

SUCKLEY PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH COUNCIL MEETING Held on Monday 9th MAY 2016 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 A Lewis, Cllr L Devenish, Cllr V Bradley

In Attendance: Mrs D Taylor (Clerk), Co Cllr P Tuthill, Dist Cllr A Warburton.

Cllr A W Huband expressed his wish not to seek re-election as Chairman of the Council

Election of Chairman Cllr P Whatley was Proposed by Cllr A Grieve
Seconded by Cllr J Green
The Chairman signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office & Code of Conduct

Apologies for absence: Dist Cllr S Rouse

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

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 C Luton declared an interest in item 21(b) on the Agenda - a planning application Ref No 16/00542/FUL – Mr R Capper

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

Report from County Councillor - Co Cllr Paul Tuthill reported to the meeting. Mr John Paul Campion had been appointed the new Crime Commissioner for West Mercia. The contract for Leigh & Bransford School development was about to be awarded. Detailed plans for Malvern North School had been submitted to the Planning Department. The Government was now scaling down its ambitions for Faster Broadband, but a Scrutiny Committee Meeting would be taking place at County Hall to look into the delivery of this project in the County, especially in the more rural areas. A project team was looking at the most cost effective repairs to Footways (next to carriageways – not footpaths) and had been allocated £2M for the coming year. Cllr Tuthill was also hopeful that Blackhouse Lane would be resurfaced by the end of the summer, as new equipment better suited to narrow roads was being purchased. The Fire Service in Hereford was running a campaign called Dying to Drive which featured simulated accidents that the Fire Service would attend. This project had been rolled out very successfully in Herefordshire Schools and Worcestershire was looking to take up this idea from Hereford. Cllr Tuthill was putting some of his Parish funding into this project for local schools. On the question of Parish funding, Cllr Tuthill agreed to consider a request from Cllr C Luton for help in replacing the copper immersion tank in the Playing Fields Pavilion. Cllr A Lewis also put in a request for help with training equipment for the Defib team.

Report from District Cllrs – Dist Cllr Anthony Warburton stated that there was very little to report at the moment. However, arrangements for waste collection were being reviewed, including the reported percentage figures for recycling which he considered were misleading. They did not take into account the levels of recycling at centres such as Newland where householders took their own items to be recycled. Cllr P Whatley enquired about the levels of fly tipping, but Dist Cllr Warburton stated that as far as he was aware no increase in fly tipping had been reported. The Council's Five Year Plan would be adopted on Tuesday 10th May.

Lengthsman Report - Cllr J Green and The Clerk reported on the Lengthsman, whose contract renewal was up for consideration. The Drains Map was proving to be very useful in pinpointing drains which required unblocking. The Clerk had reported at least six drains in need of jetting to WCC Highways. The Council agreed that the reporting system/communication/follow up should be reviewed, with Cllrs reporting either to the Clerk or Cllr J Green if they saw any problem drains. The Clerk confirmed that the Lengthsman Grant for 2016/17 was £2007.

Footpaths - The Clerk reported that a meeting of the footpaths walkers and riders team had been held. At present there were four team members. A footpaths map had been divided into four sections, with each member being responsible for walking a section and reporting to the Clerk/Helen Philpotts if they spotted any problems. However, it was important that more people joined the team to monitor the state of the footpaths. Helen Philpotts and Jan Stapleton would be speaking at the Annual Parish Meeting on Monday 16th May. The team were also keen for visiting walkers to report problems, perhaps via the Post Office, if a scheme could be put together. The Clerk had also applied to WCC Countryside Department for a small grant for replacing/repairing footpath signposts/waymarkers and vegetation clearing. It was agreed that the Lengthsman could be paid for doing some of this work, as and when required. However, the Clerk was asked to contact Alfrick Parish as their footpaths network was in a far superior state of repair compared to Suckley. Helen Philpotts agreed to contact the landowner re complaints about gates in Suckley Wood.

Local Police – As requested, the Clerk had written to the Police Commissioner about the misleading stats for crime reporting. She had received an e-mailed response from the Commissioner, which had been circulated to all Council members as had the Parish Council's reply to that e-mail. The current crime stats for the Parish underlined the concern expressed by the Council, as the 4 incidents reported (3 ASB and 1 violent crime) were all logged as taking place in the White House Court area of the Parish.

The Chairman then re-opened the Meeting

27/16 STANDING ORDERS

The Model Standing Orders were noted, these had been adopted in November 2014.

28/16 CODE OF CONDUCT

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

29/16 FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

The Council noted the present Financial Regulations – an updated version would be reviewed at the next meeting

30/16 RISK ASSESSMENT SCHEDULE

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 2016.

31/16 NOMINATION OF COUNCILLORS

Councillors were nominated to various posts as follows :-

Election of Councillor responsible for Planning

Cllr Mrs P Griffiths

Proposed by Cllr J Green
Seconded by Cllr C Luton

Election of Council Representatives on Charities :-

John Palmer Educational Trust –

Cllr L Devenish
&
Cllr A Lewis

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

Suckley Charities - Cllr A W Huband
&
Cllr P Whatley

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

Alfrick Educational Charity –

Cllr L Devenish

Proposed by Cllr A Lewis
Seconded by Cllr J Green

The Hill Trust –

Cllr A Grieve

Proposed by Cllr A Lewis
Seconded by Cllr P Griffiths

Election of Council Representatives on the Playing Fields Committee

Cllr P Griffiths

Cllr J Green

Cllr C Luton

Proposed by Cllr A Grieve
Seconded by Cllr A Lewis
Proposed by Cllr P Whatley
Seconded by Cllr L Devenish
Proposed by Cllr L Devenish
Seconded by Cllr A Grieve

Election of Council Representative on Worcs CALC Area Committee

Cllr A Grieve

Proposed by Cllr C Luton
Seconded by Cllr A W Huband

Election of Councillors with special responsibilities:

Police - Cllr P Whatley

Proposed by Cllr J Green
Seconded by Cllr A Lewis

NHS - Cllr A Lewis

Proposed by Cllr C Luton
Seconded by Cllr J Green

Suckley School Board of Governors

Cllr L Devenish

Proposed by Cllr C Luton

Seconded by Cllr J Green

School Board of Governors – the Clerk was asked to write to the Head Teacher proposing that Cllr L Devenish be nominated as a Community Governor representing the Parish Council

32/16 CHARITY ACCOUNTS

The Charities had submitted their Accounts and these were perused by the Council. Copy Accounts had not yet been received from the John Palmer Trust (due to the Bank's delay in processing the necessary paperwork to Mrs D Holloway) and the Hill Trust.

The Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 14th March 2016 were approved and signed, Proposed by Cllr C Luton and seconded by Cllr J Green.

33/16 HIGHWAYS & BYWAYS

- (a) Potholes – Blackhouse Lane (Ref 6838978) Cllr J Green reported that the potholes were increasing again. However, as reported above, it was hoped that the lane would be resurfaced by the end of the summer. Co Cllr P Tuthill drew attention again to the importance of cutting back trees alongside the lane.
- (b) Three Bar fencing in Longley Green - The Clerk reported on the response from Highways re the ownership of the fencing in question. Cllr P Whatley agreed to speak to the residents about this situation.
- (c) Trees at Parsleys Patch. As requested, the Clerk had contacted the Landscape Officer at MHDC, who confirmed that any trees on the site were the responsibility of the landowner, and any complaints or concerns should be addressed to him/her. Cllr V Bradley agreed that she would deal with the situation herself.

34/16 SPEEDING/VAS CAMERA

Cllr P Whatley had analysed the VAS stats from the Village Hall and Opposite Church Lane locations from 4th April to 3rd May. 85th percentile speeds were up by 1 mph compared to previous survey periods at both SVH and Church Lane - now 36.2 and 36.9 respectively, both were over the threshold at which the Police should show interest. Reportable speeding (over 35 mph) was significantly up at both locations and very high speeds recorded up at Church Lane. Peak times for speeding remained at 7.00 – 8.00 am and 7.00 pm – 10.0 pm indicating that most offenders were locals travelling to/from work. Peak speeds had been recorded outside busy periods, but the fastest speed at each location was on a Sunday. Vehicle numbers remained very low overall – typically 40 vehicles per hour at SVH. Peak periods for volume were school set down and pick up times when volumes recorded 60-70 vehicles per hour. In the light of these recent stats the Clerk was asked to write to the Road Safety Partnership with this information and suggest they provide some uniform officers at peak periods. Cllr J Green suggested the Council erect Speed Check Area signs. The Clerk to find out about these.

35/16 CHARITY REPORTS - All reports received to date had been circulated to Council Members.

36/16 COMMUNITY

- (a) Defibrillator Sign - Cllrs A Lewis and C Luton agreed to look further into this matter and report back to the next meeting.

- (b) Suckley Newsletter - All Councillors agreed that a Vote of Thanks should be given to Hilary Pitt at the Annual Parish Meeting for the outstanding work as editor of this Newsletter for Suckley. An appeal would be made at the Meeting for a volunteer(s) to take on the editorship of this valuable community asset.
- (c) Severn Rivers Trust – the Clerk had circulated details about this Charity/Trust who were interested in carrying out a Springs of the River project for Suckley Brook. Mr I Davies, the Project Manager, had contacted the Clerk with a view to giving a presentation to explain the work of the Trust and to enlist volunteers. After some discussion, the Council felt that the best way forward for the Trust might be for them to do a leaflet drop around the Parish, and hold a meeting in the Village Hall.

37/16 FINANCE

- (a) The following cheques were authorised for payment :- Proposed by Cllr A Grieve and seconded by Cllr A Lewis.
General Fund – Clerk’s expenses March/April 2016 £101.65; Lengthsman – March 2016 - £247.50 (already paid but to be approved); Lengthsman - April 2016 VAS £27.50 & Lengthsman Services £202.50; Lengthsman – May (to be advised); Marion Griffiths payroll services 2015/16 - £66.00; Worcs Calc subscription/Nalc Affiliation 2016/17 £309.09; HMRC PAYE April/May/June 2016 - £319.80; Linda Cotterill (Auditor) LCCA £84.00;
Playing Field Account - NPower electric £23.86; DJR Services - £190.50; John Hicks – Safety Report Playing Fields Inspection £50.76;
- (b) **Year End Accounts to 31st March 2016** were approved. Proposed by Cllr L Devenish and seconded by Cllr J Green.
Annual Audit Return for Accounts ending 31st March 2016
- (c) Approval of Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement – signed by the Chairman and Clerk
- (d) Approval of Section 2 – Annual Accounting Statement – signed by the Chairman and Clerk
- Discretionary Rate Relief 2016/17 – Parish Council financial support**
- (e) Cross Keys, Suckley - £133.57. Proposed by Cllr P Griffiths and seconded by Cllr A Grieve
- (f) Tan House, Longley Green, Suckley - £48.15. Proposed by Cllr P Griffiths and seconded by Cllr J Green.
Grants/Donations
- (g) Suckley PCC – maintenance of graveyards 2016/17 – £200 grant. Proposed by Cllr P Griffiths and seconded by Cllr C Luton.
- (h) Suckley Playing Fields Grant 2016/17 - £600. Proposed by Cllr L Devenish and seconded by Cllr A W Huband.
Contract Renewal 2016/17 - Lengthsman
- (i) The Council agreed to renew the contract for Mr Rob Lambert, on the same terms and conditions as 2015/16. Proposed by Cllr C Luton and seconded by Cllr A Grieve.
- (j) **Playing Fields Project** - Cllr C Luton requested agreement that the cheque to Ludus in settlement for the Playing Fields project be approved for payment in advance – this was for the sum of £17,500. The Council agreed to this request – proposed by Cllr A Grieve and seconded by Cllr A Lewis (subject to a satisfactory inspection of the completed works by the Playing Field Committee)
- (j) **The Parish Precept & MHDC** - A report by Cllr P Whatley on this matter had been circulated to all Councillors. Even though Suckley Parish Council reduced their Precept by 1.5% for the year 2016/17 the ratepayers of the Parish would not receive any benefit as MHDC “claw back” most of the Parish Tax Support Grant – for 2016/17 this would

be £207.31. For Parish Councils, therefore, prudence does NOT pay – which pushes Councils to increase their precept or at least freeze it to retain maximum tax support. Co Cllr P Tuthill advised that the Clerk/Cllr P Whatley write to Jack Hegarty and Phil Grove at MHDC about this complex situation.

36/16 RISK ASSESSMENT

Cllr J Green - no problems to report. Risk assessment forms completed. The Council noted the report from Mr J Hicks re the playing fields equipment and his safety assessment.

37/16 PLAYING FIELD COMMITTEE

Cllr C Luton reported that the start of improvement work for the Playing Fields was imminent. She had held a meeting with Ludus and had hoped that the project would be close to completion in time for the Annual Parish Meeting on 16th May, but this now looked unlikely. All this new work would cover any matters raised in the Safety/Risk Report by Mr J Hicks. Improved security for the Pavilion was also going to be addressed. Suckley School wanted to use the all weather pitch and the Pavilion facilities on a Wednesday afternoon after school. Cllr Luton had informed them that there would be a charge for this which she was prepared to reduce from the standard fee of £15 down to £10. However, the school had stated they could not afford to pay this charge. The Council felt that if the after hours activity was a commercial venture with a fee being paid by the children to join the group, then it was entirely reasonable for the Council to charge to cover the costs of checking the Pavilion and the pitch prior to use.

38/16 PLANNING

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

- (a) Appeal Ref No: APP/J1860/W/15/3141086
Location: Land adjacent to Stocks Farm, Suckley.
Applicants: Mr & Mrs R Capper
Proposal: Development of 4 detached dwellings
Appeal Dismissed

The Council then considered the following planning application:-

- (b) App Ref No: 16/00542/FUL
Location: Buildings at (OS 7230,5038) Suckley, Worcs
Applicant : Mr R Capper
Proposal: Change of use for part of an existing building from the current agricultural use to B2 to allow a micro brewery to be set up in part of the building

The Council recommended APPROVAL of this application

39/16 SUCKLEY CHURCH - nothing further to report at the moment

40/16 SUCKLEY SCHOOL

Cllr L Devenish reported that the school was doing better than ever, now being over capacity with 84 children on the school roll. Room for expansion was very limited, but as and when the Church Space Project was completed, this would provide a hall for the school to use. Co Cllr P Tuthill stated that as Suckley was an Academy school, it should put forward its own recommendations for expansion.

41/16 ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

The Clerk reminded the Council that the Annual Parish Meeting would be held at 7.30 pm on Monday 16th May in Suckley Village Hall. Chairman Cllr P Whatley gave his apologies for being unable to Chair this meeting, due to a prior commitment. Cllr A Grieve agreed to Chair the meeting in Cllr Whatley's absence.

42/16 MATTERS FOR FUTURE AGENDA

Updated Financial Regulations

Waste Recycling

Highways – Notice of Road closures & signage (review)

DATE OF NEXT MEETING – Monday 1st August 2016 at 7.00 pm