

## SUCKLEY PARISH COUNCIL

### MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

Held on Monday 11<sup>th</sup> SEPTEMBER 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, Cllr A Lewis, Cllr J Green, Cllr D Findlater

In Attendance: Mrs D Taylor (Clerk), Dist Cllrs A Warburton & S Rouse,  
Co Cllr P Tuthill (who arrived later in the meeting)

10 members of the public also attended the meeting to put forward their views on item 6(a) on the Agenda.

Apologies for absence – Cllr V Bradley . Co Cllr P Tuthill would be attending the meeting later in the evening.

#### **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.**

Cllr Mrs P Griffiths declared a Pecuniary Interest in item 6(a) Cllr Dr A Lewis also declared a Disclosable Interest in item 6(a)

**A request from Cllr A Lewis had been received by the Clerk for a Dispensation relating to item 6(a) on the Agenda. (Sec 33 of the Localism Act 2011). This Dispensation to apply at the present Council Meeting and at all future Council Meetings whilst she was a member of the Council up to May 2019.** She had declared a Disclosable Interest because she and her husband had submitted a representation to the Traffic Commissioner in relation to item 6(a). The Council considered this application. Cllr P Whatley proposed that it be granted, this was seconded by Cllr C Luton, and agreed by the Council.

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

**Litter Picking Project** - Catherine Armstrong was arranging for flyers to be delivered around the Parish for the Litter Picking project on 14<sup>th</sup> October. All the Councillors agreed to deliver flyers in their area of the Parish. Cllr A Lewis suggested that it might be an idea to set up a “leafleting team” when there is a community happening of general interest, such as the Litter Picking.

**Lorry traffic on Knightwick Road** - 10 parishioners attended the meeting to continue pressing their concerns about the size and number of heavy goods vehicles (HGVs) using the Knightwick Road, particularly in relation to the Cold Store.

A request was made by one of the parishioners that the Parish Council should write to the WCC Cabinet Member for Highways, the Cabinet Member for the Environment, the Leader of the County Council and the Development Control Manager for WCC asking them to scrutinise the VOC application for the Cold Store very closely bearing in mind the amount of concern this application had generated. The road from the A44 to Park House Farm was not now suitable for the very large HGV’s being used. Dist Cllr S Rouse pointed out that the Traffic Commissioner could not deny the application due to the state of the road, but would look at the exit and entrance

to the Cold Store. WCC Highways can raise concerns about the state of the road, and the Parish Council could ask Highways if they think the road is suitable for HGV's.

Cllr P Griffiths did not take part in the discussion of this matter in public question time, then left the room during the Parish Council discussion that followed.

### **The Chairman re-opened the formal Meeting of the Parish Council to discuss item 6(a)**

#### **57/17 (a) HIGHWAYS & BYWAYS - Lorry Traffic on Knightwick Road**

The Chairman reported that a considerable amount of work and research had been undertaken since the previous meeting in July, involving both the County and District Councillors. Three distinct elements needed to be looked at in this situation :-

- (i) Planning - all planning applications relating to the development of the Cold Store from the mid 1980's up to 1997 when the last application was made had been requested from MHDC's archives. Those available had been reviewed by both the Chairman and Dist Cllr S Rouse and opinions sought from MHDC's current planning and legal departments. No breaches of planning regulations had been identified. In addition, advice from MHDC was that any planning breach not challenged for over 10 years effectively becomes permitted development.
- (ii) Traffic Commissioner - the Traffic Commissioner produces a report on applications decided or rejected every Friday. No decision had been made in respect of Park House Farm. He had been made aware that a solicitor acting for the owners of the Cold Store had produced a set of proposals intended to be written into any future legal agreement with the Traffic Commissioners. These would restrict the number of vehicles to/from Park House Farm by day and time bands. It would not address all the issues that members of the public had raised, but clearly an accommodation was being sought by the applicants. Co Cllr P Tuthill had also raised a set of questions and answers from the AONB, although they were not a statutory consultee.
- (iii) Highways - the Chairman had monitored lorry movements on 5 occasions and received input from parishioners. Over a reasonable monitoring period (2.5 – 3 hours) HGV movements of all types averaged just under 2 per hour, though it was sometimes the case that 2/3 lorries were recorded within a short period, followed by none for a long period. He had also measured the width of the Knightwick Road at a number of points and other highways providing access to the Parish. It was true that the Knightwick Road was not wide enough for two large lorries to pass, but that was also true of many modern private vehicles, particularly 4 x 4's. Measured road width varied from 4.1 metres to 6.2 metres at the widest point by the site of Suckley Station. However, the Knightwick Road was by far the widest to/from Suckley, other roads narrowing to 3.3metres in several places.

The Parish Council discussed the issue, with some Councillors feeling that not enough was being done to address the concerns of local residents. What had been tolerable in 1986 had now reached unacceptable levels, and the road was not suitable for the volume and weight of lorry traffic. Cllr P Whatley confirmed that the Council had written to WCC Highways about better signage, better and more passing places and general road improvements where possible, but so far we had not received any positive response. The only authority we could have a dialogue with was WCC Highways. His understanding was that getting a prohibition on weight or size would be virtually impossible as this would affect all companies in the Parish, not just the Cold Store. Cllr P Whatley suggested that parishioners keep logs of vehicle movements, and await the Traffic Commissioners Report to see if they are going to impose restrictions. Cllr J Green proposed that the Clerk contact WCC Highways about laying down monitoring strips which would record the

number and weight of vehicles using the road 24 hours a day. This was seconded by Cllr P Whatley and agreed by the Council as an excellent idea.

**The Chairman adjourned the Meeting for continuation of Public Question Time/Participation. All members of the public were invited to stay for the remainder of the meeting if they so wished.**

**Report from District Cllrs** - Dist Cllrs A Warburton and S Rouse reported that the next District Council Meeting would be held on 26<sup>th</sup> September. The new leader would be outlining a 12 point plan for Malvern Hills District. Progress was being made on the redevelopment of the Council House, but plans to demolish Priory Lodge and replace it with a multi purpose conference centre could no longer go forward as it was now a listed building.

Co Cllr P Tuthill then joined the Meeting

**Report from County Councillor** - Co Cllr Paul Tuthill reported on his attendance earlier in the evening at the AGM of the Worcestershire Acute Hospitals Trust. A robust management change was under way with the appointment of a new Chief Executive (Michelle Kay), a new Chairman and new senior executives and directors. The hospitals forming the Trust all needed to be turned round, and £29M had been awarded from Central Government to achieve this turn around. The PFI part of the hospital would now be linked via a corridor to the older Aconbury building which would be completely refurbished. He would be opposing any closure of beds in the Malvern Community Hospital. The bid by the Police & Crime Commissioner to take over the Fire Services of Hereford & Worcester/Shropshire/Telford & Wrekin would be discussed at the next County Council Meeting. This was being met by fierce resistance, and the Fire Services concerned were putting together their own Consultants Report. However, the Hereford & Worcester Fire Service Control would be moving into West Mercia Police HQ at Hindlip, Hereford now had a combined Police & Fire Station as did Bromsgrove. As far as the Park House Cold Store VOC application was concerned, he had received a response from WCC Highways, who had looked in detail at the application. They found that the site and the highway access is not within the AONB, but on its edge. The most direct route for access is turning right out of the site along the C2070 to the A44, which does not go through the AONB and is the one they would promote as the most direct to the highway network. The site is already an HGV generator as there is an established business at the location. The site would be exempt from a weight limit if pursued. WCC Highways cannot currently influence HGV activity in the area, as all traffic has the right to pass and re-pass on the public highway. The Highway Authority has the responsibility to maintain the route, therefore it is irrelevant to this application that the road requires maintenance (this would not be considered by the Traffic Commissioner). Additionally, the Traffic Commissioner who considers all VOC applications takes into account all such licences by the operator and would normally look favourably on any applications for any new VOC where it is for less vehicles than the VOC of the largest or main site, as is the case here. Considering all these points, Highways would generally not comment on the VOC application. They would, however, be looking at the road conditions, and WCC Highways engineers were looking into the possibility of more passing places.

**Lengthsman** - Cllr J Green reported that all was okay with the Lengthsman at the moment, apart from him moving the VAS camera onto the 30 mph pole by Damson Way rather than outside the village hall. The Clerk had contacted him about this. Cllr A Lewis asked that the Lengthsman clear the drain opposite Conference Cottage in Blackhouse Lane.

**Footpaths** - Helen Philpotts reported the some of the bridleway gates had fallen off their hinges. (which was the responsibility of the landowners concerned). The Clerk to contact the Countryside department to see if they could supply new long poles for the rider operated gates. The 30 mph sign outside Holloways had been hit by a contractor, and a number of other signs including the school sign and cross roads sign were hidden by vegetation. The Clerk to contact Highways to see if there could be any objections by landowners if the Lengthsman cut vegetation back around signs.

**Local Police** – Cllr D Findlater reported that the Police crime stats for May and June. May showed 2 Asbo at White House Court & Woodland Road, 1 burglary at the White House area, 2 violent crime (no prosecution) in Damson Way. No reported crimes in Suckley for June, but there were 2 thefts in Alfrick Pound and 1 vehicle crime in Knightwick.

### **The Chairman re-opened the Meeting**

The Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 24<sup>th</sup> July 2017 were approved and signed. Proposed by Cllr C Luton and seconded by Cllr A W Huband.

### **57/17 HIGHWAYS & BYWAYS**

- (a) Lorry Traffic along Knightwick Road - see item 57/17(a) above and Co Cllrs Report
- (b) Horse Sign – Knightwick Road - The Clerk and Cllr J Green had now marked up the Highways map for the location of the Horse Sign. This was on the back of the Cross Roads sign at the White House Cross Roads approaching from Knightwick to Suckley.
- (c) Drainage problems at The Steps, Blackhouse Lane - Co Cllr Paul Tuthill reported that the Co Council engineers were hoping to come up with a solution to this problem.
- (d) Salt & Grit Storage - Cllr J Green confirmed that he had managed to obtain six IBX containers, at an average price of £32 per container. Duncan Reynolds had collected them from Cllr J Green.
- (e) Winter ice on the Cradley arm of Stocks Cross – this was still ongoing with WCC Highways.
- (f) Church Lane – resurfacing. The Clerk had put in a request for resurfacing this lane
- (g) WCC Ref No 364279. Co Cllr P Tuthill to get a drainage engineer to contact Cllr J Green.

### **58/17 VAS CAMERA**

No report as the VAS camera batteries needed replacing. The Clerk had contacted the Lengthsman about this.

### **59/17 CHARITY REPORTS**

- (a) Cllr P Whatley reported that the next meeting of Suckley Charities would be held on 4<sup>th</sup> October.
- (b) Cllr A Lewis and L Devenish reported on the John Palmer Trust (under the umbrella of Worcester Municipal Charities). The JP Trust had been receiving 10% of the WMC allocated funds (for the benefit of Suckley School). However, the WMC had been merged with a bigger charity, but the JPT would now only receive a 1% of allocated funds, which was a much smaller sum than before, even though it was a larger charity. Both Councillors were investigating this change.

### **70/17 COMMUNITY**

- (a) Defibrillator signage & training - Cllr A Lewis reported that the new Defib trainer had arrived, and thanked Co Cllr P Tuthill and the Parish Council for their contributions which had covered the cost of the defib (£390.00). She would be contacting neighbouring parishes to see if they would like to use the Trainer, with perhaps contributing a small donation.
- (b) Superfast broadband - Cllr P Whatley reported that WCC had announced that three more cabinets including upgrades would be installed in Suckley, but he was unsure at the moment as to what areas would be covered.
- (c) Memorial Services 2017 and 2018 – The 2017 Memorial Service falls on a Saturday and the Clerk had contacted the Revd Anne Potter re taking the service. A poppy wreath and crosses had been ordered and had arrived. Cllr C Luton agreed to contact Peter Hibbert to be the bugler. The Clerk confirmed that she had spoken and written to the Revd Michael Vockins who had agreed to conduct the Memorial Service on 11<sup>th</sup> November 2018.
- (d) Memorial site – Cllr P Whatley reported that he had asked Mike Baldwin who mows the Quarry to keep an eye on the slabs for algae and slipperiness. Cllr J Green and Cllr P Whatley to check the trees/leaves falling on the stones in the Autumn.

### **61/17 FINANCE**

- (a) The following cheques were authorised for payment :- Proposed by Cllr P Griffiths and seconded by Cllr C Luton.  
**General Fund** – Clerk’s expenses July/August 2017 - £40.50; Came & Co – Insurance for 2017/18 £951.20; Grant Thornton Audit Fees for 2016/17 £240.00; HMRC PAYE July/Aug/Sept - £324.00; J Green – Salt containers £192.00; RBL Poppy Appeal (27 wooden crosses with poppy & 1 wreath - £57.50; J Green L/Man Management Apr-Sept 2017 £144.00; Clerk’s Office Apr-Sept £125.00. A Lewis – Defib Trainer £390.00  
**Playing Fields** – DJR Farm Services (D Reynolds) Mowing & Strimming £432.00; Water Plus (Severn Trent Water) £13.35
- (b) **Accounts to 31<sup>st</sup> July 2017** were approved. Proposed by Cllr A Lewis and seconded by Cllr J Green.
- (c) The Clerk reported that the External Auditors (Grant Thornton) had approved the Audit Return for 2016/17.

### **62/17 PLANNING ( MHDC for information)**

Ref: 16/014562/FUL  
Applicant: Mr M Dutta  
Proposal: Conversion of redundant private sports hall to dwellinghouse  
Location: Building at Lower Tundridge Farm, Suckley, Worcs WR6 5DR  
Decision: **APPROVAL** (with conditions)

### **63/17 RISK ASSESSMENT**

Cllr J Green had undertaken risk assessments – no problems.

### **64/17 PLAYING FIELD COMMITTEE**

Cllr C Luton reported that Ludus had repaired the see-saw and the slide. A new strut for the Swing had been ordered, but an incorrect one had been delivered. Ludus would be sending a replacement strut which would cost approx. £93.00. Cllr Luton had finally managed to get another electrician to look at the electrics in the Pavilion. Cllr P Whatley proposed, seconded by Cllr P Griffiths that Cllr C Luton be authorised to try and get three quotes for the electrical work necessary, but if only two quotes obtainable, to agree to the most appropriate quote.

Cllr C Luton was also looking at the possibility of installing electric showers instead of a hot water tank. Any work on this would be postponed until the Spring.

**65/17 SUCKLEY CHURCH**

Cllr Anne Lewis reported that Phase 1 was now going out to tender. Fund raising was going well with Concerts in October and the BFG festival to be held on 23<sup>rd</sup> September.

**66/17 SUCKLEY SCHOOL**

Cllr L Devenish reported that all as going well with the school. The school now had 84 pupils, with a September intake of 16.

**67/17 MATTERS FOR FUTURE AGENDA**

None raised

**DATE OF NEXT MEETING – Monday 13<sup>th</sup> November 2017 at 7.00 pm**