

ECCLESHALL PARISH COUNCIL – ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

APRIL 25th, 2012

The Parish Meeting of Eccleshall Parish Council was held on Wednesday April 25th, 2012 at the Community Centre, Shaws Lane, Eccleshall at 7.30p.m.

1). Present were:-

Councillor G. Dale (Chair)	Councillor D. Pimble
Councillor P. Jones	Councillor L. von Elbing
Councillor B. Apps	Councillor J. Allen
Councillor G. Garner	Councillor D. Jacques
Councillor E Amos	Councillor L. Serjeant
Councillor M. Dodkins	Councillor P. Mullee
County Councillor H. Butter	Borough Councillor F. Chapman
Mrs C. Heelis (Clerk)	18 members of the public

Apologies were received from:- Councillors Starkey, Delanchy and Baskerville, together with Borough Councillor J. Pert and Mr C. Mitchell (Eccleshall Cricket Club), Mr J. Day (Croxton Methodist Church), Mr S. McKnight (Royal British Legion) and Mr M. Hazell (Eccleshall Allotments Association).

2). Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on April 27th, 2011 – The minutes, which had been previously ratified by the Council were presented to the meeting and copies were attached to the agendas.

3). Presentation – Mr P. Thurlow-Craig, Crime Prevention and Crime Stoppers:- Mr Thurlow Craig spoke about Crimestoppers, which successfully led to numerous arrests through information provided anonymously by members of the public. Those present were advised how to register various appliances through **immobilise.com** to help the police to identify the owners of lost and stolen property and were informed of the availability of **SmartWater**, a forensic marking system. Mr Thurlow-Craig passed on some useful tips for personal security and referred to thefts of overhead cables and plaques from war memorials. The public were urged to report anything suspicious including doorstep callers and scrap dealers.
Mr Thurlow-Craig was thanked for an interesting and informative presentation.

4). Chairman's welcome and report:- The Chairman welcomed those present. Councillor Dale presented an overview of the Council's activities throughout the year.

The Chairman stated that the Parish Council continued to apply for grants and funding had been received towards the Parish Council website, kissing gates and the re-printing of footpath leaflets and the Favourite Walks Booklet. Despite a further reduction in funding from the Borough Council the Parish Council had not increased the precept for 2012/13.

Following the elections in May 2011 vacancies on the Horsley and Croxton Wards had been filled by the co-option of Councillors Barry Apps and Paul Mullee and Luke Serjeant had been elected later in the year following the resignation of Peter Allsop.

Councillor Dale reported that a Housing Needs Survey would be distributed to all households in the Parish to gauge the level of support for a small affordable housing scheme.

Following the purchase of the open space on Bishops Court the Enhancements Committee was considering a package of play equipment to enhance the area, which would not impinge on the open space. Consultation with local residents would be carried out when the details had been compiled. The Parish Council was disappointed that planning permission had been granted for the development of 83 houses on the land to the rear of the Community Centre had remained committed to finding somewhere for young people to ride their bikes and have an informal kick about,

Councillor Dale referred to the Queen's Jubilee and the special edition of the June Newsletter, which was being prepared.

The Chairman concluded by thanking the Councillors for their commitment and enthusiasm over the last twelve months and indicated that he was looking forward to working together in the new financial year.

5). Report from Mr C. Middleton and pupils of Bishop Lonsdale School:- The Headteacher thanked the Parish Council for the grant towards visits to the Arboretum at Alrewas and The Houses of Parliament. Anna and Amanda, pupils from the school spoke about the trips and how they had enjoyed making poppies with disabled servicemen and women and their visit to London. Photographs taken by the pupils were passed around. The pupils had written to members of the armed forces who they did not know and collected money by having a non-uniform day. Mr Middleton and the young people were thanked for attending the meeting and sharing their experiences.

6). Clerks report and accounts:- Mrs. Heelis presented the receipts and payments accounts which had been adopted by the Council and audited by the Independent Internal Auditor. The Clerk referred to the Accounts which detailed the diverse range of matters dealt with and supported by the Parish Council together with the numerous grants made during the year to community groups.

7). Reports from Borough / County Councillors:-

Councillor F. Chapman emphasised that he had spoken strongly against the planning application for the development to the rear of the Community Centre but indicate that he understood that no development would take place until an alternative recreational area had been designated.

Councillor Chapman referred to the Localism Bill and the Community Right to Bid, together with changes to the planning system. Localism was apparent in Eccleshall through the Ecclesian Society and numerous groups. The Day Centre had contributed to the refurbishment of the Jubilee Room and the Community Centre was a well-run facility

The Borough Council was sharing services with Cannock Chase District Council and local authorities were required to make economies and establish more efficient ways of working.

Councillor H. Butter reported that finance from the Local Community Fund had been spent in Eccleshall towards kissing gates, the reprinting of the Favourite Walks booklet and the new Parish Council website. The Parish Council would also receive a grant towards the Jubilee Newsletter.

Councillor Butter indicated that he enjoyed working with the Parish Council and localism had been practised for many years in the rural areas of Staffordshire and was not a new concept.

Councillor P. Jones:- Councillor Jones indicated that he was coming to the end of his first year as a Borough Councillor and would continue to support the Parish Council wherever possible and especially on planning matters.

Police:- There was no report to receive.

8). Reports from Council Committees:- Reports were received from the Planning, Traffic Management, Policy and Resources and Enhancements Committees. Copies were available of reports from all the Council Committees.

Thanks were recorded to Councillor Dale for his work with the Community Centre and the improvements and refurbishments that had been undertaken.

There followed an interval, during which refreshments were served.

8). Reports from Organisations in the Parish:-

The Clerk read reports submitted from the Allotments Association, Eccleshall Cricket Club and Croxton Independent Methodist Church.

Reports were received from the following organisations:- Eccleshall Student Firefighters, Eccleshall First Responders, Offley Hay Village Hall, , Eccleshall in Bloom, Holy Trinity and St. Chad's Slindon, Broughton Parish Rooms and St. Paul's Church, Croxton, St. Peter's Church Broughton and Eccleshall Community Centre.

Student Firefighters:- Jessica Patten reported that 19 young people were now involved and helped to spread safety messages and make Eccleshall a safer place to live. Grants from the Parish Council and Councillor Butter had helped to purchased 24 uniforms including helmets, fire kit and boots and lightweight rolls of hose.

St. Peter's Church, Broughton:- Councillor Butter indicated that the grant from the Parish Council , which was toward site upkeep of the churchyard was very welcome..

St. Paul's, Croxton and Broughton Parish Rooms:- Mrs Roe thanked the Parish Council for grants towards the upkeep of the churchyard and the grounds of the Parish Rooms. The Parish Council was invited to create a 'Posy for the Queen' as part of the Jubilee Celebrations to form a pathway of posies to the church.

Eccleshall First Responders:- Mr Carruthers referred to the new vehicle, which was now in use and the purchase of new responders uniforms. A programme was being launched to train people in CPR and training sessions would be available for interested groups.

Eccleshall in Bloom:- Mr P. Bertram thanked the Parish Councillors and the community for their support to provide the floral displays and Christmas trees, which together with annual events such as Open Gardens helped to attract visitors to the town. Baskets and Mangers would be erected on May 27th along with 65 Union Flags.

Offley Hay Village Hall:- Councillor Dodkins indicated that bookings were good and the Hall was benefitting from a good, willing committee. A patio was being built and drainage problems had been eased with the emptying of a silt tank.

Community Centre:- Councillor Dale indicated that refurbishments had been carried out and double glazing installed amounting to £30,000. Grants had been received from the Environmental Fund and Stafford Borough Council. Repairs to the flat roof over the Jubilee Room had been funded by the Parish Council. New curtains were to be erected in the hall and sanitary ware in the ladies and gents toilets was being replaced.

Holy Trinity Church and St. Chad's Slindon:- Mr J. Pinney thanked the Parish Council for funding towards the churchyard maintenance and floodlighting. It was noted that a raised platform had been installed at Holy Trinity Church and a summer concert would be held on May 19th featuring Sarah Helsby Hughes and Nicholas Sales. The Parish Council was invited to a Service of Thanksgiving for the Queen's Diamond Jubilee on June 3rd, 2012 at 10.30am.

9). Any matters of Local or Topical Interest:- Councillor Dodkins reported that the Youth Club continued to expand and money had been secured to finance a youth leader. The Young People had worked hard to create a Community Garden at the rear of Eccleshall Library and it was hoped this would be open as part of the Open Gardens Weekend on June 16th and 17th, 2012.

The Chairman thanked everyone for attending what had been a very interesting and worthwhile meeting.

There being no further business, the Chairman declared the meeting closed at 9.55pm.