

SUCKLEY PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

Held on Monday 8th JULY 2013 at 7.00 pm in Suckley Village Hall

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

Apologies: Co Cllr Paul Tuthill, Mr Richard Harward & Mr Peter Markins
(Footpaths Wardens), Dist Cllr D Hughes

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)

No interests declared and no applications for dispensation had been received by the Clerk

The Meeting was adjourned for Public Question Time/Participation

Two members of the public attended the meeting – Mr Richard Barnes and Mrs Tania Smith. They both voiced their concerns and opposition to the planning application for Parsleys Patch. The Council agreed to take these into account when considering the application later in the meeting.

Report from County Councillor - No report received

Report from District Cllrs – Dist Cllr A Warburton reported on proposed changes to the operation of the Revenues & Benefits systems, presently based at Wychavon District Council. This was a pooling of resources for Malvern Hills District Council, Worcester City and Wychavon District Council. However, with the introduction of Universal Credit being introduced by Central Government, there was a strong possibility of a private partnership with Civica who would take over the operational activities. This could lead to potential redundancy costs. The Councils involved would be taking a slice of the revenues generated, with the prospect of £1/2m savings over the next 5 years. Dist Cllr Warburton also reported on the electronic planning system being imposed by MHDC in October this year. He was aware of the concerns voiced by Suckley PC and other Parish Councils who felt this was a transfer of costs down to the Parish Councils. He had taken this matter up with MHDC but it appeared they were determined to push this system through and there would be no exceptions. It would be an interesting exercise to find out exactly how much money would be “saved” by this move, and how the costings stacked up.

Lengthsman Report - Cllr J Green reported that the Lengthsman was doing very well and as always had been working very hard.

Footpath Wardens Report – The Clerk had received a brief e-mailed report from the Footpaths Wardens. Since the last meeting they had been clearing the Suckley part of the Worcestershire Way for a charity walk. They had also made some earth steps up a steep part of the footpath near the Steps Cottages.

Local Police – A nil report for crime in Suckley for June 2013, with the exception of 1 burglary where three mobile phones were stolen from an insecure caravan located in a field.

The Minutes of the Annual Parish Council Meeting held on 13th May 2013 were approved and signed. Proposed by Cllr A Grieve and seconded by Cllr P Whatley. The Annual Parish Council Meeting Report for 20th May had been circulated, and was noted.

58/13 HIGHWAYS & BYWAYS

- (a) Footpaths – nothing further to report.
- (b) Lengthsman – Cllr J Green reported that the Lengthsman was trying his best to keep the verges clear.
- (c) Replacement of domed metal cage at the bottom of Birchwood Lane (at the side of the water depth gauge). Ref 4430212. The Clerk reported that she had spoken to Gerry Brienza yet again about this and the work is now scheduled to be completed in a month's time.
- (d) Drainage Issues - Cllr J Green and the Clerk reported that Tom Palmer of the LDA at MHDC had issued letters and notices to Mr R Capper (re Stocks Farm), Mr E Holloway (re Holloways Garden Centre and opposite the Oast House in Blackhouse Lane, Suckley) and Mr D Philpotts (re opposite Raventree, Suckley). So far Mr Capper had done the work required, Mr Philpotts had responded to the notices saying the work would be done, and there had been no response at all from Mr E Holloway. The deadline was 10th July. If by then the work had not been completed, further action would be taken.
- (e) Corner Cottage, The Knoll - Cllr J Green had spoken to the owners about this, which was a private matter to be resolved between the landowners concerned.
- (f) Drain outside the Batch, Suckley - (still ongoing)
- (g) Drain gully opposite Crews Court, Suckley - The Clerk & Lengthsman had reported this and it was still in the system at County Highways.
- (h) Ice Warning signs – the Clerk confirmed that these were scheduled to arrive in September.

59/13 SPEEDING ISSUES

- (a) VAS Camera - The Clerk reported that this had now been upgraded and was in position at Leigh & Bransford. Her husband Mike had installed the software onto his laptop (and onto her computer) and had offered to download the information for each parish. It was hoped to do a dummy run at the end of this week to make sure everything was working correctly.
- (b) Warning Signs – Suckley Green - The Clerk confirmed that the T Junction signs (the only signs that Highways would allow) would be in place in 8 weeks time.

60/13 CHARITY REPORTS

- (a) No reports received from any meetings.
- (b) Hill Trust (Village Hall) - The Clerk had now received the accounts from the Hill Trust to the Year ended 31st December 2012 which showed an excess of expenditure over income. These were circulated to all Council members present. The Council felt it was important that the Parish Council keep open communications with the Hill Trust/Village Hall via representation on the Hill Trust Committee. It was proposed by Cllr A Lewis and seconded by Cllr A Grieve that a rota of Councillors attend the Hill Trust meetings to report back to the Parish Council. The Clerk to write to the Chairman/Secretary of the Hill Trust informing them of this decision and to find out the date of the next meeting.

61/13 COMMUNITY PLAN

Nothing to report at the moment, but Cllr A Grieve would be putting information together for the next meeting. Cllr A Lewis reported continuing interest in training for the Heart Start Scheme and basic first Aid with about 10 names at the moment. An article would be in this month's Sphere magazine. The Clerk reported that Co Cllr Paul Tuthill would be attending the Council meeting in September with ideas of how to spend his parish budget which might include matched funding for the defibrillator.

62/13 BROADBAND SERVICE

Cllr P Whatley reported that so far only 9 expressions of interest had been received re Airband. Worcestershire County Council held a list of parishes containing levels of take-up re broadband (not just for Airband). It was agreed to put another item in the Suckley Newsletter to see if this could generate more interest.

63/13 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 May/June 2013; £111.14; Clerks Annual Parish Meeting Expenses £116.22; HMRC PAYE £282.00 (Apr/May/June 2013); Lengthsman May 2013 £210.00 (already paid but to be approved); Lengthsman June 2013 £195.00; Lengthsman July 2013 (to be advised); Linda Cotterill (Auditor) £84.00; Chris Wilding – Bus Shelter roof £280.00 (already paid but to be approved); Westcotec (VAS camera upgrade) £450.00
NB – this cost to be shared with Alfrick, Leigh & Bransford; J Green – supply of ridge tiles and slates for bus shelter £200.00; Worcs Calc Clerks Gathering £10.00; J.P. Ross – Tree Survey for Quarry & Playing Fields £576.00 (PC insurance requirement); **Playing Fields** - J Green – Repairs to all weather pitch £60.00
- (b) **Severn Trent Water** - Cllr C Luton reported on a hugely successful outcome to the long term saga with Severn Trent re water leaks/repairs/bills. Her persistence had paid off with the Clerk receiving (and banking immediately!) a cheque for £1,262.73 from Severn Trent. We also now had a “nil” bill with the Company. The Council gave a “**vote of thanks**” and a round of applause to Cllr C Luton for her tireless work in taking on Severn Trent and achieving such a fantastic result for the Council and the Playing Fields.
- (c) **Accounts to 31st May 2013** were approved. Proposed by Cllr A W Huband and seconded by Cllr A Grieve.
- (d) **Discretionary Rate Relief** - Cross Keys Inn £126.58 Approved for payment. Proposed by Cllr A Grieve and seconded by Cllr P Griffiths

64/13 RISK ASSESSMENT

- (a) Cllr J Green reported no problems.
- (b) Tree Survey - Cllr C Luton reported that the tree survey had been done at a cost of £576. This included a very comprehensive report of all the trees in the Quarry and Playing Fields. Included in the report was a recommendation for either pollarding or removing two trees - an ash tree in the Playing Fields and a goat willow in the Quarry. She had obtained a quote from Nick Denley for doing either of these tasks. The Council decided the best and most cost effective course of action would be to remove the trees concerned. Proposed by Cllr A Lewis and seconded by Cllr J Green

65/13 PLAYING FIELD COMMITTEE

Cllr J Green reported that a triangle of wires had been bent to gain access to the all weather pitch. Cllr C Luton to arrange for a repair. She would also obtain a quote for the bollards at the entrance to the car park. Cllr J Green reported that the Lengthsman had strimmed round the posts and Duncan had mowed the pitch and removed rubbish in readiness for the school sports day.

66/13 PLANNING

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

(i) App Ref No: 13/00183/HOU
Applicant: Mr & Mrs B Ward
Site: Lower Barrow Kiln, Suckley, Worcs WR6 5EJ
Proposal: Single storey rear extension

Planning Permission Approved

(ii) App Ref: 13/00174/HOU
Applicant: Mr & Mrs B Ward
Site: Lower Barrow Kiln, Suckley, Worcs WR6 5EJ
Proposal: Erection of porch

Application Withdrawn

(iii) App Ref No: 13/00094/HOU
Applicant: Miss Rachel Simon
Site: Lower Barrow House, Suckley, Worcs WR6 5EJ
Proposal: Single storey stone outbuilding

Planning Permission Approved

(b) The Council considered the following applications :-

(i) App Ref No: 13/00660/HOU
Applicant: Mr & Mrs S Winstanley
Site: Dunns Cottage, Birchwood Road, Suckley, Worcs WR6 5DT
Proposal: Conservatory extension, outside toilet, new dormer window and new garage.

The Council recommended **Refusal**. They had no objection to the conservatory, or outside toilet, but they considered that the height and size of the garage was excessive.

(ii) App Ref No: 13/00727/OUT
Applicant: Messrs G & D Peplow
Site: Parsleys Patch, Longley Green, Suckley, Worcs WR6 5DU
Proposal: Outline application for two detached dwellings with associated Parking and landscaping.

The Council recommended **Refusal** and included the following comments to MHDC Planning:-

1. Access to this site was granted by MHDC on the basis of **agricultural use only**. There are also other traffic safety hazards associated with this site as the entrance is opposite the Nelson pub.
2. Contrary to the reference made in the Design & Access statement, there is **no** Settlement boundary for Suckley. This application, therefore, directly conflicts with MHDC stated policy. It also goes against the wishes of the residents in a parish survey conducted in 2012.
3. This site is a flood plain and is known to have seriously flooded in 1996, 2007 and also floods at regular intervals.

The Council strongly recommend that a site visit be made by MHDC Planning Dept prior to any decision being made. Should a visit be planned, the clerk to be informed of the time and date.

67/13 ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

The Council reviewed the Annual Parish Meeting held on 20th May. It was agreed that this had been a successful meeting, with a reasonably good turnout of parishioners.

68/13 SUCKLEY POST OFFICE

Cllr P Whatley asked the Council to look at how it could help support the Post Office, bearing in the mind the importance of this facility in the community. After some discussion, the Clerk was asked to write to Roger and Barbara Blackburn on this question

69/13 SUCKLEY CHURCH

Cllr A Lewis reported that a meeting had been held with all groups. It was now necessary to move forward with the revised plan which had been supported by the majority of residents. Two heating consultants had been looking at the best way to heat the church, which appeared to be mains gas, (already in the road). Without the Space Project taking place, the church was under threat as it was under-used. There had to be a way to get people to use the building more, and to feel comfortable about coming into the church. Cllr P Whatley asked that the Council put forward a supporting letter for future fundraising applications. The Council agreed to this request. Proposed by Cllr A Grieve and seconded by Cllr J Green.

70/13 SUCKLEY SCHOOL

The Clerk reported that as requested she had written asking for copies of all documentation relating to the County Council's application to the Land Registry for title to Suckley School (under the Freedom of Information Act). She had received a reply from their Legal Department to the effect that they were not required under the Freedom of Information Act to provide copies of documentation relating to the Title of the School as this was held by the Land Registry. Any queries relating to the registration of the Title should be raised with the Land Registry who were satisfied with the documentation on the registration of the County Council's Title. She had duly contacted the Land Registry Office customer support team and the Coventry Office. No attachments or additional documentation was showing on their electronic records (only the title). She was advised to e-mail the Coventry office requesting any information they might hold in paper files, but this would take some time to track down. There was no guarantee of any paperwork being held due to the fact that if there had been no problems with the application (and it was granted), the paperwork was returned to the applicant. The Clerk had e-mailed cvc4 team and was awaiting a reply. She would be chasing them up after a month if nothing had been received. She had been advised yet again to take legal advice on this matter. Cllrs L Devenish and A Lewis agreed to chase up ways and means of acquiring affidavits from people who had seen the original deed granting the school/site to the parish Churchwardens/Trustees.

71/13 CORRESPONDENCE

All correspondence was available for viewing.

72/13 MATTERS FOR FUTURE AGENDA

None raised.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING – Monday 9th September at 7.00 pm