

SUCKLEY PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

Held on Monday 11th MARCH 2013 at 7.00 pm in Suckley Village Hall

Present: Cllr A W Huband, Cllr J Green, Cllr C Luton, Cllr P Whatley,
Cllr P Griffiths, Cllr A Grieve, Cllr B Kearley.

Apologies: Cllr A Lewis, Cllr L Devenish, Mr Richard Harward & Mr Peter Markins
(Footpaths Wardens), Dist Cllr D Hughes

In Attendance: Mrs D Taylor (Clerk), 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. No requests had been received by the Clerk for any Dispensations relating to items on the Agenda. (Sec 33 of the Localism Act 2011)

Cllr B Kearley declared a DPI regarding Airband (Broadband Service)

The Meeting was adjourned for Public Question Time/Participation

Mr Pat Lewis gave a short presentation to the Council relating to proposals for the use of the Playing Fields. Firstly, he would like to use the whole facility more and offer holiday sport/football days on the astro pitch. The astro pitch could also be used for evening Futsal sessions with local youths on a turn up and play basis, as well as some training for local Futsal squads. He hoped that this would make the facility work for local people and keep it in use, as well as generating more income for the Council than it does now. Secondly, as the coach for the Leigh & Bransford Badgers Football Club, the Club might be able to help with maintenance and upkeep of the facility. There would be the possibility of a mini soccer pitch on the same site as the field is large enough. Thirdly, because of his links with the FA, he might be able to get better drainage for the pitch, but this would need some commitment from the Council about the Club using the facility long term and having its own storage on site. The Chairman thanked Mr Lewis for his presentation and assured him that these suggestions would be considered later in the meeting.

Report from County Councillor - No report received

Report from District Cllrs – Dist Cllr A Warburton reported again to the Council on the potential changes to the refuse collection system in the MHDC area. This would mean fortnightly collections of recyclable waste using wheelie bins, with the retention of weekly collection bags for household waste. At the last meeting of the Council, he had proposed this scheme should go back to MHDC for formal approval. He also continued to be against the Newland development within the South West Worcestershire Development Plan and had now severed his connection with the Conservative party. He intended to stand as an Independent Councillor in future elections.

Lengthsman Report - Cllr J Green reported that the Lengthsman was doing very well and as always had been working very hard.

Footpath Wardens Report – The footbridge over the brook on Joe Ropers land, footpath SU776, had been removed by WCC due to bank erosion making it dangerous to use. This had been closed back in September 2012 when it was listed for repair and re-instatement. However, due to bad weather conditions this had not been done, and at the moment there was no completion date available.

The Clerk reported that she had received an e-mail from Cllr P Whatley on 29th January 2013 regarding the landslip affecting the footpath in the vicinity of the Old Chapel Longley Green. Mr Cale was concerned with the slippage of land above a footpath, forming part of his property which descended from his house towards Cradley Brook. The slippage emanated from land forming part of the property known as The World's End. Mr Cale had previously spoken to Cllr Carol Luton and Peter Markins (Footpath Warden). Mr Markins had alerted the footpath supervisory agency at Worcestershire County Council (WCC) and a representative from that agency had attended the scene on 28th January. The owner of World's End had committed to remedy the situation, though without a stated timescale, and WCC were not minded to close the footpath temporarily pending works. Cllr P Whatley felt it was important that this implied responsibility in making a decision to keep the footpath open was placed on record in case any mishap occur to a member of the public using the footpath before repairs were made. However, a month later repairs had been effected to the landslip and the footpath restored. The footpath had also been inspected by Peter Markins.

Local Police – A nil report for crime in Suckley for February 2013.

The Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 14th January 2013 were approved and signed. Proposed by Cllr C Luton and seconded by P Whatley.

16/13 HIGHWAYS & BYWAYS

- (a) Footpaths – nothing further to report.
- (b) Lengthsman – The Council agreed to renew the Lengthsman Contract with Barrie Bennett for 2013/14, keeping the level of pay to £12 per hour. Proposed by Cllr P Whatley and seconded by Cllr P Griffiths.
- (c) Replacement of domed metal cage at the bottom of Birchwood Lane (at the side of the water depth gauge). Ref 4430212. The Clerk reported that she had spoken to Gerry Brienza about this and according to him the work had been done. However, Cllr J Green had inspected the site and the work had not been done, just a kerb laid down. The Clerk to chase again.
- (d) The Boat House Suckley WR6 5DL – (this has been dealt with)
- (e) Collapsed drain in Church Lane was – this had been fixed by the Lengthsman
- (f) Mr Talbot from the White House cottages complex was experiencing flood water up to the steps of his cottage. This was most likely due to no drain on the road side and had been reported to the Land Drainage team – still awaiting action.
- (g) The Corner Cottage at the Knoll – The Clerk had contacted Highways and they would be sending out their Drainage Team.
- (h) Stocks Cross Roads/flooding above Stocks Farm –The Clerk had contacted Highways about writing to Mr Capper, the landowner. Highways had requested a map of the ditches.
- (i) The drain outside the Batch, Suckley was still blocked and needed to be jettied. This had been reported to highways and it appeared to be a broken drain pipe.
- (j) Pewcroft Cottage – this had been resolved. .
- (k) Drain blocked at the entrance to Lower Tundridge Stud - this had been resolved.

- (l) White House Cross Roads – the drain was blocked at the entrance to the old apple orchard. This was mainly caused by tractors and other machinery pushing the mud across the drain. Cllr J Green reported that Derek Philpotts would be putting some hard core down to stop the worst of the mud. However, the ditch was blocked on the roadside and Highways to be requested to write a letter to Derek Philpotts about this.
- (m) Drain Gulley opposite Crews Court – service report for repairs had been requested.
- (n) Drain (collapsed) outside the main entrance to Holloways on the Knightwick Road Service request for repairs had been raised.
- (o) Provision of salt/grit bins – Bye Ways in Birchwood Lane. As requested, the Clerk had written to Betsan Porter suggesting sponsoring a bin. She had not yet received a reply. Cllr John Green had also suggested to Carol Dash about sponsoring a grit bin at Lower Lakes.

The Chairman reminded the Council that Cllr J Green had spent a whole day going round with the Jetting Team from Highways. This had resulted in a high number of drainage problems being resolved. The Council very much appreciated the time and effort made by Cllr J Green. It was proposed by Cllr C Luton and seconded by Cllr P Whatley that Cllr J Green be paid for this extra time as Lengthsman Manager. Cllr J Green to invoice the Council.

17/13 SPEEDING ISSUES

- (a) VAS Camera - The Clerk reported that Leigh & Bransford Parish Council had opted for the higher upgrade to the VAS camera - i.e. £350 plus VAT and £50.00 courier charges – total £480. Following on from this Alfrick had changed their mind and also wanted the higher upgrade. This just left Suckley to decide on the outcome, as all three parishes needed to agree. After some discussion, it was decided that the Council would agree to this higher upgrade. Proposed by Cllr J Green and seconded by Cllr C Luton. The Clerk to inform the other two parishes. Speeding counter – January 2013 – Village Hall 1957 – Opposite Church Lane 966. February - The Bruff – 1576 – Nelson Inn 1472.
- (b) Speeding – Warning Signs - Following the concerns expressed by Mr Tingey at the last Council Meeting re speeding in Suckley Green, the Clerk had contacted Gerry Brienza at County Highways. A Highways Traffic Engineer had visited the site and appreciated the safety issues raised. However, he did not think that the sharp bend warning signs would be beneficial. His suggested solution was to provide T junction warning signs for the junction adjacent to Stores Cottage. If this was acceptable to the Council he would arrange for a works order in the new financial year 2013/14. The Council felt that T junction signs would be wholly inadequate to deal with the speeding issues. The Clerk was asked to find out from the Traffic Management Department if it would be possible to erect triangle signs with an exclamation or hazard warning on them. Proposed by Cllr P Whatley and seconded by Cllr A Grieve.

18/13 CHARITY REPORTS

- (a) Alfrick Educational Charity – report received from Mrs Rosemary Harward. There would be 15 new children coming into Suckley School in the year. The new classroom would be versatile and could be used eventually for a class of 30, as there were 70 children at present and 80 would be anticipated next year, as well as an additional teacher. The Academy status meant that the school received 100% funding instead of 90%, and had proved to be a good move. The new library with extra facilities would encourage reading and was an excellent focus for the school. The children had been making DVDs and CDs with a 17 year old student, James Perrot. There had been two applications for grants, which had been approved.

- (b) Suckley Charities – Cllr P Whatley reported that at the meeting held on 27th February, £100 had been granted to the Evergreen Club. No other applications had been received.

19/13 COMMUNITY PLAN

Nothing to report at the moment. .

20/13 NEIGHBOURHOOD CLUSTERING

Cllr P Whatley reported on his attendance, as representative of Suckley Parish Council, at a meeting held on 5th March. The Neighbourhood Clustering proposal arises from the Neighbourhood Plan. It has the potential for Parish Councils to take on services at a higher level through the Localism Act. Parish Councils could pool precepts and money from MHDC/County to deliver services which at present may or may not be delivered by these Authorities. The Council agreed to keep in communication with the Cluster Group and discuss each issue as it arose.

21/13 BROADBAND SERVICE

Cllr P Whatley felt that the Council needed to push the advantages of Airband by putting in another piece to the Suckley Newsletter. The cost would be in the region of £100 for the equipment, plus £20 per month for 20mgb. A register of interest was not a commitment to signing up, but Airband needed 20-30 confirmed interests before site surveys could be carried out. The Clerk to look into the possibility of a presentation at the Annual Parish Meeting on 20th May.

22/13 FINANCE

- (a) The following cheques were authorised for payment :- Proposed by CllrP Griffiths and seconded by Cllr P Whatley - **General Fund** – Clerk’s expenses Jan/Feb 2013 £43.61; HMRC PAYE £103.20 (Jan/Feb/March 2013); Lengthsman January 2013 £187.50 (already paid but to be approved); Lengthsman February 2013 £216.00 ; Lengthsman March 2013 (to be advised); A J Griffiths – Salt & Grit bin refilling £150.00; J Green – cleaning bus shelters £65.00; J Green – Lengthsman management 1st Oct 2012 to 31st March 2013 £144.00; Clerk’s Office Allowance 1st Oct 2012 to 31st March 2013 £125.00; Hire fees for village hall £168.00.
Playing Fields - Severn Trent Water Bill £709.85 (see under Playing Fields Min Ref 24/13)
- (b) **Accounts to 31st January 2013** were approved. Proposed by Cllr P Whatley and seconded by Cllr C Luton.

23/13 RISK ASSESSMENT

- (a) Cllr J Green had completed the risk assessment forms. Some tiles were splitting under the climbing frame on the Playing Field. Cllr J Green reported that he had asked Chris Wilding to deal with the bus shelter roof for a fixed price of £480 to include materials. Cllr Green already had the slates and ridge tiles. This was approved by the Council. Proposed by Cllr A W Huband and seconded by Cllr C Luton.
- (b) Tree Survey - Cllr C Luton had spoken to Nick Denley, but he was not insured to carry out such a survey. She had tracked down a Mr Gerry Ross who had estimated that his fee would be around £480 Plus VAT (this was for one day). The survey would include a tree location plan and would be valid for 5 years. The Council agreed to a budget of £500 plus VAT for this work. Proposed by Cllr P Whatley and seconded by Cllr J Green.
- (c) The Chairman signed the Internal Audit Review which had been circulated by the Clerk and scrutinised by the Council.

- (d) The Clerk confirmed that she would be contacting Mr Hicks regarding his Annual Safety Inspection of the Playing Fields.

24/13 PLAYING FIELD

- (a) Severn Trent Water Bill - Cllr C Luton reported on the ongoing dialogue with Severn Trent in connection with the unpaid/disputed bill for £709.85 (plus previous paid bills) and the leaking pipe. The Clerk had received a disconnection notice even though Severn Trent had supposedly put this “bill” on hold. Cllr Luton had attended on site in February when a Crew had visited from Severn Trent. After two hours they had decided the leak was not on the field. They could not find the source of the leak, but would be reporting to Severn Trent that there was a very large leakage. Severn Trent would be sending another Crew out to try and find the leak which they suspect is on the highway and the road would, therefore, have to be closed.
- (b) Cllr J Green reported that during his inspection of the Playing Field he had spent two hours collecting rubbish from the field.
- (c) The Council considered the suggestions made by Mr Pat Lewis in his presentation regarding the use of the Playing Fields. After some discussion, it was agreed that the Council would be prepared to take up the first stage i.e. using the facility to offer holiday sport/football days and Futsal sessions on a turn up and play basis plus some training for local Futsal squads. The Clerk to obtain a copy of Mr Lewis’ liability insurance cover.

25/13 PLANNING

The Council noted the following information/refusals/permissions/appeals made by MHDC Planning :-

- (a) Appeal Ref No: APP/J1860/A/12/2181862
Applicant: Mr Derek Philpotts
Site: Applegaard Fruit Farm, Suckley, Worcs WR6 5DJ
Appeal allowed and planning permission granted for an agricultural building for storage of hay and machinery at Lower Applegaard Farm, subject to conditions.
- (b) The Council considered the following applications :-
- (i) App Ref No: 13/00094/HOU
Location: Lower Barrow House, Suckley, Worcs WR6 5EJ
Applicant: Miss Rachael Simon
Proposal: Single storey stone building
The Council recommended Approval.
- (ii) App Ref No: 13/00174/HOU
Location: Lower Barrow Kiln
Applicants: Mr & Mrs B Ward
Proposal: Erection of Porch
The Council recommended Approval
- (iii) App Ref No: 13/00183/HOU
Location: Lower Barrow Kiln
Applicants: Mr & Mrs B Ward
Proposal: Single storey rear extension
The Council recommended Approval

26/13 MALVERN HILLS - AONB Management Review

The Clerk/Council completed the Review.

27/13 SUCKLEY CHURCH

A revised scheme was now being considered. Details to be available in due course.

28/13 SUCKLEY SCHOOL

Cllr P Whatley had looked at the Land Registry site, but none of the options available were suitable for the Parish Council. Cllr A W Huband had passed to the Clerk copies of papers showing that the County Council did not own the site, but these alone would not be sufficient proof. He emphasised the importance of holding a meeting with the County Solicitors, comprising representatives from the Church, the Parish Council and the School Board of Governors. He had been unable, so far, to obtain any information from the Church Solicitors, March & Edwards. The Council agreed that it was essential for the future of the school that this matter be resolved.

29/13 CORRESPONDENCE

All correspondence was available for viewing.

30/13 MATTERS FOR FUTURE AGENDA

Census Information

**DATE OF NEXT MEETING – 7.00 pm Monday 13th May 2013. Annual Parish Meeting
20th May 2013 at 7.30 pm**