

SUCKLEY PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

Held on Monday 14th JANUARY 2013 at 7.00 pm in Suckley Village Hall

Present: Cllr A W Huband, Cllr J Green, Cllr C Luton, Cllr P Whatley, Cllr L Devenish,
Cllr A Lewis, Cllr P Griffiths, Cllr A Grieve

Apologies: Mr Richard Harward & Mr Peter Markins (Footpaths Wardens)
Dist Cllr D Hughes, Cllr B Kearley

In Attendance: Mrs D Taylor (Clerk), Dist Cllr A Warburton

Declaration of any Disclosable Pecuniary Interests (DPI) or other Disclosable Interests falling within the terms of para 12(4)((b) of the Code of Conduct. No requests had been received by the Clerk for any Dispensations relating to items on the Agenda. (Sec 33 of the Localism Act 2011)

The Meeting was adjourned for Public Question Time/Participation

Mr A Tingey from Wells Cottage spoke to the Council of his concern about speeding vehicles in Suckley Green. In December 2012 there had been a crash between a lorry and a bus, resulting in the lorry ending up in the hedge of Wells Cottage. Fortunately the bus was not carrying any passengers at the time (around 8.30 am) and no-one was seriously hurt. There was a dangerous bend through Suckley Green, and he wanted the Council to press County Highways to put up speed limit signs, or at the very least, a warning bend sign. It was proposed by Cllr P Whatley and seconded by Cllr J Green that the Clerk write to Mr Gerry Brienza at County Highways requesting warning signs to be erected along this road and possibly painting the road surface along the edges to narrow the width of the road. It was felt that County were more likely to agree to this request than a speed limit.

Report from County Councillor - No report received

Report from District Cllrs – Dist Cllr A Warburton reported again to the Council on the potential changes to the refuse collection system in the MHDC area. This would mean fortnightly collections of recyclable waste using wheelie bins, with the retention of weekly collection bags for household waste. MHDC had now received a £1.7m grant for this scheme. Dist Cllr Warburton had opposed this scheme as he felt this was the beginning of large scale use of wheelie bins in the future which were not suitable for the Malvern area, and had been opposed by many of the Malvern residents. He also reported on the South West Worcestershire Development Plan, which had been approved by a small majority at a meeting on 10th December. He had voted against the plan, and would continue to oppose it.

Lengthsman Report - Cllr J Green reported that the Lengthsman was doing very well and had been working very hard to unblock drains during the recent spells of heavy rain.

Footpath Wardens Report - No report from the Wardens. However, the Clerk reported that she had checked with the Countryside Department at County Hall, and it would appear that all work undertaken by the Footpath Wardens was covered by County Council insurance.

Local Police – Crime figures for Suckley – November 2012 1 RTC (damage only), 1 Theft. December 2012 – 2 ASB and 1 theft of two bronze statues valued jointly at £1,500.

The Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 12th November 2012 were approved and signed. Proposed by Cllr C Luton and seconded by P Whatley. The Minutes of the Planning Meeting held on 10th December 2012 were approved and signed. Proposed by Cllr P Griffiths and seconded by Cllr A Grieve.

01/13 HIGHWAYS & BYWAYS

- (a) Footpaths – nothing further to report.
- (b) Lengthsman – Cllr J Green and the Clerk reported that due to adverse weather conditions the Lengthsman had been working longer hours to cope with the workload, especially unblocking drains. This had resulted in there being only 4 allocated hours left until the end of March 2012. The Council agreed to fund (if necessary) a further 28 hours for the Lengthsman. Proposed by Cllr P Whatley and seconded by Cllr L Devenish.
- (c) Replacement of domed metal cage at the bottom of Birchwood Lane (at the side of the water depth gauge). Ref 4430212. Cllr J Green reported that a kerb had been laid down to the entrance, but no further work had yet been done. The Clerk had chased this yet again, and Gerry Brienza had reported to her that the work was scheduled to be done early in the New Year.
- (d) The Boat House Suckley WR6 5DL – both the Lengthsman and the Clerk had reported this problem to Highways. (Ref No CEN/18898) This was a blocked drain which was overflowing down to another drain further down the road. When it freezes, the road becomes treacherous. This was first reported in July and Ringway had informed County Highways that work had been completed on this on 6th September. However, whatever work had been done had not solved the problem, despite the Lengthsman buying extra rods to try and rod from the lower drain upwards. Cllr J Green thought that the drain/pipework might be broken. Gerry Brienza was having this re-investigated.
- (e) Cllr J Green reported that the collapsed drain in Church Lane was probably broken as it could not be rodded by the Lengthsman.
- (f) Mr Talbot from the White House cottages complex was experiencing flood water up to the steps of his cottage. This was most likely due to no drain on the road side and had been reported to the Land Drainage team.
- (g) The Corner Cottage at the Knoll – the ditch round the property was blocked up, stopping water draining off the road from the White House Cross Road to the Knoll. The Clerk to ask Highways to write to the owner re clearing the ditch.
- (h) Stocks Cross Roads – another blocked drain.
- (i) The drain outside the Batch, Suckley was still blocked and needed to be jetted.
- (j) Pewcroft Cottage – the drain still blocked at this address.
- (k) Drain blocked at the entrance to Lower Tundridge Stud
- (l) White House Cross Roads – the drain was blocked at the entrance to the old apple orchard. This was mainly caused by tractors and other machinery pushing the mud across the drain. Highways to be informed of this situation and to write to the owner.

The Clerk to write to Highways asking for action on the above issues.

- (m) Provision of salt/grit bin in Birchwood Lane. A request had been received from Betsan Porter at ByeWays for a salt/grit bin to be located on the sharp bend close to Dunns Cottage in Birchwood Lane. This was becoming highly dangerous when the road was icy. The Clerk had written to County Highways requesting a bin, but this had been turned down by Highways as there was a grit bin sited on Birchwood Road at Cherry Bank. After some discussion, the Council asked the Clerk to write to Betsan Porter suggesting that interested parties in the area sponsor a bin which the Parish Council would then undertake to keep filled.

02/13 SPEEDING ISSUES

The Clerk reported that she had contacted Westotec, the suppliers of the VAS camera. It was possible to reprogramme the radar speed to 36 mph. This would cost approx £50 plus VAT (including courier collection). However, there was a further option of fitting an upgraded data collection unit which would record the date, time, actual speed and vehicle counts. This would cost £350.00 plus VAT. The Clerk had circulated this option to the other two parishes (Alfrick & Lulsley, Leigh & Bransford) but Alfrick had decided against it. Leigh & Bransford had yet to hold their January meeting. The Council decided that Suckley opt for the speed adjustment to 36 mph. Proposed by Cllr P Whatley and seconded by Cllr A Grieve.

03/13 CHARITY REPORTS

No reports received

04/13 COMMUNITY PLAN

Cllr A Grieve would report to the next Council Meeting in March.

05/13 HEART START

Cllr J Green and Cllr A Lewis informed the Council about the HeartStart scheme. This was essentially a training scheme for volunteers to be able to use a defibrillator. At least ten trained people were required. The cost of a defibrillator would be in the region of £1,200 - £1,500 plus VAT (including some training). There was also a requirement for a suitable location for the defibrillator in the Parish. Whilst the Council approved of the idea, it was felt that this should be a community fund raising project perhaps under the umbrella of the Health & Wellbeing Group, with the Parish Council putting in a donation.

06/13 BROADBAND SERVICE

The Clerk reported that following the November meeting she had contacted Airband regarding further information and the possibility of a presentation meeting in January 2013. Airband had responded by saying that they would appreciate us holding back from a meeting until their engineers had surveyed the area. She had chased again early in January and Airband had e-mailed to say some parts of the area had been surveyed, but no further detailed information was available. Airband wanted people to start registering. They needed 20-30 confirmed interests before proper site surveys could be carried out. Cllr P Whatley who was the nominated co-ordinator reported that so far he had received three expressions of interest. It was agreed that another piece be put in the Suckley News letter, but the Council needed more information before we could really move forward on this scheme.

07/13 FINANCE

- (a) The following cheques were authorised for payment :- Proposed by Cllr A Grieve and seconded by Cllr P Griffiths - **General Fund** – Clerk’s expenses Nov/December 2012 £34.21; HMRC PAYE (Oct/Nov/Dec) £272.40; Lengthsman November 2012 £177.00 (already paid but to be approved); Lengthsman December 2012 £159.00; Lengthsman January 2013 (to be advised); PCC Grant 2012 (graveyard) £100.00. B.G.S. VAS Services December 2012 £34.50
Playing Fields - DJR Farm Services (mowing) £100.00; Pestkill (mole removal) £160.00; J R Drew – Plumbing repairs £74.87.
- (b) **Accounts to 30th November 2012** were approved. Proposed by Cllr A Grieve and seconded by Cllr P Whatley.
- (c) **Precept 2013/14** - The Clerk reported that she had checked with Andy Baldwin - the Head of Resources at MHDC. He had confirmed to her that as long as Suckley Parish Council kept the precept to the 2012/13 figure i.e. £13,859, this would not trigger a referendum. MHDC would then pay our requested amount made up from Council Tax and subsidy. The Council unanimously agreed that the Precept for 2013/14 be set at £13,859. This had been proposed by Cllr A Grieve and seconded by Cllr P Whatley at the Council meeting on 12th November 2012.

08/13 RISK ASSESSMENT

- (a) Cllr J Green had completed the risk assessment forms. No problems to report. The fencing posts at the Quarry had been inspected and were sound.
- (b) The Clerk reported that Came & Co our insurers were recommending that a tree survey be carried out by a qualified Arborculturalist, and that the Council follows any advice given in such a report. Significant personal injury and property damage claims were being brought against Councils, but if the Council had done everything reasonably possible to minimise chances of an incident occurring, the claim would be easier for the insurers to repudiate on our behalf. Cllr C Luton offered to speak to Mr Nick Denley who she felt would be able to help in this matter, as the Council was responsible for trees in the Quarry and along the edge of the Playing Field.

09/13 PLAYING FIELD

- (a) Leaking water pipe – Cllr J Green and Cllr C Luton reported that Severn Trent had now fixed the leak and installed a new meter. The Clerk reported Severn Trent had sent her a leakage claim form which she had completed and returned. She had also received a water bill for £709.85. Severn Trent had stated that they would only consider a refund up to a maximum of 50% of the excess water lost through leakage and for one billing period only. She had written to Severn Trent stating this was totally unacceptable as the leak was first reported in June 2012. Severn Trent had failed on three occasions to repair this leak and it had not been finally fixed until November 2012 – five months later. The Council would be looking for a refund on the bill paid in May of £588.08 and the current bill of £709.85.

10/13 PARISH CLUSTERING

The Clerk reported that she had received an e-mail from Geoffrey Brewin, the Clerk of Alfrick and Lulsley. They were keen to take up the idea of clustering of Parish Councils together in order to work more effectively with Worcestershire County Council and devolve services more efficiently. Alfrick & Lulsley were suggesting a grouping of themselves, Suckley and Leigh & Bransford. The Council were not convinced of the purpose or benefits of this arrangement and asked the Clerk to find out more about it.

11/13 PLANNING

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

- (a) App Ref No: 12/01323/FUL Grid Ref: E 373964 N 251 264
Tundridge Stud, Stocks Lane, Suckley, Worcs WR6 5DP
Applicant: Mr Tom Hayes
Proposal: Access track to land and buildings
Planning Permission **Refused**
- (b) App No: 12/01345/LBC Grid Ref: E 372156 N 252754
Rosegrove Barn, 4, White House Court, Suckley, Worcs WR6 5DF
Applicant: Mr N Bentley
Proposal: Installation of black chimney flue to roof to allow installation of a log burner in living room of house.
Planning Permission **Approved**
- (c) App Ref No: 112/01559/FUL Grid Ref: E 374247 N 250791
Bells Bank, Birchwood Lane, Suckley, Worcs WR6 5DT
Applicant: Mr M Evans
Proposal: Two storey extensions and alterations, reformation of driveway/
Access to highway and change of use of land at rear to residential garden.
Planning Permission **Approved**

12/13 SUCKLEY CHURCH

Cllr A Lewis reported that the vast majority of people attending the meeting in November were behind the need to do something about the Church, with about ten per cent strongly against. It was important to make sure the views of those concerned about the SPACE project were taken into account. Another Steering Group meeting would be held in February.

13/13 SUCKLEY SCHOOL

- (a) Cllr A W Huband reported on his quest for documentation relating to the ownership of Suckley School. He had visited the Church solicitors, March & Edwards in Worcester who hold all church deeds, explained the situation and requested a search. So far, he had not received a response, but would be chasing this up. However, he had managed to acquire a copy of a document c 1982 which stated that the County Council **did not own** the school site. This appeared to be part of a review of schools during that period. Cllr A W Huband felt that a meeting with the County Council Legal Department would be beneficial. The Clerk confirmed that the site had been registered with the Land Registry by the County Council on 30th August 2005. It was proposed by Cllr A Grieve and seconded by Cllr C Luton that Cllr P Whatley look at the Land Registry site, with a view to lodging a formal complaint if it was possible to do so. Cllr P Whatley to liaise with the Clerk on this matter.
- (b) Cllr L Devenish reported that work had started on the new classroom at Suckley School.

14/13 CORRESPONDENCE

All correspondence was available for viewing.

15/12 MATTERS FOR FUTURE AGENDA

No items raised

DATE OF NEXT MEETING – 7.00 pm Monday 11th March 2013