

ECCLESHALL PARISH COUNCIL – ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

APRIL 29th, 2015

The Parish Meeting of Eccleshall Parish Council was held on Wednesday April 29th, 2015 at the Community Centre, Shaws Lane, Eccleshall at 7.30p.m.

1). Present were:-

Councillor G. Dale (Chair)	Councillor D. Pimble	Councillor J. Allen
Councillor L. Taylor-Potts	Councillor G. Garner	Councillor P. Mullee
Councillor M. Dodkins	Councillor P. Jones	Councillor E. Amos
Councillor P. Baskerville	Councillor R. Langford	Councillor M. Starkey
Borough Councillor J. Pert	Mrs C. Heelis (Clerk)	
1 member of the press	Approx 35 members of the public	

Apologies were received from:- Councillors Serjeant, Jacques and Delanchy, together with County / Borough Councillor Chapman and Mr D. Kirby (Eccleshall Methodist Church)

2). Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on April 30th, 2014 – The minutes, which had been previously ratified by the Council were presented to the meeting and copies were attached to the agendas.

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

It was noted that the precept remained unchanged at £50160.

The Parish Council continued to pressurise the County Council Highways to address issues with pot holes and road surfaces and concerns had been raised regarding the new road junction proposed on the A519 to access Raleigh Hall. Resurfacing of Castle Street and Stafford Street was scheduled to start on July 20th, 2015 for a period of 4 weeks, when disruption would be unavoidable.

The Policy and Resources Committee was reviewing Standing Orders and financial regulations to enable the Clerk to access online banking to transfer money between accounts, check balances and make BACS payments, and incorporate a change under the Openness of Government Bodies Regulations 2014 to allow the filming, photographing or audio recording of meetings.

One of the most popular projects throughout the year had been the moving of the Fire Tender from the Fire Station on Newport Road to the front of the Co-op store. A lectern was planned detailing the history of the fire engine and its restoration.

The Chairman thanked Councillor Allen, Chairman of the Policy and Resources and Footpaths Committees, on his retirement from the Council, for all his hard work over the last 20 years.

The Chairman concluded by indicating that the real work was carried out in the Council Committees and thanked Councillors for their commitment and enthusiasm over the last twelve months.

4). Presentation – Neighbourhood Plan:- Councillor Pimble reported that the Plan for Borough had been adopted in June 2014. The Neighbourhood Plan would have statutory status, identifying guide lines and principles for Eccleshall Parish which would form the basis whereby planning applications would be determined within the Neighbourhood Area. The Neighbourhood Plan could not contradict any of the elements within the Local Plan and so the Policies within the Local Plan which directly affected the Parish of Eccleshall must not be opposed by the Plan.

The draft plan had been submitted for a six week consultation period from January 19th, 2015 to February 28th, 2015 and the Plan had subsequently been amended in line with the comments received. Each response had been individually examined and a report prepared on the outcomes. The report would be available on the Parish Council website when the documents had been approved by the Parish Council. The Plan would then be submitted to Stafford Borough Council who would undertake various checks to ensure compatibility with the Plan for Stafford Borough and also with statutory requirements. The documents would then be subject to a further six week consultation period after which a Local Authority appointed examiner would undertake an independent examination and if the Neighbourhood Plan was accepted it would then be subject to a referendum of the local residents in the Parish.

Eccleshall was identified in the Plan for Stafford Borough as a Key Service Village capable of additional development, together with 10 other larger villages in the Borough such as Gnosall, Tixall

and The Haywoods. The Key Service Villages having a total requirement to provide 1200 new dwellings. However, no specific sites for development in Eccleshall or numbers of dwellings were mentioned in the Plan for Stafford Borough, but the Neighbourhood Plan proposed a total number of 325 new houses in Eccleshall Parish. 212 houses already having planning permission leaving a total of 113 to be distributed on other sites in the town.

The Local Plan also included the expansion of Raleigh Hall by an additional 4 hectares on land to the west of the existing estate with a new vehicle access onto the A519. The industrial estate is designated as a site for light industrial, general industrial, storage and distribution and even appropriate waste management uses. The Parish remained concerned that additional storage and distribution facilities may mean considerable additional traffic, especially heavy lorries, coming through the town and on the local road network. The objections raised by the Parish Council when the Plan for Stafford Borough was out for consultation were ignored.

Councillor Pimble thanked the members of the steering group who had contributed to the preparation of the Plan and Mrs Heelis for the work and effort put into the preparation of the documents.

5). 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. It was stated that the balance was slightly inflated at year end due to the late presentation of various large invoices for works already executed. No questions were raised regarding the Council's Accounts.

6). Reports from Borough / County Councillors:-

Mrs Heelis read a report submitted by **Councillor Chapman**. Councillor Chapman referred to his retirement as Borough Councillor on May 11th, although he would continue as a County Councillor for the Ward. The rehousing of the Fire Tender had been an example of how various bodies could work together to achieve positive outcomes. Councillor Chapman stated that the Fire Service was currently engaged in extensive consultation as to how future emergency cover was to be provided. Other matters of concern were the number of HGV's passing through Eccleshall and the damage caused to the road network. Grants would again be available from the Local Community Fund to support local initiatives and prospective applicants were asked to contact Councillor Chapman.

Mrs Heelis was asked to write and thank Councillor Chapman for his report.

Councillor Pert referred to ongoing Conservation Area Appraisals for Offley Brook and Walk Mill and also a mobile app that had been developed by Stafford Borough Council to report community issues. A Grant fund was to be made available for small community groups. Despite local and national publicity and efforts, the NatWest Bank had sadly closed and a mobile facility was planned commencing in August. Councillor Pert thanked Councillor Chapman for his leadership and guidance as a Borough Councillor.

Councillor Jones reported that he had completed a four year term of office as a Borough Councillor and was Mayor elect for the coming year. Councillor Jones was working with the Business Group to encourage residents and businesses to keep Eccleshall tidy. A litter pick was planned to take place on May 5th at 10am.

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.

9). Reports from Organisations in the Parish:-

Mrs Heelis read a report submitted from Eccleshall Methodist Church.

Reports were received from the following organisations:- Offley Hay Village Hall, Eccleshall in Bloom, Holy Trinity Church, St. Peter's Church Broughton, Broughton Parish Rooms, St. Paul's Croxton, Croxton Independent Methodist Church, Slindon PCC, Yo Yo Youth Club, Eccleshall RUFC, Broughton Well Dressing Committee and Eccleshall Community Centre.

10). Any matters of Local or Topical Interest:- No matters were raised.

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

Presentations were made to retiring members Councillor Gordon Dale and John Allen to thank them for their work in the community over 20years.

There being no further business, the Chairman declared the meeting closed at 8.45pm.

A buffet was served following the meeting.