

# **SUCKLEY PARISH COUNCIL**

## **MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING**

**Held on Monday 20<sup>th</sup> SEPTEMBER 2021 at 7.00 pm in Suckley Village Hall**

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

**In Attendance:** Mrs D Taylor (Clerk), Mrs H Philpotts – (Footpaths Warden), PC Jon Hand (West Mercia Police)

Two members of the public attended the meeting (one in relation to a planning application)

**Apologies:** Cllr L Devenish, Cllr A W Huband, Co Cllr K Hanks, Dist Cllr S Rouse

- (a) Cllrs were reminded of the need to complete/update their Register of Interests**
- (b) Declaration of any Disclosable Pecuniary Interests (DPI) in items on the Agenda – or -**
- (c) Declaration of Other Disclosable Interests in items on the Agenda falling within the terms of para 12(4)((b) of the Code of Conduct.**

**Cllr P Whatley stated that as a District Cllr he would not take part in any discussions relating to Planning items on the Agenda.**

**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 (including planning applicant/s or their representatives)**

- (1) The applicant re item 5(b) on the Agenda, App No 21/01199/CU outlined the background and reasons for this planning application.
- (2/3) No comments were forthcoming from members of the public present.

**Report from County Councillor** - The Clerk had not received a report from Co Cllr Karen Hanks. However, the following morning the Clerk picked up an e-mail with a report attached, but unfortunately it had not arrived in time for the meeting. In this report Co Cllr Hanks listed a discretionary payment she had made to Suckley SPACE; she had raised the issue of very poor broadband speeds in areas of Suckley/Longley Green; she had made a visit to the Envirosort Plant in Norton, Worcester, and she was looking into the list of highways issues the Clerk had sent to her. This report has been e-mailed to Cllrs.

**Report from District Cllrs** – Dist Cllr P Whatley reported on the revised South Worcs Development Plan (SWDPr) which had been delayed further due to slow information provision by Worcs CC Highways (now resolved) and also Severn Trent Water and Western Power (ongoing). A recent Appeal decision in Rushwick had caused attention as the Inspector allowed the Appeal based on his view that MHDC did not, when the original planning application was made, have a 5 year housing land supply. However, in the same report, the Inspector also stated clearly that MHDC does – in his view – now have a 5-year supply. Therefore, the existing SWDP Plan still applies and with it a presumption of no building outside settlement boundaries. MHDC finances were sound, with central government generously funding rural areas. The

number of claims for government grants/financial help had dropped considerably since April/May. Both he and Dist Cllr S Rouse had been busy with the project for 30 mph scarecrows in high viz jackets dotted along the 30 mph roads in Leigh & Bransford. These had proved to be very effective, and the idea might be extended into Malvern Link area. The former town clerk at Tenbury had been elected as a District Cllr and had joined the Independent Group which was now the majority Group on MHDC. Dist Cllr Whatley responded to a question from the Chairman Cllr R Hill re homeless people in the MHDC area. He confirmed that the number of homeless people was quite low. There were about 7 at one point, but this was now down to 3, all of whom had been taken in to hostels or shelters. A target build of 550 affordable houses from 2020 – 2025 had been set. So far, about 224 had been built.

**Lengthsman** - The Clerk reported that in June the Lengthsman had been working to clear vegetation at the White House Cross Roads, Longley Green and Birchwood. He had also strimmed back along Church Lane down to the school. His invoice/timesheets were now being set out correctly in line with WCC Highways requirements.

**Footpaths** – Helen Philpotts reported that she would be speaking to the owners at Baston Hall re putting a gate back up which had fallen down. The Clerk agreed to write to Jon White (Countryside Department) re advising the department of footpath issues. Helen was willing to take up training to use the Volunteer Point System of reporting.

**Local Police** – PC 2483 Jon Hand from West Mercia Police attended the meeting to report on policing/crime issues. He was part of the Safer Neighbourhood Team for Kempsey & Alfrick which included Suckley. Fortunately there were no specific crime trends in the area. He drew the attention of the Council to a new website – Neighbourhood Matters – [www.neighbourhoodmatters.co.uk](http://www.neighbourhoodmatters.co.uk) - where parishioners could sign up for Police updates/crime prevention/ongoing incidents. He was very much aware of the speeding concerns in Suckley and surrounding parishes.

## **67/21 PLANNING**

The Council considered the following Planning Applications :-

(a) App No: 21/01566/HP  
Location: Crews Hill House, Crews Hill, Alfrick, Worcs WR6 5HF  
Proposal: Conversion of outbuilding into ancillary accommodation

*The Council supported this application and had no objections.*

(b) App No: 21/01199/CU  
Location: Barn as (OS 7235 5102) Stocks Farm, Suckley  
Proposal: Change of use of existing redundant farm building to Class B1 (business) use including construction of single storey extension.

*The Council supported this application and had no objections.*

(c) App No: 21/01601/HP  
Location: The ByeWays, Birchwood Road, Suckley, Worcs WR6 5DT  
Proposal: Demolition of existing single storey garage and storage building and replacement with a new single storey garage and storage building.

*The Council supported this application and had no objections*

**Planning - For information only:-**

- (d) Planning application re Conference Centre at Harp Farm (near to Lower Mosewick Farm, Longley Green). Herefordshire Planning Ref No P212514F. As this site was in Herefordshire, Suckley PC had not been consulted. Cllr R Hill had contacted Herefordshire Planning about this as it would have an impact on Longley Green in Suckley parish. The Herefordshire Planning Office had agreed to extend the date for comments to 2<sup>nd</sup> October to give Suckley residents time to send in their views on this proposed conference centre.
- (e) **Prior Approval** had been granted by MHDC Planning for the creation of a hardstanding track for agricultural purposes at Lower House, Suckley, Worcs WR6 5DQ. App Ref: 21/01090/AGR.
- (f) Erection of a detached double garage & demolition of shed at 2 Pewcroft Cottages, Suckley, Worcs WR6 5DG had been **Approved** by MHDC Planning.
- (g) Replacement of a three bay concrete garage with a two bay oak framed garage at Tile House, Birchwood, Storridge, had been **Approved** by MHDC Planning.

**68/21 MINUTES**

The Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 12<sup>th</sup> July 2021 were approved and signed. Proposed by Cllr P Whatley and seconded by Cllr A Lewis. The Minutes of the Extraordinary Meeting & Planning Meeting held on 16<sup>th</sup> August 2021 were approved and signed. Proposed by Cllr P Griffiths and seconded by Cllr J Green.

**69/21 CHARITY REPORTS**

The Brookes Memorial Report had been moved to 8<sup>th</sup> November Meeting. Cllr P Whatley reported that the Suckley Charities meeting would be held in November. A replacement would have to be found for Cllr A W Huband as the second Trustee representing the Parish Council. This item to be on the Agenda for the November meeting.

**70/21 HIGHWAYS & BYWAYS**

The Clerk had circulated an update to Cllrs re Parish Highways issues still outstanding up to 31<sup>st</sup> August 2021. This update had also been sent to Co Cllr K Hanks and Hannah Davies at WCC Highways. It was noted that a number of problem areas were still outstanding from a meeting held with Cllr P Whatley and Cllr R Hill with Hannah Davies in October 2020. The Clerk to arrange a further site meeting with Hannah Davies, Co Cllr K Hanks, Cllr R Hill and Cllr P Whatley. Cllr P Whatley reported that overgrown vegetation/shrubs/trees at Birchwood up to Bye Ways. This would need attention by WCC Highways, especially the overhanging trees.

**71/21 VAS CAMERA**

VAS Suckley stats up to 27<sup>th</sup> June 2021 had been circulated to Cllrs by the Clerk for the July meeting. These showed that the highest rate of speeding was along the Knightwick Road by the Village Hall and Church Lane. The Clerk reported that Alfrick & Lulsley Parish were looking to purchase a new VAS camera, leaving Suckley with the original VAS purchased some years ago. At the moment, Alfrick was supplying Suckley with the speeding stats analysis. The Clerk had looked into purchasing a new VAS via the Police & Crime Commssioner budget, but so far no response. Co Cllr Karen Hanks had offered £3K from her Suckley Parish budget to purchase a new VAS. Cllr P Whatley reported that the 30 mph scarecrows in Leigh & Bransford had been very effective in reducing speeding. Cllr A Lewis offered to look into setting up a community project to make some scarecrows for Suckley. The Clerk to contact Jacqui Barker at Leigh &

Bransford re funding opportunities for a new VAS. Cllr A Lewis suggested setting up a Country Driving Code for drivers, making them aware of the risks and hazards of driving in the countryside. Cllr P Whatley agreed to speak to WCC Highways about this idea.

#### **72/21 COUNCILLOR VACANCY**

The Council accepted the letter of resignation from the Council from Cllr Walter Huband. The Council wished to minute its appreciation of Walter's outstanding contribution to the Council and Suckley parish generally over the 60 plus years he had been a Councillor. Ideas to be submitted to the Chairman and/or the Clerk as to how best to thank Walter for his dedication to the Suckley community.

#### **73/21 COMMUNITY**

- (a) **Parish Information Pack** - Cllr A Lewis reported that the packs were being distributed, but it was important to keep them updated. The Chairman thanked Cllr Lewis for all her hard work in organising this community project.
- (b) **Memorial Site – The Old Quarry** - The new stone trough had now been put in place at the memorial site. The Revd Anne Potter would be saying a few words of dedication prior to the Remembrance Service on 11<sup>th</sup> November. The Clerk to order 20 poppy crosses (Cllr P Whatley already had some crosses and poppy wreaths in store) and to contact Peter Hibbert re playing the bugle for the service.
- (c) **Queen's Platinum Jubilee – 2022** - An extended bank holiday, from Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> June to Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> June 2022 had been set aside to celebrate the Queen's seventy years of service to the country. Various options to celebrate this Jubilee were discussed by the Council – these included the Queen's Green Canopy (a national project for planting a commemorative tree or trees); supporting Suckley school Jubilee Party event on the Playing field on 27<sup>th</sup> May; supporting the lighting of a beacon/bonfire (another national Jubilee event) at Pewcroft together with a pig roast; the possibility of parishioners holding garden parties over the bank holiday period.

#### **74/21 FINANCE** - The following cheques were approved :-

- (a) **Gen Fund** – - proposed by Cllr C Luton and seconded by Cllr P Griffiths :-  
D W Taylor, Clerk's expenses July/August 2021 - £70.29; R Wilks - Lengthsman June 2021 - £90.00; Lengthsman July/August to be advised; HMRC PAYE July/August/September 2021 - £411.60.  
Already paid but to be approved – Stonemasons of Worcester Ltd - £495.00 (Memorial Trough final payment);
- (b) **Playing Field** – Proposed by Cllr P Whatley and seconded by Cllr J Green :-  
D Reynolds (DJR Farm services) – Topping Playing Field £84.00;  
Direct Debit – Water Plus – 09 June – 19 Aug 2021 - £13.58
- (c) **Accounts to 31<sup>st</sup> July 2021** were approved. Proposed by Cllr P Whatley and seconded by Cllr J Green.
- (d) **Insurance Renewal** - The Clerk had obtained two quotes for insurance renewal, and recommended the quote from Zurich Municipal as the best value for money. The Council agreed with this recommendation and the payment of £1,032.62 was proposed by Cllr P Whatley and seconded by Cllr J Green.

#### **75/21 HILL TRUST/VILLAGE HALL**

Cllr R Hill reported that the Hall Committee members had met four or five times since the last Parish Council meeting to discuss how best to improve the hall following the substantial grants from central government to compensate for the hall closure during covid. In addition to this, the committee had been approached by the local pre-school playgroup/nursery regarding using the

hall Monday to Friday. This would mean the hall having to make some interior changes, and would exclude the use of the hall for other groups in the parish. A Trust member had written to the Charity Commission to see if this was permissible. He also reported that Steve & Carol Boughton were resigning as Trustees of the Hill Trust at the end of the year. The Trust Deeds were very much out of date, but allowed two representatives from the Parish Council to be Trustees. As Cllr Walter Huband had now resigned from the Council, a replacement Trustee was needed.

#### **76/21 PLAYING FIELD**

Cllr C Luton reported that two different groups would be using the all weather pitch on Mondays and Wednesdays from 4<sup>th</sup> October. Weeding around the all weather pitch was needed, and Helen Philpotts agreed to speak to the school contractor. A parishioner had sent in a request for outdoor adult keep fit/gym equipment to be installed on the Playing Fields. After considerable discussion, the Council felt that taking into account the cost of buying/installation/maintenance it would not be cost effective for the very minimal use (if any) of this equipment by parishioners. It would also be difficult to prevent children from playing on it.

#### **77/21 RISK ASSESSMENT**

Cllr R Hill reported no issues re risk assessment for the bus shelters, trees in quarry and the Map Board. Cllr C Luton reported all was well with the Playing Field.

#### **78/21 SUCKLEY CHURCH**

Cllr A Lewis reported that money was now available for the installation of the toilets/kitchen facilities, but unfortunately they could not be fitted until around the Easter holidays next year. Disabled friendly access was now the next project for fundraising. Temporary plastic grass had been laid for a footpath up to the church. The Council expressed their appreciation to all the volunteers who worked so hard to maintain the church graveyard.

#### **79/21 SUCKLEY SCHOOL**

It was reported that the school building and outside areas were looking very tired. Grass and tarmac areas for playing needing replacing as well as the playground equipment both indoors and outdoors. This item to be on the Agenda for the next meeting in November.

#### **80/21 MATTERS FOR FUTURE AGENDA**

None raised

**Date of next meeting – Monday 8<sup>th</sup> November at 7.00 pm**

