

SUCKLEY PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

Held on Monday 13th MARCH 2017 at 7.00 pm in Suckley Village Hall

Present: Cllr P Whatley, Cllr A W Huband, Cllr C Luton, Cllr P Griffiths,
Cllr L Devenish

In Attendance: Mrs D Taylor (Clerk), Dist Cllrs A Warburton & S Rouse, Co Cllr P Tuthill,
Helen Philpotts (Footpaths)

Apologies for absence: Cllr J Green, Cllr V Bradley, Cllr A Lewis

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)

Prior to the start of the Meeting, the Chairman informed the Council that Cllr John Green had been taken ill and had been in hospital. He was now back home recuperating. All members present wished him a speedy recovery and the Clerk was asked to send him a Get Well card from the Council.

The Chairman then adjourned the Meeting for Public Question Time/Participation

Report from County Councillor - Co Cllr Paul Tuthill reported that the Fire Stations at Kidderminster, Bewdley & Stourport would be merging. Droitwich Fire Station would be moving onto the site of the Waitrose Store in Droitwich, (owned by Wychavon). In Evesham Wychavon also owns the old Fire Station site where a new Waitrose will be built, and a new Fire Station had been built and opened on a new site at Evesham by the new bridge. The Budget had been agreed and he had secured £6M over 2 years for the repair/upgrading of footways. During reconstruction, the Southern Link Bypass would be operating a traffic system of one lane up and two lanes down. Funding had been secured for the engineering analysis for the Powick/Carrington bridge and causeway. The Local Transport Policy Plan had generally been well received and he thanked the Parish Council for sending in their comments on this. Leigh & Bransford school extension was on track to open in a month's time. Malvern Vale school was to be an entry level school under the management of Somers Park School which was now a Trust.

Report from District Cllrs – Dist Cllrs Sarah Rouse and Anthony Warburton reported that despite their best efforts, Malvern Hills District Council had voted for fortnightly waste collections. They were still convinced that this move would not make the savings which had been claimed. They also reported that the Planning procedural system of North and South Area Committees had been retained. This was vital to ensure that District Councillors were able to make representations on behalf of their parishes about planning applications.

Lengthsman - As previously reported at the 13th February meeting, Rob Lambert had given notice to leave at the end of March. The Clerk had details of two applicants for this post, and a decision on the Lengthsman Contract could be made later in the meeting.

Footpaths - Helen Philpotts reported that new Footpath signs were now in place. The Clerk confirmed that Worcestershire County Council is responsible for the safety of bridleway and footpath bridges.

Local Police – Cllr P Whatley reported on crime stats to the end of December 2016 – this being the most recent date for stats available as the online system had not been updated since that date. This showed a total of 44 reported crimes for the year. ASB crime accounted for 43% of the total, and violent crime 36% - both occurring in the same areas of the Parish – Damson Way/Woodland Road. A Police Newsletter was being circulated on line from the Kempsey Beat Area.

The Chairman then re-opened the Meeting

The Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 9th January 2017 were approved and signed. Proposed by Cllr C Luton and seconded by Cllr A W Huband. The Minutes of the Extra Parish Council Meeting held on 13th February 2017 were approved and signed. Proposed by Cllr P Griffiths and seconded by Cllr C Luton.

15/17 HIGHWAYS & BYWAYS

- (a) Road Works/Closure issues in Suckley – Cllr P Whatley reported that following the problems with highways work which had taken place at The Bruff, he had spoken to the Network Manager at Worcestershire County Council, who acknowledged that the closure time had been unacceptably long. He had been assured that steps would be taken to address this for any future works. Cllr Whatley felt that Suckley especially was now high on the WCC list for better management of works/road closures, but a close eye would be kept on any future situations.
- (b) Three Bar metal fencing in Longley Green - This had been completed.
- (c) Drainage problems at The Steps, Blackhouse Lane - The Clerk reported that the underlying causes of this problem had taken a considerable time to be determined. However, the County Council was considering installing a new gully and connecting it to a new pipe. This proposal was at the early design stage, with other options to be considered, but WCC Highways would keep the Clerk informed.
- (d) Salt & Grit Storage - This item deferred for Cllr J Green to report.
- (e) Vegetation obscuring the view at junctions of White House Cross Roads. The Clerk had been informed that a letter had been sent to the owners of Haventree by Worcestershire County Council Highways. However, it appeared that the laurel hedge concerned had not been cut back as requested. The Clerk to follow this up with Highways.
- (f) Winter ice on the Cradley arm of Stocks Cross – the Clerk reported that Ice Warning signs had now been put in place and arrangements were being made to excavate a ditch between the entrance to Stocks Farm and the junction, taking the water towards a nearby gully. The issue of water seeping through the road surface was still being investigated, although it was suspected that a high water table might be the reason for this seepage. The Council was not convinced that this would resolve the problem, as Stocks Cross Roads was at a high point, and clear water (not rain water) was breaking through the road surface, causing a deep pot hole to form. The Clerk was asked to follow this up with WCC Highways.
- (g) Hedge Trimmings left on roads - a complaint had been received by the Clerk, but the Council felt that eventually these trimmings would be pushed to the side of the roads by passing traffic, and did not pose a major problem.

- (h) A complaint had been received that the Horse sign 400 metres south of the White House Cross roads had been placed in the middle of the verge, and should also be on the other side of the road. The Clerk to check this with WCC Highways.
- (i) **Lengthsman Contract** - the Clerk outlined the details of two applicants for the Lengthsman contract. After some discussion, it was agreed that Mr Rob Wilks be awarded the contract for the year 2017/18. Proposed by Cllr P Griffiths and seconded by Cllr A W Huband.

16/17 VAS CAMERA - A report on the stats would be available for the next meeting.

17/17 CHARITY REPORTS - Cllr P Whatley reported that Suckley Charities would be holding their next meeting on 12th April 2017.

18/17 COMMUNITY

- (a) Defibrillator signage & training - Co Cllr P Tuthill reported that he would try and put Cllr A Lewis in contact with Malvern Fire Service to see if they could help with training on a dummy defib
- (b) Suckley Facebook – Cllr P Whatley reported that the Facebook now had about 31 followers, with 50 – 70 hits every week or so.
- (c) SuperFast Broadband – Co Cllr P Tuthill reported that this was creeping towards Suckley from the direction of Leigh Sinton! The main contract for the provision of superfast broadband was moving into a subsequent contract for the hard to reach areas. It would be possible for groups of people to band together and share their own mini cabinet.
- (d) Memorial Service 2018 – Cllr L Devenish agreed to speak to the Vicar about this service, as 11th November 2018 fell on a Sunday.

19/17 FINANCE

- (a) The following cheques were authorised for payment :- Proposed by Cllr C Luton and seconded by Cllr P Griffiths.
General Fund – Clerk’s expenses Jan/Feb 2017 - £62.45; Lengthsman services January 2017 - £231.25 (VAS £10/Services £221.25) - (paid but to be approved); Lengthsman Services - February/March (to be advised); Cheque to Playing Fields Account £500 (donation from Co Cllr P Tuthill for hot water tank); HMRC PAYE Jan/Feb/March 2017 £319.80; Clerk’s Office Oct 2016 – March 2017 £125.00; J Green – cleaning bus shelters £60.00; J Green – Lengthsman management 30/09/16 – 31/03/17 - £144.00.
Playing Fields - KES Electrical Contracting - £130.00 (reconnection of floodlighting on Playing Field)
- (b) **Accounts to 31st January 2017** were approved. Proposed by Cllr A W Huband and seconded by Cllr L Devenish.
- (c) Internal Audit Review & Appointment of Internal Auditor – the Audit Review/checklist had been circulated by the Clerk. This was agreed by the Council and signed by the Chairman. The Council approved the appointment of Linda Cotterill as Internal Auditor. Proposed by Cllr C Luton and seconded by Cllr P Griffiths.
- (d) Nat West Bank – the Clerk reported that she had contacted CALC as requested, but they did not have any facilities for safe storage of documents. No other Banks were offering this facility – they were all withdrawing this service as branches were being closed. Malvern Hills District Council had also been approached, but the Clerk was told they could not store documents due to shortage of space. They send any key papers to Worcestershire County Council who would then send them to be archived at The Hive in

Worcester. Cllr P Whatley had discovered that MHDC was legally obliged to store documents on behalf of the Parish Council if so requested. The Clerk was instructed to make numerous copies of the documents, and then give the originals to MHDC for safe keeping.

20/17 RISK ASSESSMENT

Due to Cllr J Green's illness, Cllr P Whatley had checked the Quarry, Bus Shelters and the Map Board. He would continue to do this for the foreseeable future. Cllr C Luton agreed to carry out the assessments for the Playing Field sports equipment and playground equipment. The Clerk confirmed that she had instructed Mr J Hicks to carry out his annual safety check at the Playing Fields in March.

21/17 PLAYING FIELD COMMITTEE

Cllr C Luton reported that the mole problem was being treated. She thanked Co Cllr P Tuthill for his donation towards the cost of replacing the hot water tank which would be purchased nearer to the summer months. Mowing was urgently needed around the play area, as Duncan was unable to do this with the tractor equipment. Emergency repairs to the floodlighting system had been made so that three of the four lights were now functioning. However, she would be seeking out quotes for new cabling and lighting for consideration at the next meeting.

22/17 COUNCILLOR VACANCY

The Clerk reported that she had informed the Electoral Officer at MHDC of the resignation of Cllr Andrew Grieve, and as no request had been received by the Electoral Officer for an election, the Council was free to co-opt a new member at the next meeting of the Council in May. Notices were being placed on Notice Boards in the Parish, on Facebook and the Council website. Applications to be received by the Clerk by 28th April.

23/17 SUCKLEY CHURCH

Cllr A Lewis reported that the PCC would be holding another BFG (Beer/Food/Gifts) event on 23rd September 2017 as the 2016 one had proved so successful. A Concert would be held at the Church on 1st April.

24/17 SUCKLEY SCHOOL

Cllr L Devenish reported that the School was absolutely full – there was a waiting list and the intake for the next three years was also full. The school desperately needed to expand, and as Suckley was an Academy School it was looking at various funding opportunities. The car parking situation was also desperate, with the plans for the car park still waiting to be signed off. Litter and dog mess in the road and in front of the school was causing problems.

25/17 ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

The Clerk reminded the Council that the Annual Parish Meeting would be held on Monday 22nd May at 7.30 pm in the Village Hall.

26/17 MATTERS FOR FUTURE AGENDA

None raised

DATE OF NEXT MEETING – Monday 8th May 2017 at 7.00 pm

