

SUCKLEY PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

Held on Monday 16th JULY 2012 at 7.00 pm in Suckley Village Hall

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

The Chairman, Cllr A W Huband, opened the meeting by reporting on his attendance at the Jubilee Reception & Lunch held at Worcester City Guildhall for HM Queen Elizabeth and HRH Duke of Edinburgh on 11th July. It was an experience he would never forget and he thanked all the Parish Councillors, County & District Councillors for nominating him to attend on behalf of Suckley Parish.

The Chairman also welcomed back Cllr J Green after his heart operation.

Declaration of any Disclosable Pecuniary Interests (DPI) or other Disclosable Interests
Cllr P Griffiths declared an interest in Agenda item 16 (Cllr vacancy).

Public Question Time/Participation -

Report from County Councillor - Co Cllr Clive Smith had asked the Clerk to report that he had now received his grant for community action for the current year. He was, therefore, able to purchase a second VAS camera for use in the parishes.

Report from District Cllrs – Dist Cllr D Hughes reported to the Council. The Office of National Statistics would be rolling out a national census in all Wards and Parishes later in the year. The results would be very helpful in forming development plans. The Rural Services Network research had revealed that living in the countryside was twice as expensive for essential goods & services as families living in urban areas. Schemes/Grants for extra insulation in loft and cavity walls were still available. Lottery funds were also available for small rural projects. The MHDC strategic review first report would be coming out in September. The South Worcestershire Development Plan – the next stage focuses on Proposed Significant Changes to the Plan. These will be presented to the Council in November after Consultation Events. A number of Councillors expressed concern about charges of £500 for school transport being imposed by Worcestershire County Council for pupils attending secondary schools other than Dysons (which was the nearest school to Suckley). This would have a damaging effect on the Chase School and effectively limited the choice of schools. Additionally, pupils over 16 staying on at any school in the area will have to pay the £500 transport charge. The Clerk was asked to write to Worcs Co Cllr Clive Smith (copying in to Dist Cllrs) pointing out this extra hardship for rural communities and the likelihood of increased traffic and congestion if parents have to take their children to school by car.

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

Footpath Wardens Report - The Clerk read out a report from Mr Peter Markins and Mr Richard Harward. With the wettest June on record had resulted in footpath surfaces being muddy and borders lined with tall weeds and wet grass. A good walk which the Wardens had recently cleared starts opposite the Steps Cottages and runs north along the ridge above Baston Hall, eventually joining the Worcestershire Way and coming out at Knightwick Station. Alternatively, about one third of the way up the ridge there is a signpost directing you down towards Green Lane. The Wardens were working on a circular walk which was partly in Suckley Parish.

Local Police – The Clerk read out the Crime Figures from CSO Martin Butcher. May 2012 revealed 2 ASB – one neighbour dispute, another a dispute between a landlord and their former tenant. 0 violent crime. 0 burglary. 0 theft. 0 criminal damage 0 RTC. June 2012 revealed 1 ASB – neighbour dispute. 0 violent crime 0 burglary 0 theft 0 criminal damage 1 computer hacking including an attempt to withdraw monies from a bank account 0 RTC

The Minutes of the Annual Parish Council Meeting held on 14th May 2012 were approved and signed. Proposed by Cllr C Luton and seconded by Cllr P Griffiths. The Minutes of an extraordinary Parish Council Meeting held on 26th June 2012 were approved and signed. Proposed by Cllr A Grieve and seconded by Cllr P Whatley. The Minutes of the Planning Meeting held on 26th June 2012 were approved and signed. Proposed by Cllr B Kearley and seconded by Cllr P Griffiths.

71/12 WOODLAND ROAD

The Clerk reported that she had spoken to Mr White from Woodland Road who confirmed that the defences had held up during the recent onslaught of rain. However, Mr White had asked if the Lengthsman could cut down the overgrown weeds and shrubs alongside the barrier/ditch. It was agreed that Cllr J Green would get the Lengthsman to do this work – the cost being met from the ringfenced £2K defence grant. The Clerk also reported that she was still trying to get a response from Gerry Brienza about replacing the culvert under the road, but she was not very hopeful of a positive result.

72/12 HIGHWAYS & BYWAYS

- (a) Footpaths – The Clerk was asked to report to the Footpath Wardens that the footpath at the back of Stocks Cottage was very overgrown.
- (b) (i) Lengthsman – Cllr P Whatley reported that there was a lot of run-off to the Eastern side of the carriageway near to White House Court. Cllr J Green to get the Lengthsman to have a look at this
- (c) Cllr J Green reported that after yet another meeting with Highways, they had finally agreed that the work they had done regarding the replacement of domed metal cage at the bottom of Birchwood Lane (at the side of the water depth gauge) had been a complete waste of time. The proposal now was to build a back wall and put a grid up at an angle as a short term solution. Long term, they may consider raising the level of the road but Cllr Green felt that in the present economic situation this was unlikely. However, Highways were hoping for some Flood Relief money for 2013/14.

73/12 SPEEDING /NOISE ISSUES

- (a) The Clerk reported that she had received further complaints about speeding along Knightwick Road and through Longley Green. Gerry Brienza had arranged for the extra 30 mph repeater signs to be installed. However, the traffic management team had

decided that white lines would not be very effective and would prove difficult to lay through Longley Green. Figures for the VAS camera over the period March to May were as follows :- March (The Bruff) 6,451. April (Longley Green) 3,094. May (Village Hall) 4,782. June (opposite Church Lane) 4,919. This was a total count of 19,246. It was noted, however, that the VAS camera was set to register at around 32mph so this would not necessarily mean that all of the 19,246 drivers had been driving excessively fast, though some obviously were! The VAS camera was now being moved to Alfrick Parish, then on the Leigh & Bransford, and would eventually come back to Suckley. The Clerk was asked to write to the Safer Roads Partnership to request a Police & camera presence along the Knightwick Road.

74/12 CHARITY REPORTS

No Reports

75/12 COMMUNITY PLAN

Cllr A Grieve reported that work had been going on apace with the Community Survey form and a draft was circulated to Councillors. A few final details had yet to be added and the Survey would then be posted round all the resident in the Parish. The Council was very impressed with the content and layout of the Survey. Thanks were due to all those involved in its production. The Community Group was hoping for a high response, as this would form the basis for future actions taken by the Council in planning and development for the Parish.

76/12 DIAMOND JUBILEE 2012

Cllr A Grieve reported that the Jubilee Fun Day held on 4th June had proved very successful, particularly the Barn Dance in the evening. The Community Group were looking to stage an event on similar lines next year, with the focus on family activities and perhaps featuring local produce. Thanks were due all those involved with the event, but especially to Andrew Duncan who had worked very hard in difficult conditions mowing and preparing the Playing Fields prior to the Jubilee Event.

77/12 FINANCE

- (a) The following cheques were authorised for payment :- Proposed by Cllr A Grieve and seconded by Cllr P Whatley - **General Fund** – Clerk’s expenses May/June 2012 £119.34 & Annual Parish Meeting expenses 21 May 2012 £103.34; Lengthsman May 2012 £243; Lengthsman June 2012 £210.00; Lengthsman VAS May/June 2012 £65.00; Lengthsman July 2012 (to be advised); Linda Cotterill (Internal Audit services) LCCA Ltd £84.00;
Playing Fields - DJR Farm Services (D Reynolds) £114.00 (already paid but to be approved); Aardvark Tractors & Mowers £203.75 (already paid but to be approved).
- (b) The Accounts to 31st May 2012 were approved. Proposed by Cllr A Grieve and seconded by Cllr P Griffiths.
- (c) Closing of Accounts - The Clerk reported that the internal auditor Dr Linda Cotterill had advised that the Parish Council Capital Account No 2449741 be closed as the interest being paid was minimal. The monies held therein should be transferred to the Business Reserve Account No 24445843.
Dr Cotterill had also advised a similar action for the same reason for the Playing Fields – the Business Reserve Account No 24425478 should be closed and the monies therein transferred to the Current Account No 24433527.
The Council approved both these proposals. - Proposed by Cllr A Grieve and seconded by Cllr P Griffiths. The Clerk to action this.

- (d) Cllr C Luton reported that she would be paying in a donation to the Playing Fields Account of £2,594.34. This was from the former Football 100 Club.

78/12 RISK ASSESSMENT

- (a) Cllr P Whatley had completed the Risk Assessment forms on behalf of Cllr J Green. No problems to report.

79/12 PLAYING FIELD

Cllr A Grieve reported that the straw bales from the Jubilee Event had not been collected as promised, and consequently they had broken up in the Playing Fields. Cllr J Green to ask Duncan Reynolds to put them under the trees.

Cllr C Luton reported that she had been approached by Steve Dallow from Leigh & Bransford Badgers Football Club who are looking to use the Playing Fields on Saturdays and Sundays. They had proposed a set fee for the season, but Cllr Luton felt it would be preferable to have a fee on a match by match basis. Negotiations were ongoing. Cllr J Green agreed to approach Duncan Reynolds to see if he would roll and mow the pitch. Cllr C Luton also reported that the mole situation had improved. It was agreed that the "No Wheeled Vehicles" sign be fixed at the end of the Pavilion.

80/12 OIL PURCHASING COLLECTIVE

Cllr A W Huband reported a disappointing response so far, with only three or four people expressing an interest. The Scheme was running in Martley, and there would be a meeting at the Nelson at some time in the near future (date to be advised). The Clerk to make sure this was put in the News Letter.

81/12 PLANNING

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

- (a) Committee Notification – Proposed agricultural building for storage of hay and machinery. Applegaard Fruit Farm, Suckley, Worcs WR6 5DJ. Consideration of the above application by Northern Area Development Control Committee – 4th July 2012. No decision yet received by the Clerk.
- (b) App No: 12/00573/HOU – Bush Bank Cottage, Suckley, Worcs WR6 5DR. Demolition of pig sty. Erection of single storey side extension. MHDC Planning Permission **Approved.**
- (c) App Ref: 12/00627/HOU – Stocks House, Suckley, Worcs WR6 5EE. Erection of carport. MHDC Planning Permission **Approved.**
- (d) App Ref: 12/00540/HOU – Haventree Cottage, Suckley, Worcs WR6 5DQ. Single storey extension. MHDC Planning Permission **Approved.**
- (e) App Ref: 12/00059/HOU – Steepways, Longley Green, Suckley, Worcs WR6 5DU. Extensions and alterations to dwelling & construction of retaining wall. MHDC Planning Permission **Approved.**
- (f) Duggans House, Blackhouse Lane, Suckley, Worcs WR6 5DP. The Clerk reported on the response of MHDC Planning and the applicant from the Recommendation of Refusal and comments arising from the Planning Meeting on 26th June. The Council requested that the Clerk write back to MHDC stressing that although the Council do not object in principle to the building of a garage, they consider the proposed height of 8 metres was inappropriate for the purpose for which the structure is intended – as stated on the plan.
- (f) Planning Training Dates - 6th November Planning Enforcement. Cllrs P Griffiths and B Kearley expressed an interest in attending.

6th December – Permitted Development Rights update. Cllr B Kearley expressed an interest in attending.

82/12 WORCESTERSHIRE AGREEMENT

As part of the Worcestershire Agreement (signed up to at the last meeting) Worcestershire County Council Legal Services were offering to provide a range of services to Parish Councils at very competitive legal rates. The Council decided to sign a Service Level of Agreement for the use of these services. Proposed by Cllr C Luton and seconded by Cllr P Griffiths.

83/12 COUNCILLOR VACANCY

The Council considered three excellent applications for the Councillor vacancy. Cllr Mrs P Griffiths did not take part in this vote. A first vote was taken and Dr Anne Lewis was chosen by a large majority. The Clerk to write to Dr Lewis and the other candidates.

84/12 SUCKLEY CHURCH

The Clerk had received the latest update re Suckley Church Plans from Dr Anne Lewis, which was circulated to all Councillors present. This outlined the aims of the SPACE project and the Steering Group headed up by Cllr L Devenish and Dr Anne Lewis. Although Plans were being discussed, there would be many opportunities for the community as a whole to put forward their views on what they did and did not want to see happening to the Church. What was absolutely agreed was that it was vital for SOMETHING to make Suckley Church more “fit for purpose” so that it remained as a meeting place and village church for many more years to come. Cllrs A Grieve and P Whatley, who also served on the Steering Committee, reported that approaches were being made to the Village Hall Trust Committee to arrange a meeting.

85/12 ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

It was felt that the meeting went very well, even though fewer people attended than the previous year (60 last year and 45 this year). The possibility of a speaker for next year was raised, but to be discussed next year.

86/12 SUCKLEY SCHOOL

- (a) The Clerk reported that she had received an e-mail from Cllr L Devenish attaching the 125 years Lease between Suckley School and Worcestershire County Council, plus other tenancy documents. She had printed these off (all 28 pages!). She had e-mailed Andrew Duncan again re-iterating that it was not the Governors of the School who were querying the lease, but the Parish Council, as they were convinced that the land (and possibly the building) had been “gifted” to the Parish around 1874-76 when the school was built. However, she had not received any reply from him on this point. Cllr A W Huband and Cllr P Whatley stated that they were still prepared to go through the Annual Parish Meeting & Parish Council Minute Books for the period. The Clerk agreed to find out if these Books had been relocated from Gloucester to the new Archives at The Hive in Worcester. Cllr L Devenish reported that pupil numbers for the September start stood at 62.

87/12 CORRESPONDENCE

All correspondence was available for viewing.

88/12 MATTERS FOR FUTURE AGENDA

No items raised

DATE OF NEXT MEETING – 7.00 pm Monday 10th September 2012