

SUCKLEY PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL COUNCIL MEETING  
Held on Monday 13th May 2013 at 7.00 pm in Suckley Village Hall

Present: Cllr A W Huband, Cllr L Devenish, Cllr C Luton, Cllr A Grieve  
Cllr P Whatley, Cllr A Lewis, Cllr J Green

Apologies: Cllr P Griffiths, Co Cllr Paul Tuthill, Mr R Harward/Mr Peter  
Markins (Footpath Wardens)

In Attendance: Mrs D Taylor (Clerk), Dist Cllr A Warburton

**Election of Chairman** Cllr A W Huband was Proposed by Cllr P Whatley  
Seconded by Cllr C Luton  
carried unanimously

The Chairman signed the declaration of Acceptance of office & Code of Conduct

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

- (a) **All Councillors were reminded of the need to complete/update their Register of Interests.**
- (b) **Declaration of any Disclosable Pecuniary Interests in items on the Agenda and their nature.**

**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**

**Report from County Councillor - No Report**

**Report from District Cllrs** – Dist Cllr A Warburton reported on a fairly quiet period at the moment, following the local elections and asked to be informed of any matters of concern within the Parish. The Chairman explained to him the situation regarding the ownership of Suckley School site. Dist Cllr Warburton advised that one way forward would be to write to Worcs County Council and ask for information under the Freedom of Information Act. All present agreed that this was an excellent idea, and the Clerk was asked to compose the letter.

**Lengthsman Report** - Cllr J Green reported no problems with the Lengthsman who, as always, was working very hard

**Footpath Wardens Report** - The Clerk read out a written report from the Footpath Wardens, which would be repeated at the Annual Parish Meeting on 20th May. The team of Harward & Markins had continued to prosper, with the chief occupation over the year being clearing wind blown trees which have been falling and blocking the Worcestershire Way. Some of these trees are potentially dangerous, and the Wardens are asking for help in locating the owners of woods in

the area so that action can be arranged. A new bridge had recently been built replacing the old plank one which crosses the brook forming the boundary between Joe Roper's Lower House Farm and John Lewis' Low Yearsett Farm.

**Local Police** – The Clerk had received a report from the CSO - No reports of any criminal/accident or ASB activity in the parish.

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

**34/13 STANDING ORDERS**

The Council noted the new Model Standing Orders which had been adopted in June 2012

**35/13 CODE OF CONDUCT**

The Council noted the Code of Conduct which had been adopted in June 2012

**36/13 FINANCIAL REGULATIONS**

The Council noted the Financial Regulations which had been adopted in September 2011.

**37/13 RISK ASSESSMENT SCHEDULE**

The Council noted the Risk Assessment Schedule as prepared by the Clerk, which had been circulated to all Councillors.

**38/13 ANNUAL INSURANCE REVIEW**

This was not due until October 2013, as last year the Council signed up to the three year agreement and took up the offer of 16 months cover for the price of 12 (thus moving the renewal date to October)

**39/13 NOMINATION OF COUNCILLORS**

The Clerk reported that former Cllr Rosemary Harward had offered to still attend Charity meetings on behalf of the Council, if the Council so wished. The Clerk had consulted CALC on this matter, and this would be in order if (a) the Parish Council nominated her and (b) the Charity concerned also agreed.

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** – former  
Cllr Mrs R Harward

Proposed by Cllr L Devenish  
Seconded by Cllr C Luton

**Suckley Charities** – Cllr A W Huband  
&  
Cllr P Whatley

Proposed by Cllr A Grieve  
Seconded by Cllr C Luton  
Proposed by Cllr L Devenish  
Seconded by Cllr J Green

**Alfrick Educational Charity** – former  
Cllr R Harward

Proposed by Cllr P Whatley  
Seconded by Cllr C Luton

**The Hill Trust** - vacancy left open

**Election of Council Representatives on Playing  
Fields Committee**

Cllr P Griffiths

Proposed by Cllr A Grieve  
Seconded by Cllr C Luton

Cllr J Green

Proposed by Cllr C Luton  
Seconded by Cllr L Devenish

Cllr C Luton

Proposed by Cllr P Whatley  
Seconded by Cllr L Devenish

**Election of Council Representatives on Worcs CALC  
Area Committee**

Cllr A Grieve  
&  
Cllr B Kearley

Proposed by Cllr C Luton  
Seconded by Cllr P Whatley  
Proposed by Cllr A Grieve  
Seconded by Cllr A Lewis

**Election of Council Representative to Joint Cllrs  
Area Forum**

Cllr A W Huband

Proposed by Cllr Whatley  
Seconded by Cllr C Luton

**Election of Councillors with special responsibilities:**

Police - Cllr A W Huband

Proposed by Cllr A Grieve  
Seconded by Cllr A Lewis

NHS - Cllr A Grieve

Proposed by Cllr C Luton  
Seconded by Cllr J Green

**School Board of Governors**

Cllr L Devenish

Proposed by Cllr C Luton  
Seconded by Cllr A Grieve

School Board of Governors – The Clerk was asked to write to Mr Matt Meekin proposing that Cllr L Devenish be nominated as a Community Governor representing the Parish Council.

**40/13 CHARITY ACCOUNTS**

The Charities had submitted their Accounts and these were perused by the Council and found to be satisfactory. Copy Accounts had not yet been received from the John Palmer Trust and the Hill Trust.

### **41/13 MINUTES**

The Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 11<sup>th</sup> March 2013 were approved and signed, Proposed by Cllr J Green and seconded by Cllr A Grieve. The Minutes of the Special Parish Council Meeting held on 29<sup>th</sup> April were approved and signed. Proposed by Cllr J Green and seconded by Cllr A Lewis.

### **42/13 HIGHWAYS & BYWAYS**

- (a) Footpaths – no further report
- (b) The Clerk reported that the Lengthsman, Mr Barry Bennett, had signed the Council's contract for a further 12 months.
- (c) Lengthsman Scheme Funding for 2013/14 – the grant for the coming year remained fixed at £2006.60p.
- (c) Replacement of domed metal cage at the bottom of Birchwood Lane. The Clerk had been assured by Gerry Brienza of Co Highways that this would definitely be resolved by mid June.
- (d) Potential flooding risk at the Wagon House (Mr Talbot). Cllr J Green/Lengthsman/and the Land Drainage Officer Tom Palmer had viewed the situation. There was no further action that the Parish Council or the Land Drainage Team could take, as the problem lay with lack of ditching in the adjoining field. Mr Talbot would be discussing this with the landowners, with whom he was on good terms.
- (e) Corner Cottage the The Knoll. Again this could only be resolved by agreement with the land owner – Joe Roper and the owner of Corner Cottage. Cllr J Green offered to speak to Joe Roper.
- (f) Stocks Cross Roads/flooding above Stocks Farm. The Clerk had reported this to Highways who had requested a map of the ditches. This had been prepared by Cllr J Green and sent on to Highways for the Land Drainage Team to write to Mr Capper, the landowner.
- (g) Drain outside the Batch, Suckley – this was still an ongoing problem
- (h) White House Cross Roads – blocked ditch. Highways/Land Drainage Authority (LDA) to write to Derek Philpotts.
- (i) Drain Gulley opposite Crews Court – still outstanding. A service report for repairs had been requested by Gerry Brienza.
- (j) Collapsed drain outside main entrance & ditch outside the Garden Centre to Holloways. LDA to send a letter to the landowner – Mr Edward Holloway
- (k) Blocked ditch in Blackhouse Lane - LDA to send a letter to Mr E Holloway.
- (k) Cllr J Green/Clerk reported that the snowflake (ice warning signs) had been removed from their posts in Longley Green – near to the Bruff and by the bridge. The Clerk had reported this to Highways and an order was being raised for replacement signs.

### **43/13 SPEEDING ISSUES**

- (a) VAS Upgrade - The Clerk reported that despite repeated requests to former Co Cllr Clive Smith, he had not carried through his offer to fund the upgrade. The upgrade would now take place with funding being split between the three Parish Councils.
- (b) Speeding Warning Signs - The Clerk reported that the Traffic Engineer at County Highways had informed her that the triangle warning signs the Parish Council had requested did not meet the criteria laid down for the erection of such signs. It appeared, therefore, that the only signing allowed would be the T junction signs. The Council agreed that T Junction signage was better than nothing, and the Clerk was asked to confirm this with Highways.

#### 44/13 NEIGHBOURHOOD CLUSTERING

The Clerk circulated a report from Alfrick & Lulsley Parish Council regarding Neighbourhood Clustering. The Council agreed to just keep an eye on the situation for the time being.

#### 45/13 CENSUS INFORMATION

Cllr P Whatley had extracted information from the Census Report as related to Suckley. This confirmed what the Parish Survey had revealed – that there was a predominantly older village population, with a high proportion of cars per household. It would be vital in the near future to attract younger people into the village, as although Suckley School was full to bursting point at the moment, this was due to children being brought into the School from outside the Parish.

#### 46/13 COMMUNITY PLAN

Nothing to report at the moment, but Cllr A Grieve would be giving an annual resume of events at the Parish Meeting on 20<sup>th</sup> May. Cllr A Lewis reported on the success of the Good Neighbour Scheme, but asked if it would be possible for the Parish Council to grant them a float of £50 for miscellaneous expenses. This was approved by the Council. Proposed by Cllr P Whatley and seconded by Cllr C Luton. Cllr Lewis also reminded the Council about the Heart Start Scheme and the provision of a defibrillator for the Parish. Apart from fundraising for the defibrillator, it was necessary to recruit at least 12 volunteers to be trained in its use. It was agreed that this was a matter to be raised at the Annual Parish Meeting on 20<sup>th</sup> May.

#### 47/13 CHARITY REPORTS

No reports

#### 48/13 BROADBAND IMPROVEMENT

The Clerk reported that Airband had agreed to attend the Annual Parish Meeting on 20<sup>th</sup> May and give a presentation about their services. We were still well short of the numbers needed to start a set up of this service in the Parish.

#### 49/13 FINANCE

- (a) The following cheques were authorised for payment :- Proposed by Cllr P Whatley and seconded by Cllr L Devenish.

**General Fund** – Clerk’s expenses March/April 2013 £47.19; Lengthsman March 2013 £48.00 (already paid but to be approved); Lengthsman VAS Services March 2013 £35.00 (already paid but to be approved); Lengthsman April 2013 £252.00; Lengthsman May 2013 (to be advised); Worcs Calc Subscription and NALC affiliation fee £248.12; M Griffiths (Payroll 2012/13) £55.00; Clerk’s April 2013 pay adjustment £13.00; J Green – extra Lengthsman management hours £96.00; A Gillett – grass cutting & maintenance at the Old Quarry 2012 £246.00;

**Playing Fields** – John Hicks & Associates – Safety Report Fee £50.76; Mole Treatment £175.00; D J Reynolds – mowing - £127.50; NPower Electric/Pavilion £64.39; C Luton (Aardvark Mowers) £203.75 (to replace cheque dated 20/06/12 which has been cancelled).

- (b) The Year End Accounts to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2013 were approved and signed. These had been Signed Off by the Internal Auditor – Dr Linda Cotterill. Proposed by Cllr P Whatley and seconded by Cllr L Devenish.

**Annual Audit Return for Accounts ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 2013**

- (c) The Chairman and Clerk signed the Approval of Section 1 – Accounting statement  
(d) The Chairman and Clerk signed the Approval of Section 2 – Annual Governance Statement

- Discretionary Rate Relief - Approved as follows :-**
- (e) Tan House, Longley Green - £45.63 Proposed by Cllr P Whatley and seconded by Cllr C Luton
- Grants/Donations**
- (f) The Council approved the annual grant of £100 to Suckley PCC for maintenance of graveyards. Proposed by Cllr C Luton and seconded by Cllr J Green.
  - (g) The Council approved the annual grant to the Playing Fields of £600.00. Proposed by Cllr P Whatley and seconded by Cllr A Grieve

### **50/13 PLAYING FIELDS**

Annual Inspection - Mr J Hicks. The Council noted the Annual Safety Report from Mr J Hicks. Cllr J Green reported that he would be cleaning the tiles (as requested in the Safety Report). Cllr C Luton and Cllr J Green reported on the ongoing saga with Severn Trent Water. There were two leaks found, and Severn Trent Water has now put in a new pipe. However, the drain pipe had become blocked. This will also be repaired by Severn Trent. The problem of dumping garden waste and other materials onto the Playing Fields continues, with hedge trimmings and half a tree being the most recently dumped items. The Playing Field Committee had, therefore, decided that the only answer to the problem would be to erect a removable bollard at the entrance to the car park, this would be about 650 mm above ground, painted yellow and black. Keys would be available for regular users of the Playing Field, and also be held by Cllr Luton for other users. It was agreed that this matter should be highlighted in the Suckley NewsLetter and the Sphere. The question of increased operating costs for running the Playing Fields was discussed, and it was agreed by the Council that charges for use of the Playing Fields should be increased to £8 per hour. Proposed by Cllr A Lewis and seconded by Cllr J Green. The Clerk to write to Mr Pat Lewis informing him of this increase which would be £48 for each six hour session from 9.0 am to 3.0 pm.

### **51/13 RISK ASSESSMENT**

- (a) Cllr J Green had completed all the risk assessment forms. The new roof had been completed by Chris Wilding on the Bus Shelter opposite the Stocks.
- (b) Tree Survey - Cllr C Luton had e-mailed Mr Ross who had sent back a picture he had googled. This would come within his daily rate of £480. However, he had not included a picture of the Old Quarry, which Cllr Luton then sent to him. So far, she had not received a reply, but would go ahead as and when a response was received (assuming this was within budget).

### **52/13 PLANNING**

- (a) The Council noted the following refusals/permissions/Appeals (MHDC)
  - (i) App Ref No: 13/00094/HOU
  - Location: Lower Barrow House, Suckley, Worcs WR6 5EJ
  - Applicant: Miss Rachael Simon
  - Proposal: Single storey outbuilding
  - Planning Permission **Approved**

### **53/13 SUCKLEY CHURCH**

Cllr A Lewis reported that a meeting was planned for Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> May. There would be a village wide leaflet drop in the next week or so. The plans were now being scaled back from the original ones in a response to comments made at the open meeting last year.

**54/13 SUCKLEY SCHOOL**

As previously minuted, the Council all agreed that the suggestion made by Dist Cllr Warburton to seek information under the Freedom of Information Act was a very good one and the Clerk was asked to compose and send a letter to Worcs County Council Legal Department. It was also agreed that Affidavits should be obtained from the Chairman, Walter Huband, Mrs Pat Perks and June Mifflin – all of whom had seen the deed referred to in earlier Minutes relating to the gifting of the site to the Church Wardens/Trustees/Parish of Suckley. Cllrs A Lewis and L Devenish agreed to start searching through the Church records now that an Authority had been issued by the Revd A Bullock. It was essential to obtain as much background information as possible, and it might be the case that the original deed (or a copy) would be found in the Church records.

**55/13 ANNUAL PARISH MEETING**

The Clerk reminded the Council that the Annual Parish Meeting would be held on 20<sup>th</sup> May at 7.30 pm. The Clerk to purchase soft drinks/wine etc. All Councillors to bring some nibbles.

**56/13 CORRESPONDENCE**

All correspondence was available for viewing.

**57/13 MATTERS FOR FUTURE AGENDA**

None received

**DATE OF NEXT MEETING - Monday 8<sup>th</sup> July 2013**