

SUCKLEY PARISH COUNCIL

ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

22nd MAY 2017 at 7.30 pm in Suckley Village Hall

Present: 35 people attended the meeting including Parish Councillors.

In Attendance: Mrs Diana Taylor, Clerk

The Chairman – Cllr Peter Whatley, welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Apologies: Cllr C Luton, Cllr V Bradley, Mr & Mrs Holden

Suckley Primary School - Four pupils from Suckley School - Lily, Chelsea, Billie 1 and Billy 2 – gave a Powerpoint presentation to the meeting. They explained how the different year ages were divided into Wrens, Robins, Woodpeckers and Eagles. Each year group undertook different projects. Years 3 & 4 visited Smite Farm (near Droitwich) and met a team of Geologists; Years 5 & 6 met a Husky Team. They all enjoy their Forest School, and make Viking ships, shelters and dens. Sports activities at the school cover netball, football, rugby and rounders. The school has a choir with the children learning to play guitar, piano and violin, and a dood (sounds like a saxophone, but with the same holes as a recorder!) The school was successful in winning funding from Tesco for their Wildlife Zone, where they have put up bird hides and bird boxes. The pupils run a School Council, which last year played a part in deciding what equipment they would like in the Playing Field. The Head Teacher, Mrs Sheila Marshall, reported that the school numbers had reached 84, which meant that the school was bursting at the seams. However, there would always be space for local children to attend the school. The Chairman thanked them for their Presentation and the assembly gave them a well deserved round of applause.

West Mercia Police – PC 3366 Paul Kennedy (Safer Neighbourhood Officer) and Dist Cllr Phil Grove – the Police Community Ambassador for the Malvern Hills area - attended the meeting. PC Kennedy reported that Police cover operated out of the Malvern Police Station on a 24 hours 7 days a week basis, but because of the wide geographical area the team covered, the focus would always be based on the highest risk of threat to communities. Cllr P Whatley raised the question of speeding along the Knightwick Road, which the VAS stats had highlighted. PC Kennedy accepted that this was an issue locally, but the Safer Roads Partnership would look at the volume of traffic use, which would have to fit their criteria for any major action to be taken due to their limited resources. However, he would put in a request for a patrol team to visit and do some enforcement at the peak times for speeding. Dist Cllr Phil Grove reported that a Community Speed Watch team could be set up (through the Parish Council) and training would be given to use the equipment and report the speeding vehicles registration numbers. Cllr Anne Lewis and Cllr Peter Whatley both raised questions regarding the

presentation and methodology of West Mercia crime stats reporting. Reported local crime statistics did not match the national database, and the crime localities were misleading. PC Kennedy responded that this could be due to the fact that their stats did not cover all categories of crime, only four. A question was also raised regarding teams of cyclists taking over the entire road space along some of the roads in the parish, with car drivers being put at risk. PC Kennedy stated that any cycling race event had to be marshalled and a risk assessment undertaken.

County Councillor – County Councillor Paul Tuthill reported that the number of County Councillors was 57. The Council was in the process of electing people to various Committees. The Council spends approx. £1M per day on revenue and half a million on capital items. The Council was trying to get funding of £70M for the Southern Link Road project. He had a parish budget of £10K to help with community & parish projects, some of which was spent last year in Suckley for the upgraded play area and Playing Field pavilion hot water system. 2018 would be 100 years since the end of WWI. The County Council had already refurbished a bench in Malvern Link in memory of Private Sayer who had fought at Vimy Ridge in 2017.

District Councillors – Dist Cllrs Anthony Warburton and Sarah Rouse reported to the meeting. Two Councillors from Suckley Parish Council had received an award through the Community Awards Scheme. Cllr A Warburton explained the restructured planning process and the retention of both Northern & Southern Planning Committees and their decisions on referred planning applications. Dist Cllr A Warburton apologised for not being successful in retaining weekly waste collections, despite his and his colleagues questioning the “cost savings” that were being made, and the potential £600K cost of new wheelie bins.

Chairman’s Report - this printed report, covering the work of the Council over the previous 12 months, was circulated to all present. Cllr Peter Whatley gave a short resume of the Council’s activities, with the main project being the new playing field equipment. Other significant matters of interest were the disruption caused by road closures, the resurfacing of Blackhouse Lane and the lamentable lack of superfast broadband speed in the area. Cllr Whatley thanked all the Councillors and the Clerk for their work and support throughout the year, with special thanks to Andrew Grieve, who had resigned in February due to business commitments. He introduced Mr Darran Findlater who would be co-opted onto the Council in July.

COMMUNITY

Good Neighbour Scheme/Defibrillator - Cllr Anne Lewis reported that the Good Neighbour Scheme had now been running for a number of years, with members now being trained up with CAB as Community Volunteers. The Good Neighbours had received an award from the Community Awards Scheme. The defibrillator was still installed on the outside wall of Suckley school and regular training sessions were taking place. It was hoped to purchase a model defib trainer, with the help of Co Cllr Paul Tuthill’s Parish Fund and Parish Council matched funding.

Footpath Walkers/Riders - Cllr Peter Whatley reported on the sterling work being done by Helen Philpotts, Jan Stapleton, Peter Hibbert and Phil Milsom, who between them covered all the footpaths in the Parish. As a result of their efforts, a number of new footpath signs had been erected in the Parish.

REPORTS FROM LOCAL ORGANISATIONS & TRUSTS

Suckley History Society - Nessa Haworth reported that the current membership of the Society was 25. The Membership fee was £15. Meetings were held in the Village Hall and members enjoyed a varied programme, including visits to National Trust properties, Croome Park, Wichenford Church, Beauchamp Almshouses and Workhouses. A visit to Chateau Impney in Droitwich was planned as part of the future programme.

Suckley Church & P.C.C. - the Revd Anne Potter reported a very active year for the church, with Teddy Bear absailing down the church tower, the September BFG festival, the tree of lights, two concerts and the annual Victorian Fair. The re-ordering of the church was still a work in progress, but the Space Project had been registered as a Charity in October 2016 as part of the fund-raising arm of the scheme. One third of the funds required had been raised in the last year. A new architect had been appointed with previous experience of redesigning church space.

Suckley Playing Fields - Cllr Peter Whatley reported that as previously mentioned, the playing fields new play equipment was now in place. Despite the moles still causing problems, it was hoped that a new football team would be using the pitch in the future. Improvements to the Pavilion were also in the pipeline. He confirmed that the Council was aware of the muddy entrance to the car park, and this would be looked at.

The Hill Trust - Mr Steve Boughton reported on behalf of the Hill Trust/Village Hall Committee. Last year had been a difficult year, with lettings down and events not being supported, together with some petty vandalism. However, the coming year was looking more promising, with a Pilates group, a folksong/band rehearsal, a dog massage service, keep fit and art groups using the hall. Approximately £1800 was needed to repair the roof. A Quiz Night was planned for 4th October and a Xmas "Bash" on 2nd December.

Public Questions - The Chairman answered a query on the merits or otherwise of ACV's (Assets of Community Value).

The Chairman then closed the meeting and thanked everyone for coming. All were invited to stay and have a glass of wine/fruit juice with nibbles provided by the Parish Councillors.

The Minute Book & Audited Accounts for 2015/16; The Parish Council Accounts (internally audited) for 2016/17; the Annual Accounts & Reports for local Charities and Trusts were available for inspection.

