

SUCKLEY PARISH COUNCIL

ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

27th MAY 2014 at 7.00 pm in Suckley Village Hall

Present: 50 people attended the meeting including
9 Parish Councillors and specially invited guests.
Sarah Ransome Williams – West Mercia Police
Dist Cllrs Anthony Warburton & David Hughes

The Annual Parish Meeting followed a Special Presentation to Cllr A Walter Huband to mark his 50th year of service to the community as elected Chairman of Suckley Parish Council. Dist Cllrs David Hughes and Anthony Warburton paid tribute to Walter for over 50 years of commitment and service to the community of Suckley, and presented him with a specially commissioned painting by Mrs Rosemary Harward.

In Attendance: Mrs Diana Taylor, Clerk

The Chairman, Cllr A W Huband welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Apologies: Mr A G Duncan, Mr A Holmes, Mr & Mrs Hammond
Co Cllr P Tuthill, Mr M Savage

Suckley Primary School - Three pupils from Suckley School gave a powerpoint presentation to the meeting. This covered all the activities they enjoyed in their Forest School, the land for which Cllr A W Huband had made available to the School. The pupils thanked Cllr Huband for his generosity and presented him with a carved mallet made from one of the tree branches in the Forest School. Cllr L Devenish who represented the Parish Council on the Board of Governors reported that the school was flourishing, with pupils numbers now standing at 85 – the maximum possible the school could take in. The interim head teacher arrangements were working well, and a new Head Mrs Sheila Marshall from Kempsey school would be starting in September.

County Councillor – No Report

District Councillors - Dist Cllrs David Hughes reported to the meeting. Despite cuts, Malvern Hills District Council had managed to keep a balanced budget, and had retained core services. They were still working through further cost reductions, and looking at sharing more services with other Councils and even sharing senior management. The new recycling system had been a resounding success and had significantly reduced landfill, but there was still more to do. The civil enforcement of car parking in Malvern main town especially had improved the footfall for shops and traders. Lobbying was still taking place for BT to improve BroadBand speeds in rural areas. New cabinets were being installed in Leigh Sinton and Knightwick. The South West Worcestershire Development Plan was through its first phase of inspection, but the Inspector still wanted

housing up to 28,000 across the three areas – Worcester City, Wychavon and Malvern Hills. This in turn was leading to speculative development with the national framework tipped in favour of development. However, the Council and Councillors would be doing their utmost to ensure that everyone gets the best value out of their Council tax. Dist Cllr Anthony Warburton stressed the importance of Parish Councils and their links to the grass roots of the area. Both he and David Hughes would try their best to help anyone in the parishes they cover, and were available either through the Clerk, Diana Taylor, or directly by phone. The Chairman thanked both District Councillors for all their hard work over the last 12 months, and for coming to Parish Council Meetings to keep us informed.

Chairman's Report - this report, covering the work of the Council over the previous 12 months, was circulated to all present.

West Mercia Police - Sarah Ransome Williams gave an analysis of crime figures., which stood at 11, compared to 12 in the same period in 2012/13. 1 offence involving drugs, 3 theft, 3 involving motor vehicles, 2 burglaries, 2 assaults and 8 ASB incidents (compared to 12 the previous year). The ASB were mainly neighbour disputes, not young people. The team were now working out of Worcester, which meant that patrol coverage was much better. Suckley remained a very low crime area. The Chairman expressed his appreciation to Sarah Ransome-Williams for taking the time to attend our meeting.

Community Group - Cllr Andrew Grieve reported that the Community Group had hoped to erect a war memorial as 2014 was the centenary year of the First World War. but this plan did not appear to be of interest to the community. However, the poppy planting project was well under way. Pupils of Suckley School had planted seeds in the Forest School and all had received packets of seeds for their own gardens. The Lengthsman had dug a plot in the front of the village hall and poppy seeds had been planted there. The Suckley Newsletter was now not only self funding but a vital and very popular part of the community. Hilary Pitt the editor was always seeking articles and local news for the Newsletter.

Good Neighbour Scheme/HeartStart - Cllr Anne Lewis reported that the Good Neighbour Scheme was still in operation, and available for anyone in the area who needed help. 36 people had now been trained in defib and basic first aid skills, so Suckley was well equipped for emergencies. The Parish now owned a defibrillator through the good offices of Co Cllr Paul Tuthill, the British Heart Foundation and the Parish Council matched funding. The defibrillator had to be stored in a special temperature controlled cabinet, which had been installed at Suckley School by Cllr B Kearley. This cabinet had a coded lock, but she asked the meeting if they felt that the cabinet should be kept locked or unlocked. The meeting voted in favour of it being kept unlocked.

REPORTS FROM LOCAL ORGANISATIONS & TRUSTS

Footpath Wardens - Mr Richard Harward reported on the work of the Footpath Team of Harward and Markins. He had hoped to have a full report on the situation at Tundridge to present to the meeting. The access to this development and the state of the land around it had been causing a great deal of concern to walkers and people living on the opposite side of the valley. The Countryside Department at Worcs County Council had been made aware of the problems and would be investigating. Irregular inspections of the footpaths network had been made over the year, trying to anticipate problems. It was important that local residents and walkers contact the Wardens if they find any problems. Most of the work over the winter had been clearing windblown trees lying across the tracks. The Chairman thanked Mr Harward and Mr Markins for all their hard work and commitment to keeping the footpaths open for local people and walkers visiting the area.

Suckley History Society - Cllr Andrew Grieve reported that the reformed History Society now had 33 members, with meetings once a month. Non members were always welcome to attend. The next meeting would be held on 21st June, with a tour of Suckley Church and its history. On 17th July a private preview of Brockhampton Hall had been arranged, prior to its being open to the public. Worcester University was seeking material for its World War I project. If anyone had articles/items of interest, the University would be pleased to see them.

Suckley Church & P.C.C. - Cllr Anne Lewis thanked the Revd Andrew Bullock (who was retiring) for all his work in the Parish over the last 12 years. The SPACE Plans had now been submitted and the DAC had recommended they go forward to the Chancellor in London. This was in effect outline planning permission. All the plans were displayed within the church for all to see. On 18th July Summer Soiree would be held to help with fundraising – all were welcome. A new Vicar had not yet been appointed.

Suckley Playing Fields - Cllr Carol Luton reported that the rather wet year had wiped out the football for the latter part of the season. The Playing Fields were still experiencing some vandalism, with the Pavilion door having to be replaced recently. In view of this, the bollards had been ordered and would be erected very shortly. CCTV was also being considered. The bank balance for the Playing Fields was looking very healthy and the Playing Fields Committee were looking at an ambitious plan for replacing the play equipment and refurbishing the play area. The plan as displayed in the hall would cost in the region of £45K and was based on a very successful layout in Rushwick parish. Thanks were due to Cllr John Green for his weekly risk assessment inspections and general maintenance of the equipment, also to Duncan Reynolds for mowing the Playing Field over the last 12 months.

The Hill Trust - Mr Steve Boughton reported on behalf of the Hill Trust/Village Hall Committee. The past 12 months had shown a very small improvement, with a wide range of activities and groups using the hall – Art Group – Keep Fit -Yoga – History Society and Suckley School as well as the Parish Council and other occasional bookings. A large group of over 200 cyclists had recently used the hall as a rest stop. However, this was not enough to maintain the fabric of the hall. The accounts showed a deficit of £200 for the end of the year, which had been covered by an increase in investment interest. The Hall Committee were launching a survey to find out from local people what they wanted from the hall, as a number of events had failed to bring out the numbers of people required. The survey would be going out to all households in the Parish. The Hall Committee would be keen to hear of new ideas for fund raising/events/new groups who would be interested in using the hall.

The Chairman thanked the Parish Councillors for their support to him and the Council over the last year with special thanks to the Clerk Diana Taylor for all her hard work. He 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 2012/13; The Parish Council Accounts (unaudited) for 2013/14; the Annual Accounts & Reports for local Charities and Trusts were available for inspection.