Orchard – Suckley Green. This was being dealt with by Dist Cllr David Hughes.
- (e) Site Visit – App 11/01569/AGR – Robin Hill
Cllr P Whatley reported on his attendance as an observer at the site visit. Five MHDC Councillors attended including Dist Cllrs Hughes and Warburton. A sixth Councillor arrived later and was briefed separately by Mr Young, the Planning Officer. Mr Hill, the applicant, and Mr Douds (neighbour and objector to the plans) also attended. Mr Young advised that the visit was to assess the proposed structure’s siting, design and external appearance in its surroundings. If the Plans were approved, conditions would be made of (i) an appearance consistent with the structure already extant and (ii) no externally visible illumination in the hours of darkness. The attendees viewed plans of the new building. Cllr Whatley took photographs both from the site, looking downhill and toward the skyline from the viewpoint used by the Councillors.
- (f) Appeal Ref: App/J1860/A/11/2159180/NWF – Mr Derek Philpotts. Site at Lower Appelgaard Farm, Suckley, Worcs WR6 5DJ. The Appeal is **DISMISSED.**

31/12 WORCESTERSHIRE AGREEMENT

The Council agreed to sign up to the Worcestershire Agreement which had been circulated to all Councillors, subject to the deletion of 4.3 on page 4; 4.8 & 4.10 on page 5; 4.3 & 4.4 on page 11;

32/12 SUCKLEY SCHOOL

- (a) The Clerk reported that she had been advised by Mr Duncan not to write to Mr Holloway for the time being. Mr Duncan had asked if the School was a Church of England School, as if it was, we might be able to trace deeds back through Church records. However, it appeared that the School was not a C of E School. Cllr L Devenish had requested a copy of the signed Lease from the Governors at the request of Mr Duncan. The Clerk was asked to find out from Mr Duncan if the Minutes of the Parish Council would be of any help in proving the ownership of the site. If so, Cllr P Whatley volunteered to wade through the Minute Books from 1874 – 1876 to see if there was a relevant Minute.
- (b) Cllr L Devenish reported that the school had been given and “Outstanding” Report from Ofsted which was excellent news. The Head Teacher was arranging a “thank you” event to all the staff for their hard work.

33/12 VILLAGE HALL CAR PARK

- (a) The further Car park sign – to read “All vehicles & their contents are parked here at owner’s risk” was now in place.

34/12 RESIGNATION

Cllr Rosemary Harward had sent in a letter of resignation to the Clerk, which was regretfully accepted by the Chairman and the Council. The Chairman thanked her for all her hard work whilst she had served on the Council, which was much appreciated. The Clerk presented her with a bouquet of flowers as a “thank you” from the Council.

35/12 FUTURE MEETINGS

The Clerk reminded the Council that the next meeting on 14th May was the Annual Council Meeting and the Annual Parish Meeting was on 21st May.

36/12 CORRESPONDENCE

All correspondence was available for viewing.

14/12 MATTERS FOR FUTURE AGENDA

No items raised

DATE OF NEXT MEETING – 7.00 pm Monday 14th May 2012. (Annual Council Meeting)