

# **SUCKLEY PARISH COUNCIL**

## MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

Held on Monday 12th MARCH 2018 at 7.00 pm in Suckley Village Hall

Present: Cllr P Whatley, Cllr A W Huband, Cllr P Griffiths, Cllr A Lewis, Cllr J Green, Cllr D Findlater

In Attendance: Mrs D Taylor (Clerk), Dist Cllr S Rouse, Co Cllr P Tuthill, Mrs Helen Philpotts (Footpaths), Mrs C Armstrong (Womble Litterpick)

3 members of the public attended the meeting.

Apologies: Cllr C Luton, Cllr V Bradley, Cllr L Devenish, 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.**

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

- (a) A complaint was made to the Council by a resident of the parish regarding the hazardous situation at the White House Cross Roads. The hedge at Haventree made it impossible to have a clear view of traffic travelling along the Knightwick Road. Numerous people (himself included) had experienced a close shave when trying to pull out from the junction. The Chairman and Council agreed that this was an issue. WCC Highways had been informed of the Parish Council's concern several times, but were of the view that sightlines were adequate. They had also rejected suggestions for different traffic flow arrangements, noting that no accidents had been reported at the crossroads. However, the Clerk was asked to write yet again to Highways expressing the Council's concern in view of the increasing number of near misses.
- (b) A new resident in the Parish wished to register his concern about the state of the roads, especially potholes, in the Suckley area. He lived on the boundary of Herefordshire and Worcestershire, so was dealing with both authorities re potholes. He was planning to shadow the lengthsman in Cradley parish with the idea of filling in potholes himself (after some training) and then possibly becoming an unpaid lengthsman and helping out in both parishes. The Clerk informed him that Lengthsmen in Worcestershire (who are under the control of WCC Highways) did not fill in potholes, although they did do this in Herefordshire. Co Cllr P Tuthill stated that the WCC policy re treating potholes in Worcestershire was one of taking out a larger patch of road to retarmac rather than just filling holes.
- (c) Catherine Armstrong reported that she had recruited about 27 - 33 volunteers for the Womble LitterPick on 17<sup>th</sup> March. The Good Neighbour team had helped deliver leaflets around the parish, and people from other areas were enquiring about running a similar project. She and Cllr A Lewis would be liaising with Suckley School re the litter poster competition, and she showed the Council a range of potential poster holders that could be used to display the litter posters at key points in the parish.

**All members of the public present were invited to stay for the remainder of the meeting if they so wished.**

**Report from District Cllrs** - Dist Cllr S Rouse reported that a reception area (with a receptionist) was being planned for the refurbished MHDC offices. New black wheelie bins had now been delivered throughout the area and the new waste collection scheme would be starting from 2<sup>nd</sup> April. A further land supply for building would be required after the current SWDP had expired in 2025

**Report from County Councillor** - Co Cllr P Tuthill circulated a leaflet “Dying to Drive” – a joint initiative between Hereford & Worcester Fire & Rescue service, Herefordshire Council, West Mercia Police and St John Ambulance. This was targeted at young people between the ages of 16 – 20 and detailed the risks of drink driving, speeding, using a mobile phone and not wearing a seatbelt.

**Lengthsman** - Cllr J Green reported on his meeting with the Lengthsman. After some discussion the Council agreed that it was important to keep the services of the Lengthsman, but to set out a detailed plan for key drains to be lifted and thoroughly cleared following the parish drain map.

**Footpaths** - Helen Philpotts reported that she had met up with Jon White from the Countryside Department and had identified the gates for new latches. She would be obtaining the landowners permission for WCC to replace the gate at Hall House. A local landowner was also prepared to legally move a footpath on his land to enable wheelchair access.

**Local Police/Crime** – Cllr D Findlater reported to the meeting. Crime stats for December and 2017 revealed 1 criminal damage/arson at White House Court area in December; 1 violent crime in the White House Court area and 1 burglary in Damson Way area in January 2018. The total crime figure for 2016 was 44, and for 2017 had reduced to 32.

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

The Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 8<sup>th</sup> January 2018 were approved and signed. Proposed by Cllr J Green and seconded by Cllr A W Huband. The Minutes of the Planning Meeting held on 29<sup>th</sup> January 2018 were approved and signed. Proposed by Cllr D Findlater and seconded by Cllr P Griffiths

### **14/18 HIGHWAYS & BYWAYS**

- (a) Drainage problems at The Steps, Blackhouse Lane - Co Cllr Paul Tuthill reported that hopefully work on this would be done in September.
- (b) Church Lane – resurfacing & drainage problems. The Clerk reported that she had been in touch with Hannah Davies at WCC Highways about this. The Highways Team had visited Church Lane in October, but it appeared that they had not jetted the lower parts of the pipe (the section that drains out into the stream) only the top part. Cllr A W Huband reported that his inspection of the pipe revealed that it had been crushed and it should be dug out and replaced. The Clerk was asked to contact Hannah Davies and arrange a site visit. Co Cllr P Tuthill reported that Church Lane was scheduled to be resurfaced in the summer, so it was important to resolve the drainage problems before then.
- (c) Winter ice on the Cradley arm of Stocks Cross – Co Cllr P Tuthill reported that WCC Highways were working on a plan to resolve this problem.

- (d) Stocks Road – Mousehole to Blackhouse Lane junction - The Clerk had contacted WCC Highways re passing places along this stretch of road. WCC had responded by saying they were arranging for “Road Narrows” signage, but were unable to provide any more passing places.
- (e) Satl/Grit Bin Church Lane - Cllr J Green advised the Council that the original site for a salt/grit bin at the corner of Church Lane/Knightwick Road would be unsuitable. A better option would be to site it on the patch of ground between the churchyard gates and Holloways building. The PCC were agreeable to this, with the preference being for a green bin rather than yellow. The Clerk reported that Hannah Davies had forwarded a request for gritting Church Lane to WCC maintenance department for their consideration.
- (f) The Council noted the details and conditions attached to the Traffic Commissioners granting of the application for an Operating Licence at Parkhouse Farm Coldstore.

### 15/18 VAS CAMERA

Cllr D Findlater reported his analysis of the traffic data for January and February 2018. It revealed that 40% of journeys were above the speed limit compared to 50% at the end of 2017. However, there had been a noticeable increase in excessive speeds. Band C offences (51 mph and above) were shown as 46 incidents in 28 days – Church Lane site; 12 incidents in 14 days – Bruff Bank site; 6 incidents in 20 days – Village Hall site. Band B offences (41 – 50 mph) were shown as typically 17 vehicles a day at the Church Lane site; 18 vehicles a day above 40 mph at Bruff Bank and 20 journeys per day at the Village Hall site. He had passed this information on to the local traffic team.

### 16/18 COMMUNITY

- (a) Superfast Broadband - Nothing to report.
- (b) Remembrance Service 2018 – Cllr P Whatley drew the attention of the Council to the “There but not There” project being rolled out throughout the UK. The outline figure of a 1914/18 British “Tommy” in black cast aluminium and in Perspex could be purchased to commemorate the fallen of the Parish. However, he was looking at a number of options. The Clerk had looked into the possibility of getting the road closed during the service, but it would be costly and complex to manage. It was agreed that a road closure would not be pursued.
- (c) Litter Picking Project – As previously minuted, this would be taking place on Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> March. The Clerk agreed to check again with the insurance company re insurance cover for volunteers. Cllr A Lewis reported that the Litter Poster competition was ready to launch and both she would be liaising with the school.
- (d) Other Reports – future projects – to be advised.

### 17/18 FINANCE

- (a) The following cheques were approved and authorised for payment:-  
Proposed by Cllr D Findlater and seconded by Cllr P Griffiths.  
**General Fund** – Clerk’s expenses Jan/Feb 2018 £63.34; Lengthsman Jan 2018 £259.20 (paid, but to be approved); Lengthsman Feb 2018 £259.20; HMRC PAYE – Jan/Feb/March 2018 - £324.00; Worcs Calc Training Jan 2018 - £30.00; J Green – Lengthsman Management 1 Oct 2017 – 31 March 2018 - £144.00; J Green – bus shelter cleaning £60.00.  
**Playing Fields** – Npower – Pavilion - £94.75 (paid, but to be approved); Water Plus (Severn Trent) – fixed charges £9.18; DJR Farm Services (D Reynolds) - £114.00 (paid, but to be approved); Adam Cross – Mole Control - £65.00 (paid, but to be approved)
- (b) **Accounts to 31<sup>st</sup> January 2018** were approved. Proposed by Cllr A W Huband and seconded by Cllr P Griffiths.

- (c) **Financial Assistance to Church property/graveyards.**– The Chairman reported to the Council that the Clerk had received advice from NALC (National Association of Local Councils) stating that in their view it may not be legally valid for Parish Councils to give financial assistance to property, buildings or land relating to the affairs of the Church. This would mean that the Council would be unable to give the annual grant to Suckley PCC for the maintenance of the church graveyard (unless it was a closed churchyard). However, Mathon Parish Council (for whom the Clerk also works) had sought advice from a retired Circuit Judge who lived in Mathon. He had studied all the details of the NALC document, and had concluded that “it was lawful for the PC to give financial assistance to the PCC to contribute to the expenses of providing a cemetery in which residents in the PC’s area may be buried.” In view of this advice, the Chairman recommended that Suckley Parish Council continue to support the PCC via the annual graveyard grant. The Parish Council agreed to continue to fund graveyard maintenance on the basis of the advice supplied to Mathon PC.
- (d) Internal Audit Review & Appointment of Internal Auditor – the Clerk had circulated a review which was agreed by the Council. The Council also agreed to appoint Linda Cotterill as the Internal Auditor for the Council. Proposed by Cllr J Green and seconded by Cllr P Griffiths.
- (e) Lengthsman Contract – 2018/19. After a short discussion, the Council agreed to renew the contract with the current Lengthsman – Mr R Wilks – on the same terms and conditions. Proposed by Cllr P Whatley and seconded by Cllr P Griffiths.

#### **18/18 DATA PROTECTION REGULATIONS**

The Clerk had e-mailed the NALC toolkit (63 pages) relating to the new Data Protection regulations coming into force in May 2018. Worcs Calc would be holding a training course which the Clerk would attend. However, the Council needed to appoint a DPO (Data Protection Officer) before the end of May. Cllr P Whatley offered his experience and assistance to the Council and the Clerk in this role.

#### **19/18 PLANNING**

The Council noted the following MHDC Planning Decision :-

App No: 18/00013/HP & 18/00014/LB  
 Location: The Old Post Office, Suckley, Worcs WR6 5EE  
 Proposal: Conversion of integral garage into residential accommodation incidental to the dwellinghouse  
 Decision: Application APPROVED (subject to conditions)

The Council considered the following application :-

App No: 18/00167/HP  
 Location: Knowle Cottage, Suckley, Worcs WR6 5DJ  
 Proposal: Additional room above existing single storey annexe to side of Property

After a short discussion, the Council recommended Approval of the application.

**20/18 RISK ASSESSMENT** - Cllr J Green had undertaken risk assessments – no problems.

#### **21/18 PLAYING FIELD COMMITTEE**

The Clerk reported that Mr J Hicks would be undertaking his annual safety inspection of the Playing Fields in March

### **22/18 SUCKLEY CHURCH**

Cllr A Lewis reported that the builders had been booked, and a new floor would also be laid down next month. The churchyard would continue to be open, but the church building would be closed during the building work. They were looking for a final bit of funding for the boiler, and had received £10K from the lottery fund

### **23/18 SUCKLEY SCHOOL**

It was noted that the school was currently running at full capacity. Cllr A Lewis passed a request to the Council from Cllr V Bradley regarding new outside litterbins for the school with lids on (not flip lids) to prevent birds from diving into the bins for waste food. After discussion and input from Mrs Philpotts, the Parish Council asked Cllr A Lewis to seek more clarity from the school regarding this request.

### **24/18 MATTERS FOR FUTURE AGENDA**

None raised.

Change of dates for meetings as follows:- 9<sup>th</sup> July to move to 23<sup>rd</sup> July and the September meeting is now on **3<sup>rd</sup> September** (moved from 24<sup>th</sup> September as the 3<sup>rd</sup> is nearer to the original date of 10<sup>th</sup> September).

**DATE OF NEXT PC MEETING – Monday 14<sup>TH</sup> MAY 2018 at 7.00 pm - Suckley Village Hall.**

**ANNUAL PARISH MEETING – 7.30 P.M. MONDAY 21<sup>ST</sup> MAY in Suckley Village Hall.**