

SUCKLEY PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH COUNCIL MEETING Held on Monday 13th MAY 2019 at 7.00 pm in Suckley Village Hall

Present: Cllr P Whatley, Cllr C Luton, Cllr J Green, Cllr R Hill, Cllr R Hooper
Cllr A Lewis, Cllr P Griffiths

In Attendance: Mrs D Taylor (Clerk), Dist Cllr S Rouse, Mrs Helen Philpotts (Footpaths)

Two members of the public attended the meeting.

Election of Chairman Cllr P Whatley was Proposed by Cllr A Lewis
Seconded by Cllr P Griffiths

The Chairman signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office & Code of Conduct

As this meeting followed a Council election held on 2nd May 2019, all Councillors present signed their Declaration of Acceptance of Office & Code of Conduct. The Council agreed that re-elected Cllr Liz Devenish could sign her Declaration of Acceptance of Office & Code of Conduct at the next Council meeting on 1st July 2019.

The Chairman welcomed the two newly elected members onto the Council – Cllr R Hill and Cllr R Hooper.

Apologies for absence – Co Cllr P Tuthill, Cllr A W Huband, Cllr L Devenish

Election of Vice-Chairman Cllr J Green was Proposed by Cllr P Whatley
Seconded by Cllr C Luton

Cllrs were reminded of the need to complete a new Register of Interests form and a Return of Expenses Form (even if no expenses were incurred) to be sent to the Monitoring Officer at MHDC within 28 days of election.

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 Chairman then adjourned the Meeting for Public Question Time/Participation

A complaint was received from one of the parishioners attending the meeting relating to a collapsed road drain which was covered in weeds, opposite Wells Cottage in Knightwick Road. Cllr J Green and Clerk to liaise with the Lengthsman, and if necessary report this to WCC Highways. Also a problem stile near to the same property. Helen Philpotts, Footpaths Officer, to investigate.

A complaint from another parishioner related to the speeding of vehicles in the Suckley Green/White House Cross Roads area, with a request that the 30 mph limit be extended out to the other side of Suckley Green. Whilst in total agreement with this request, Cllr P Whatley reported

that WCC Highways held the view that the speed limit was appropriate. He would, however, look into this again and take the matter up with Co Cllr P Tuthill. Dist Cllr S Rouse reported that she had spoken to the Police Crime Commissioner about speeding problems in rural areas, but the Police have insufficient manpower to attend every location where speeding is reported, even if Highways could be persuaded to extend the 30 mph limit.

A query relating to the Baston Hall planning application was raised. Cllr P Whatley confirmed that all planning applications were dealt with by the standard procedure laid down by the local authority. Any member of the public was permitted to speak at a planning meeting. Each application was judged on its own merits and any previous application was deemed to be irrelevant to the discussion.

Report from County Councillor - No Report

Report from District Cllrs – Dist Cllr Sarah Rouse reported that Malvern Hills District Council now had a greatly improved new reception area, with staff available to help with enquiries. Discussions and negotiations were ongoing following the District Council Elections as there was no group with a large enough majority to take control of the Council.

Lengthsman - Cllr J Green reported that the Lengthsman had carried out all tasks as requested, and cleared the BT blocked drain. The Clerk reported that she had still not received a signed contract back from the Lengthsman, but was chasing him for this. The Chairman noted that the Lengthsman could not be reimbursed without a valid contract in place. As the Lengthsman was no longer authorised to dig out drains, the Council agreed to try and compile a list of other tasks he could be asked to undertake. Cllr R Hill to look into the possibility of the Lengthsman painting the milestones in the parish.

Footpaths - Helen Philpotts reported that the tree branch hanging over the footbridge problem had been resolved. She would be investigating the footpaths issue near to Wells Cottage. More footpaths walkers were needed and she would be asking for volunteers at the Annual Parish Meeting on 20th May.

Local Police – No Report

The Chairman then re-opened the Meeting

29/19 STANDING ORDERS

The Council noted the new Model Standing Orders (adopted in September 2018)

30/19 CODE OF CONDUCT

The Council noted the Code of Conduct (adopted in June 2012)

31/19 FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

The Council noted the Financial Regulations (adopted in September 2016)

32/19 RISK ASSESSMENT

The Council noted the Risk Assessment Schedule prepared by the Clerk and circulated to all Councillors. Included in this schedule was Insurance cover which was not due to be renewed until October 2019.

33/19 NOMINATION OF COUNCILLORS

Councillors were nominated to various posts as follows:-

Election of Councillor responsible for Planning -

Cllr Mrs P Griffiths

Proposed by Cllr C Luton
Seconded by Cllr P Whatley

Election of Council Representatives on Charities:-

John Palmer Educational Trust –

Cllr L Devenish
&
Cllr A Lewis

Proposed by Cllr C Luton
Seconded by Cllr P Griffiths
Proposed by Cllr J Green
Seconded by Cllr P Whatley

Suckley Charities - Cllr A W Huband
&
Cllr P Whatley

Proposed by Cllr J Green
Seconded by Cllr C Luton
Proposed by Cllr P Griffiths
Seconded by Cllr A Lewis

Alfrick Educational Charity –

Cllr L Devenish
&
Cllr A Lewis

Proposed by Cllr J Green
Seconded by Cllr P Griffiths
Proposed by Cllr C Luton
Seconded by Cllr J Green

The Hill Trust – Cllr R Hill

Proposed by Cllr P Whatley
Seconded by Cllr C Luton

Election of Council Representatives on the Playing Fields Committee -

Cllr P Griffiths

Proposed by Cllr P Whatley
Seconded by Cllr A Lewis
Proposed by Cllr P Griffiths
Seconded by Cllr P Whatley
Proposed by Cllr P Whatley
Seconded by Cllr J Green

Cllr J Green

Cllr C Luton

Election of Council Representative on Worcs CALC Area Committee

(vacancy not filled)

Election of Councillors with special responsibilities:-

Police - Cllr R Hooper

Proposed by Cllr P Whatley
Seconded by Cllr C Luton

NHS - Cllr A Lewis

Proposed by Cllr P Griffiths
Seconded by Cllr J Green

Suckley School Board of Governors

No automatic place on the School Board for a Parish Council representative. However, Cllr L Devenish had previously agreed to keep the Council informed on school matters.

34/19 CHARITY ACCOUNTS

The Charities had submitted their Accounts and these were perused by the Council. Accounts had not yet been received from the Hill Trust, or the John Palmer Trust. Cllr R Hill offered to look into the Brookes Memorial Fund Accounting Report. The Clerk drew the attention of the Council to the confidential/sensitive information contained in the Alfrick Educational Charity Report – this information to be redacted by the Clerk for the Annual Parish Meeting.

The Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 11th March 2019 were approved and signed Proposed by Cllr C Luton and seconded by Cllr P Griffiths. The Minutes of the Council Planning Meeting held on 29th April 2019 were approved and signed. Proposed by Cllr J Green and seconded by Cllr P Whatley.

35/19 HIGHWAYS & BYWAYS

- (a) Winter ice on the Cradley arm of Stocks Cross – work on this had now been completed.
- (b) Overhanging trees – Knightwick Road. Nothing as yet had been done about this – still on WCC Highways list. Co Cllr P Tuthill to report.
- (c) Blocked drain/ditch at Stocks Cottages. Cllr J Green reported that the Lengthsman had cleared around the drain as requested by Hannah Davies at WCC Highways. Clerk had e-mailed Hannah Davies requesting further action.
- (d) Outstanding repair for drain cover – Blackhouse Lane. Clerk had chased this up with Hannah Davies yet again. Ref: 636955
- (e) Damaged railing – corner of Blackhouse Lane. This had now been repaired.
- (f) Sign for Longley Green (opposite the bus shelter). Cllr J Green had spoken to Hannah Davies about this when she visited re (c) above.
- (g) Damage to 30 mph signs. Both the Chairman and Clerk had reported this to WCC Highways who appear to misunderstand the problem, so it is still outstanding.
- (h) Blocked drain No 57. Clerk had reported this to WCC Highways Ref: C2064. Still outstanding.
- (i) Closure of C2070 Suckley Road, Knightwick for 5 days commencing 20th June. Cllr P Whatley reported that BT Open Reach would be laying new fibre optic ducting. The proposed diversion route was not an ideal solution. He had spoken to Co Cllr P Tuthill about this and would be pursuing the matter with Highways.
- (j) Cllr P Whatley had reported a flooding issue at the bottom of Birchwood Road to WCC Highways.
- (k) Cllr C Luton reported that the sightlines and potential for an accident at the White House Cross Roads still remained a major issue, and requested that this ongoing problem be Minuted.

36/19 VAS CAMERA (in Alfrick Parish until 13th May)

Cllr P Whatley to contact Darran Findlater to see if he was still willing to analyse the VAS stats.

37/19 CHARITY REPORTS - No further reports received.

38/19 COMMUNITY

- (a) Discussion of new potential projects for 2019 included the Woodlands Trust Tree Planting Scheme – a Parish Picnic in the Playing Fields – an updated Parish information pack for newcomers to the area. These suggestions to be researched further. The Wombles Litter-Picks were now an established parish event thanks to Catherine Armstrong.

39/19 FINANCE

- (a) The following cheques were authorised for payment :- Proposed by Cllr J Green and seconded by Cllr P Griffiths.
General Fund – Clerk’s expenses March/April 2019 - £71.49; D W Taylor (clerk’s salary adjustment for April 2019 - £21.64 (net). Worcs Calc subscriptions & Nalc affiliation fees 2019/20 - £384.50; LCCA (Linda Cotterill) Audit Fee £84.00.
Lengthsman March 2019 - £187.20 (paid but to be approved)
Playing Fields - John Hicks & Associates – Playing Field Inspection - £68.40
- (b) **Grants/Donations**
- (i) Suckley PCC – maintenance of graveyards (2019/20) - £200.00 Proposed by Cllr C Luton and seconded by Cllr J Green
- (ii) Suckley Playing Fields Grant 2019/20 - £1000.00 Proposed by Cllr R Hill and seconded by Cllr J Green
- (c) **Accounts to 31st March 2019** were approved. Proposed by Cllr C Luton and seconded by Cllr P Griffiths. These were signed by the Chairman and the Clerk.

40/19 APPROVAL OF ANNUAL AUDIT for Accounts to 31st March 2019 (as an Exempt Authority)

- (a) The Council resolved that as the income or expenditure of the Council was less than £25K p/a the Council met the criteria to be considered an “Exempt Authority” and did not have to forward a return to the External Auditors. Proposed by Cllr P Whatley and seconded by Cllr J Green. However, the Annual Return did have to be completed and signed, and posted onto the Parish Council website. The statement of exemption was signed by the Chairman and the Clerk to be forwarded to the External Auditors.
- (b) **Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement** (Signed by the Chairman & Clerk)
Proposed by Cllr C Luton and seconded by Cllr A Lewis
- (c) **Section 2 – Accounting Statement.** (Signed by the Chairman and the Clerk)
Proposed by Cllr J Green and seconded by Cllr P Whatley

41/19 PLAYING FIELD COMMITTEE

Cllr C Luton thanked the Parish Council for its grant for the maintenance of the Playing Fields. Unfortunately the junior boys football team who had been using the pitch and Pavilion would be moving back to Worcester. This would have an impact on the financial health of the Playing Fields in the coming year. The broken see-saw and matters raised in Mr John Hick’s inspection report were being resolved. Cllr Luton would be contacting Ludus – the equipment provider. Suckley School wanted the use of the Playing Fields/Pavilion on 25th June and 3rd July. Cllr R Hill made a generous donation of £100 for the hire of the Playing Fields.

42/19 RISK ASSESSMENT

All risk assessment forms had been completed – no problems (other than those raised by Mr J Hicks re Playing Fields).

43/19 SUCKLEY CHURCH

Cllr A Lewis reported that things were moving in the right direction. The gas connection to the new kitchen was close to completion, with a water connection being the next item on the Agenda. The chair fund raising was going well. The new chairs would allow much more space to be used.

44/19 SUCKLEY SCHOOL - No Report

45/19 ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

The Clerk reminded the Council that the Annual Parish Meeting would be held on Monday 20th May at 7.30 pm in the Village Hall. Cllr C Luton agreed to provide some goodie bags for the Suckley pupils taking part in the presentation.

46/19 MATTERS FOR FUTURE AGENDA

None raised

DATE OF NEXT MEETING – Monday 1st July 2019 at 7.00 pm