

SUCKLEY PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

Held on Monday 9th NOVEMBER 2015 at 7.00 pm in Suckley Village Hall

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

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

Three members of the public also attended the meeting, together with Mr James Hitchcock from Worcs WildLife Trust.

Apologies: 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)

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

Worcs Wildlife Trust – Blackhouse Wood - Mr James Hitchcock gave a brief presentation on the background to Worcs WildLife Trust, one of 47 WildLife Trusts in the UK who managed over 70 Reserves, and had a membership of around 10,000. Worcs WildLife Trust had recently acquired Blackhouse Wood in Suckley and Mr Hitchcock had kindly agreed to speak to the Parish Council on the present and future plans for enhancing and preserving this ancient woodland. The aim of the Trust was to put in more structured broadleaf woodland to assist the wildlife already existing in the wood which included bats, dormice, some very rare insects, dragonflies, moths and butterflies to name just a few. A number of queries were raised regarding access and use of the wood for walking and horse riding; the numbers of people who might visit the wood in the future and car parking. It was suggested by the Chairman, Cllr W Huband, that a site meeting be held, perhaps in the Spring of next year, when these concerns could be addressed. A notice could be put in the Suckley Newsletter inviting any parishioner who was interested to attend the meeting. Mr Hitchcock agreed with this suggestion. He also asked for volunteers to help with the work parties in the wood which were held on the third Sunday of every month. The Clerk agreed to put the contact information about this in the Suckley Newsletter.

County Councillor - Co Cllr Paul Tuthill reported on his visit to the Fire & Rescue Service at Moreton in the Marsh where 30 Fire Engines took part on a terrorist training exercise. The County Council was undergoing yet another re-organisation. Cllr P Whatley gave a brief summary of the chaos caused by the closure of the road through Longley Green, without any prior warning, without any understandable diversion signs being erected and without any co-ordination between the County Council and the contractors involved. Not only were there safety issues, but also loss of business for the local post office/stores and the Nelson pub, and possibly other companies in the vicinity. Co Cllr Tuthill acknowledged all of these points and stated that he would be holding a meeting with the Chief Executive on 10th November about this, and would report back to the next PC Meeting.

Report from District Cllrs – Dist Cllr Sarah Rouse reported that sharing of senior managers with Wychavon District Council was being proposed. A Waste Contract questionnaire would be going out to all residents of MHDC and it seemed very likely that the waste collection service would be going out to contract. This could mean the ending of weekly waste collection in the area, despite previous promises by the ruling group on MHDC. A new Worcestershire Devolution initiative to create a new organisational model throughout the County was being prepared. This would bring together the County, City & District Councils and link in with the “World Class Worcestershire” plan for investment, business, infrastructure and quality of life.

Lengthsman Report - Cllr J Green and the Clerk reported that the Lengthsman had been unable to do any work in October as he had not yet received confirmation that he had passed the training course which would enable him to undertake highways work. The Clerk confirmed that he had attend a nationally recognised course, and both she and Rob Lambert were waiting for his certificate to be issued by the training company. Once this was done, he would be able to start work to unblock drains in the Parish which was very important at this time of year.

Footpaths – Helen Philpotts reported on behalf of the Footpaths Team. The footpath sign opposite the Post Office had been broken. Cllr P Whatley had already sent in a complaint to Worcs Co Council about this. Waymarking sign problems had arisen along Blackhouse Lane and at Knoll Bank, also the footpath near to Riddings Farm was becoming overgrown. Cllr J Green said that the Lengthsman would be willing to tackle some of the footpath tasks. Ragwort was growing in a field opposite Lower Tundridge Farm, and in the same area hedge cutting was required from Lower Tundridge Farm to Mousehole Bridge. The Clerk to contact Worcs Co Council Highways re the hedge cutting. Cllr V Bradley reported that the County Council had acted to repair erosion along the bridle path behind the Post Office, and she had written a letter of thanks to them.

Local Police/Crime Stats – Cllr P Whatley reported that there were a couple of Asbos and one burglary – still pretty quiet.

The Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 14th September 2015 were approved and signed, Proposed by Cllr P Whatley and seconded by Cllr J Green. The Minutes of the Parish Council Planning Meeting held on 5th October 2015 were approved and signed. Proposed by Cllr A Grieve and seconded by Cllr P Griffiths.

86/15 HIGHWAYS & BYWAYS

- (a) Closure of Road in Longley Green - previously covered.
- (b) Footpaths - previously covered
- (c) Potholes/resurfacing – Blackhouse Lane. Cllr J Green reported that red lines had been put round some of the potholes, but resurfacing work was still outstanding. The Clerk gave Co Cllr P Tuthill the reference number (5824082) relating to Blackhouse Lane work, but it still seemed unlikely that the road would be totally resurfaced.
- (d) The Clerk had reported to Highways re the poor condition of the old metal three bar fencing on the verge of the highway in Longley Green (Ref 6797940) – spanning about three houses in length – from the cottage at Parsleys Patch. She was still waiting for a response.

87/15 CHARITY REPORTS

- (a) **Alfrick Educational Charity** - Cllr L Devenish reported that this Charity did not appear to be very widely advertised, even though it could be of tremendous help to local students. The Clerk to put information about this in the Suckley Newsletter.

- (b) **Palmer Educational Foundation** (Worcester Municipal Charities) - Cllr L Devenish reported that she and Cllr A Lewis had attended a recent meeting of this Foundation linked to Worcester Municipal Charities. It had been decided to keep the Foundation as it is, with about £1K available to Suckley School/students each year. Cllr A Lewis had agreed to be Chairman of the Trustees and Mrs Diana Holloway was the Treasurer.
- (c) Suckley Charities – Cllr P Whatley reported on the meeting held on 14th October. The Charity had pledged £500 each to the Playing Field fund and Suckley School. The next meeting would be held on 9th March 2016.

88/15 COMMUNITY

- (a) **Suckley War Memorial** – Cllr A Grieve reported that a short Remembrance Service would be held at 11.0 am on 11th November. Unfortunately there had not been enough time to put a notice in the Newsletter, so it would be a low key event, with a notice displayed in the Post Office. Hopefully this would now become an annual service so next year more publicity would be given. The oak benches for the memorial site had been fixed in place thanks to the Griffiths team.
- (b) **Defibrillator** - As requested, the Clerk had contacted Highways about the possibility of a direction sign to the defibrillator on the Knightwick Road, pointing to Church Lane. The response was that as this was a “new request” i.e. they had not been asked this before, the Department was still thinking about it!
- (c) **BT – broadband** - Cllr P Whatley reported some hopeful signs that Suckley would soon be super-connected to the outside world! BT Open Reach had installed green cabinets in the Parish, so within 3 – 6 months fantastic broadband speeds should be possible.

89/15 FINANCE

- (a) The following cheques were authorised for payment :- Proposed by Cllr P Whatley and seconded by Cllr P Griffiths.
General Fund – Clerk’s expenses September/October 2015 £47.42; Lengthsman September 2015 £142.50 (sum to be approved); Lengthsman November 2015 (to be advised); MHDC uncontested parish fees for election May 2015 £26.49; Information Commissioner (Data Protection registration fee) £35.00.
Playing Field Account - DJR Farm Services (D Reynolds) – mowing Playing Fields x 2 £144.00 (already paid but to be approved); Npower Electricity for Pavilion £10.64; DJR Farm Services Mowing of Playing Fields x 3 £216.00;
- (b) **Accounts to 30th September 2015** – These were approved. Proposed by Cllr P Whatley and seconded by Cllr C Luton. The Clerk pointed out a payment of £353 from Worcs County Council which did not relate to any requests for payment from the Clerk. She had contacted Worcs Co Council Lengthsman Scheme about this, but they had not been able to track down the reason for the payment, but would be making further enquiries.
- (c) **Clerk’s Salary Review 2016/17** – The Clerk’s present salary was SCP 25. The Council unanimously approved an upgrade to SCP 26 (April 2013 rates) for the year 2016/17 – commencing 1st April 2016. This was an increase of 37pence to £11.66 per hour on present rates with an annual salary of £6,0673 gross. Proposed by Cllr A W Huband and seconded by Cllr P Whatley.

90/15 PLANNING

The Council noted the following refusals/permissions/approvals (MHDC):-

- (a) App Ref No 15/00564/CLE
 Proposal: Application for Lawful Development Certificate for the continued use of land for the storage of one touring caravan.
 Location: Bush Bank, Suckley, Worcs WR6 5DR

Grid Ref: Easting: 373595 Northing: 250662

Applicant: Mrs Lynne Barker

APPROVAL GIVEN

- (b) App Ref: 15/00717/HOU
Proposal: Rear and side extension
Location: Conference Cottage, Suckley, Worcs WR6 5DW
Applicant: Mr R Lewis

APPLICATION WITHDRAWN

- (c) App Ref: 15/01195/FUL
Proposal: Extension & alteration to Ash Grove `House, new detached garaged and enlargement of domestic curtilage to alter driveway arrangement
Location: Ash Grove, Suckley, Worcs WR6 5DJ
Applicants: Mr & Mrs I Price

The original application was described as “replacement dwelling” but the description had now been amended back to the original “extension and alteration” category. This was an amended re-application.

91/15 TRANSPARENCY CODE FOR SMALLER AUTHORITIES

The Clerk reported that in order to assist smaller authorities to comply with the above Code which came into operation in July 2015, the Government had set aside some funding to cover initial costs of compliance i.e. setting up a website, computer equipment etc. The Clerk would be applying for a grant to cover the cost of purchasing a lap top for the Council. The sum available was up to £350. Applications were being processed through Worcs Calc and then on to NALC for approval.

92/15 PLAYING FIELDS COMMITTEE

Cllr C Luton reported that she and Cllr P Whatley were close to completing the application for a grant from the small lottery fund. This would be for £9,140 based on the Ludus quotation. Matched funding would have to be provided by the Parish Council and other fund raising within the Parish. Cllr J Green reported that the mole problem was still in evidence - Cllr C Luton to contact the pest control Company again.

93/15 RISK ASSESSMENT

Cllr J Green had completed the forms. No issues at the moment, other than those reported above.

94/15 SUCKLEY CHURCH

No Report

95/15 SUCKLEY SCHOOL

No Report

96/15 MATTERS FOR FUTURE AGENDA

Precept 2016/17

97/15 CORRESPONDENCE

All correspondence was available for viewing from 6.45 pm

DATE OF NEXT MEETING – Monday 11th January 2016 at 7.00 pm

