

## ECCLESHALL PARISH COUNCIL

April 16<sup>th</sup>, 2014

A meeting of Eccleshall Parish Council was held on April 16<sup>th</sup>, 2014 at Broughton Parish Rooms, this meeting was preceded by a presentation from Richborough Estates at 7pm and followed at 9pm by a meeting of the Planning Committee

### **Richborough Estates – Proposals for development off Stafford Road / Badgers Croft:-**

10 members of the public / representatives of the Neighbourhood Plan Group were present.

Jonathan Bloor and Paul Campbell - Richborough Estates;

Charlotte Lewis - Pegasus

James Parker - PTB Transport.

Ms C. Riley – Housing Plus

PCSO D. Lutwyche

Councillor D. Pimble (Chairman)

Councillor E. Amos

Councillor L. Serjeant

Councillor D. Jacques

Councillor B. Delanchy

Councillor P. Baskerville

Councillor B. Apps

Mrs C. Heelis (Clerk)

Councillor G. Dale

Councillor P. Mullee

Councillor M. Dodkins

Charlotte Lewis reported on the feedback from the public consultation, which had been attended by 149 local residents and subsequent meetings with Stafford Borough Council. Various amendments had been made to the initial proposals, including:-

- Removal of the access from Badgers Croft – it was proposed that this would now be an emergency access only, which would have two removal bollards.
- Boundary treatments to land adjacent to the access to prevent access by cycles or motor bikes.
- A roundabout on the Stafford Road at the site entrance, which would also reduce traffic speeds on the A5013, supplemented by an extension of the 30mph limit and gateway features.
- Bungalows to the rear of existing houses, with a footpath to allow access to the rear of existing properties.
- Pegasus was working with Severn Trent regarding the capacity of the existing sewers and the implications of the proposed development
- Development would be set away from the area to the north of the site, which was prone to flooding and attenuation ponds would be included to ensure a controlled distribution of water.
- Discussions were ongoing with Stafford Borough Council regarding the need for play facilities for young people and it was also possible that an area for young children could be provided on either Bishops Court or Badgers Croft.
- It was envisaged that 40% of the houses would be affordable, in accordance with the emerging Local Plan and it was possible to include a legal requirement that the properties were offered to people with a local connection before being made more widely available.

Jonathon Bloor indicated that it was proposed to submit a formal planning application in May. Feedback would be welcomed prior to submission to help refine the scheme in view of local residents' comments and community aspirations.

The amended proposals would be posted on the Richborough Estates Website and a link could be included on the Parish Council website.

James Mumby commented that play areas on the site would be for general use, even if the purchasers of the properties were responsible for their upkeep, a practice which was now commonplace. Councillor Pimble indicated that the Parish Council felt that areas should be adopted by the Borough or Parish Council to ensure that they would always be available to the general public.

James stated that there was no intention to increase the number of properties proposed from 130 and that the planning application would include a design and access statement.

*The meeting opened with prayers*

**38/14). Apologies** were received and accepted from Councillors Jones, Garner and Starkey.

**39/14). To consider Councillor requests for dispensations:-** There were no requests to receive.

**40/14). Public Participation:-** The members of the public present did not wish to raise any matters.

**41/14). To confirm the minutes of the Council Meeting held on March 19<sup>th</sup>, 2014:-** The minutes, which had been previously circulated, were agreed and signed.

**42/14). Police:-** PCSO Lutwyche reported that numerous rumours were in circulation concerning the level of policing in Eccleshall. The Chief Inspector had requested that the following information was relayed:-

- PCSO's Ian Brewis and Ricky Hunt had been moved to Stafford for an unspecified period
- Police Officers Helen Davies, Karl Green and Mark Napier would continue to cover Eccleshall.
- Although Dianne would now sign on in Stone she would continue to police Eccleshall and the remainder of the area on her own.

Dianne reported anti-social behaviour and disturbances in the old school building. Taylor Wimpey had been contacted and had responded promptly by boarding up the school and making the site safe.

**43/14). Affordable Housing – Ms C. Riley, Housing Plus:-** Ms Riley reported that unfortunately, the scheme for development of affordable homes on The Bugage site could not proceed as the landowner had withdrawn the land. Discussions were still being held with other landowners in the vicinity and the Council resolved to request Housing Plus to continue with these negotiations to source an alternative site.

**44/14). Reports from Borough / County Councillors:-**

**Councillor Chapman** indicated that the Borough Councillors would continue to represent the local residents and call in any significant planning applications for Eccleshall, No applications should be considered 'done deals' and all would be subject to careful consideration.

The Chief Fire Officer had given assurances that 'The Eagle' Fire Tender would remain at Eccleshall Fire Station.

The Bus Services would continue to operate as previously.

Councillors were asked to consider local voluntary organisations or companies who they believed to be deserving of a Queens Award for Voluntary Services or Enterprise or individuals who could be nominated for a National Honour.

**Councillor Chapman** indicated that he had walked around Eccleshall with Mr C. Mitchell from County Highways when the following issues had been addressed:-

- Posts would be installed by the NHT at the top of Kerry Lane on the next visit.
- Plastic posts on Castle Street would be replaced in due course with oak posts more in keeping with the Conservation Area and Councillor Chapman was liaising with Stafford and Rural Homes to seek replacement of damaged posts under the Access from Selwyn Court to Cherry Tree Close.
- Options for protecting the grass verge on Church Street were under consideration.
- The recent work to the surface of Stafford Street and the mini roundabout had been unsatisfactory and the loose chippings exacerbated the situation. More thorough resurfacing work had been postponed due to insufficient finances. Councillor Chapman indicated that it would be undesirable for utilities to excavate the road once the surface was made good.
- Discussions had been held with the Environment Agency concerning the impact of additional development on the inadequate sewage system and it was important to make representations to both Severn Trent and the Environment Agency prior to the approval of any planning applications.
- The blocked gully on Stafford Street would be emptied and the leak was under investigation.
- Applications for funding from the Local Community Fund were welcome anyone interested should contact Councillor Chapman in the first instance.
- Councillor Chapman referred to the proposed expansion of Raleigh Hall, which was included in the emerging Local Plan and would therefore, be difficult to oppose. Councillor Dodkins relayed

concerns expressed by local residents and Councillor Pimble stated that a junction was proposed on the A519 with a filter lane to provide a second access to the site.

**Councillor Pert** stated that no formal planning applications for development in the parish had been submitted. A meeting had been held with Mr Manders to discuss the number of homes allocated to the Key Service Villages in the emerging Local Plan and it was noted that no indication of numbers could be provided until after the Plan had been adopted. Councillor Pimble expressed concern that the Local Plan was not expected to be adopted before June and that it was important to proceed with the Neighbourhood Plan to withstand pressure from prospective developers.

Councillor Pert referred to the new junction at Norton Bridge, which had received approval from the Secretary of State and indicated that efforts were ongoing to ensure that employment opportunities were made available to local people.

The County Council had recently conducted a consultation on young people and facilities and Eccleshall was identified as a prime example of forward thinking. Those involved with the youth in Eccleshall were to be congratulated on the immense achievements and opportunities provided for young people.

Councillor Pert undertook to arrange a working party to carry out a thorough clean of the play equipment and safety surfacing at the Croxton Play Area.

#### **45/14). Committee Report:-**

**Traffic Management:-** Councillor von Elbing reported that a response from the County Highways with regard to waiting restrictions in the vicinity of the proposed new roundabout at the access to the new development, indicated that access matters had been determined as part of the outline proposal and it was not possible to levy a condition on the reserved matters proposal to request the provision of waiting restrictions. However, the Council would still be able to comment when the formal planning application was submitted.

There were a number of issues important relating to highways that required discussion, It was therefore agreed to convene an additional meeting of the Traffic Management Committee on May 7<sup>th</sup>, 2014, following the meeting of the Planning Committee. The visit of the Neighbourhood Highway Team was scheduled for June 6<sup>th</sup>, 2104 and items had to be forwarded to Highways before May 19<sup>th</sup>.

Councillor Chapman expressed concern about the danger to pedestrians using the Stafford Road.

Councillor Delanchy indicated that according to EU regulations no utilities should excavate for twelve months following reinstatement of a highway. Councillor Delanchy also referred to the specification for road reinstatements and Councillor Dale requested site of a copy of the appropriate documentation.

**Enhancements Committee:-** Councillor Dale referred to the minutes from a meeting held on April 2<sup>nd</sup>. 2014 copies of which had been circulated to members.

- **Assets – outstanding work:-** The Chairman reported that he remained hopeful that the Prison would be able to undertake refurbishments of the seats and notice boards. Councillor Serjeant confirmed that gardener had been employed by the Prison and they should soon be in a position to commence the work. Mrs Heelis had obtained a quote from Mr Sheard of £25 per bench and £10 per notice board, which could be considered should the Prison have difficulty completing the tasks during the year.
- **Fire Tender:-** Despite Councillor Chapman's assurances that the Fire Tender would be able to remain at the Fire Station, it was agreed to continue to pursue the relocation of the equipment to the Co-op as it was considered this would be a more central location and would create a feature for the town. After negotiating with the Co-op for over twelve months, some progress had finally been made and the board was considering the project and obtaining costs. It was resolved that the Council could consider making a contribution towards the costs if necessary.
- **Civic Service:-** Councillor Dale reported that the Civic Service was to be held at Croxton C of E Church on October, 26<sup>th</sup>, 2014 at 11am.

The minutes of the Enhancement Committee were adopted by the Council.

There were no reports to receive from the Policy and Resources or Footpaths Committees.

**46/14). Liaison Representatives:-** There were no reports to receive from the Tourism Bureau, Allotments Association, Business Group or Eccelian Society.

**Offley Hay Village Hall:-** Councillor Dodkins reported that there were no problems.

**Bishop Lonsdale School:-** Councillor Dodkins reiterated concerns regarding problems with the old school premises and the fact that the Police were monitoring the situation.

**Community Centre:-** Councillor Dale reported that the Dance on Saturday had been a success and the Entertainments Committee had arranged a programme of events throughout 2014 and 2015.

**Young People:-** Emma Austin had returned from Japan and had agreed to give a report on her visit at the Annual Parish Meeting. Youth Club Membership continued to increase and a waiting list was to be created.

**Communities Mean Business:-** The new scheme was being established and the group had met to formulate a development strategy. Councillor Dodkins indicated that brochures had been printed and would be available at the Parish Meeting.

**47/14). Neighbourhood Plan:-** The group had met with Bob Keith from Planning Aid on April 15<sup>th</sup>, 2014. Mr Keith had advised on the next stages in the process. A further meeting of the group was to be held on May 1<sup>st</sup>, 2014 at 6pm to start preparing the Policies. The lack of information regarding the number of houses to be required in each Key Service Village was creating a problem for the writing of the Plan and details would not be available from the Borough Council until after the Local Plan was adopted in June. Councillor Pimble indicated that the number of houses was a serious issue that needed to be addressed and the Parish Council, which was ultimately responsible for the Neighbourhood Plan, should adopt a positive approach, given that larger developments could bring benefits for the community and help to fulfil the aspirations identified during the consultation process.

The advice was to continue with the preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan and the identification of the settlement boundary as swiftly as possible. Any Planning Applications submitted prior to the adoption of the Local Plan would be difficult to refuse without significant grounds to do so and if the applicant appealed the Inspector would be likely to approve the proposals and the Borough could incur considerable costs.

This issue would be discussed further at the meeting of the Planning Committee later in the evening. Councillor Pimble would present an update on progress at the Annual Parish Meeting.

**48/14). The Community Council of Staffordshire's Good Neighbours Scheme:-** The Community Council had obtained 12 months' worth of funding from the County Council Public Health budget to support 6 pilot schemes across the County. The funding was due to end in June 2014 and the 2 part time members of staff helping schemes would unfortunately, not be available to support communities after this date. The Parish Council was asked to register an interest in establishing a scheme to help secure further funds to continue to develop local schemes. The Council agreed to register an interest and it was agreed to include an article in the next Parish Council Newsletter.

**49/14). Clerk's report and correspondence:-**

**Holy Trinity Church:-** The Clerk circulated copies of a notice served by the Church to a certain individual who had been causing problems with threatening and aggressive behaviour in the grounds of the Church and Vicarage. The notice stated that presence by this individual, in these locations would be considered trespassing and the Police would be informed. The Parish Council supported the Vicar in this matter. However, it was noted that the individual in question was currently detained in Police custody.

**William Cash MP:-** A letter had been received from Mr Cash seeking the views of the Parish Council on three prospective housing developments that could affect the area's facilities and bring a total of 400 new homes to the town. It was resolved that Councillor Pimble would draft a response for the Clerk to despatch.

**Watering Contract 2014:-** A quotation for the watering contract had been received from Stafford Borough Council at a cost of £4470 for watering 4 days per week over 15 weeks, which represented a slight increase on the costs from 2013. The Council resolved to suspend Standing Orders and award the contract to Stafford Borough Council as members were unaware of anyone else who may be able/willing to undertake the work as cost effectively as the Borough.

**Governor – Bishop Lonsdale School:-** The Council was advised that the term of office of a Gocal Authority Governor was due to end on June 30<sup>th</sup>, 2014. The Parish Council did not wish to make a nomination.

**Croxton Play Area:-** Mrs Heelis reported that she had accompanied the Inspector from Wicksteed to undertake the annual safety assessment of the Play Area. Issues requiring attention were the replacement of three rotten vertical posts on the log walk and a repair to the wetpour surface, previously noted. **Wicksteed had issued a quotation for these repairs and the Council agreed to proceed at a cost of £825.** The Clerk indicated that the equipment and safety surfacing required washing and brushing with a stiff brush.

**Council AGM:-** Mrs Heelis indicated that the forms to register an interest in standing for Chair / Vice-Chair at the AGM on May 21<sup>st</sup>, would be circulated shortly.

**50/14). Chairman’s report:-** Councillor Dale reported that he had represented Eccleshall Parish Council at the Newport Town Council Civic Ball and the Stone Town Council Civic Dinner.

**51/14). Accounts:-**

**Receipts and Payments and Audit Return 2013/14:-** Copies of the Accounting and Governance Statements had been circulated together with the Receipts and Payments Summary, Income and Expenditure details for 2013/14.

- 2013/14- The Clerk reported that the accounts had been audited by both the internal auditor and the independent auditor and there were no matters to be addressed.
- Copies of the Summary Receipts and Payments Statement and Audit Return had been circulated and the accounts for 2013/14 were approved by the Council and signed by the Chairman.
- The Annual Governance Statement was considered by the Council and members agreed all matters had been adequately complied with.

Retrospective authorisation was granted for the following payment, which had been made since the last meeting:-

Richard Clift – Tree Planting – <i>Local Community Fund</i>	157.20
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Authorisation was requested for the following payments:-

Salary & associated costs – <i>LGA 1972 s. 112</i>	2517.08
Expenses – <i>Local Government (Financial Provisions) Act 1963</i>	58.47
Additional Chairman’s Allowance 2012/13 – <i>LGA 1972 ss. 15 (5)</i>	60.35
Annual subscription – Community Council – <i>LGA 1972 s. 111</i>	25.00
SPCA Subscription – <i>LGA 1972 s.111</i>	567.00
Subscription Local Council Review – <i>LGA 1972 s.111</i>	17.00
P.Jones – Festival Insurance – <i>LGA 1972 s.145</i>	272.73
D. Smith – Footpaths – <i>HA 1980 s.143</i>	12.62

All were in favour and the cheques were signed.

**52/14). Items/date and venue for next meeting:-** May 21<sup>st</sup>, 2014, AGM. Eccleshall Community Centre 7.30pm

There being no further business, the Chairman declared the meeting closed at 9pm.