

## ECCLESHALL PARISH COUNCIL

April 18<sup>th</sup>, 2012

A meeting of Eccleshall Parish Council was held on April 18<sup>th</sup>, 2012, at Broughton Parish Rooms at 7.30pm, this meeting was followed by a meeting of the Planning Committee.

|                               |                               |                               |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| <b>38/12). Present were:-</b> | Councillor G. Dale (Chairman) | Councillor D. Pimble          |
|                               | Councillor J. Allen           | Councillor P. Baskerville     |
|                               | Councillor M. Starkey         | Councillor E. Amos            |
|                               | Councillor D. Jacques         | Councillor B. Apps            |
|                               | Councillor G. Garner          | Councillor B. Delanchy        |
|                               | Councillor P. Mullee          | Councillor L. Serjeant        |
|                               | Councillor L. von Elbing      | Councillor P. Jones           |
|                               | County Councillor H. Butter   | Borough Councillor F. Chapman |
|                               | 1 member of the public        | Mrs C. Heelis (Clerk)         |

*The meeting opened with prayers*

Apologies were received and accepted from Councillor Dodkins and Borough Councillor J. Pert.

**39/12). Public Participation:-** Mr R. Carruthers spoke about the launch of a new initiative by the Ambulance Service and the British Heart Foundation to train members of the public in basic life support. The proposed two hour sessions would aim to train people from 14 years old upwards and could be provided for various groups. Posters were to be displayed locally.

**40/12). To confirm the minutes of the Council meeting held on March 21<sup>st</sup>, 2012:-** The minutes, which had been previously circulated, were agreed and signed.

**41/12). Reports from Borough Councillors:-**

**Councillor Butter:-** Thanks were expressed to Councillor Butter for agreeing to donate £750 from the Local Community Fund towards the printing costs of the Parish Council June Newsletter commemorating the Queen's Jubilee. Councillor Butter had also committed funds towards the garden project at Eccleshall Library and Eccleshall Cricket Club. Work on the B5026 at Croxton had been completed, costing a total of £200,000.

**Councillor Chapman:-** Councillor Chapman reported that he had attended seminars on localism and facilitation skills and also public speaking. Discussions had been held with SARH concerning the completion of an application form for funding towards the Castle Street refurbishment project and Councillor Chapman was working with the residents of Selwyn Court to submit the application. Ownership of the frontage outside The George had been confirmed by the County Council and it was likely that the scheme would be delivered in three phases with the area outside Selwyn Court being the initial phase.

The County Council had indicated that herringbone parking could not be endorsed but the scheme allowed for 8 parking spaces and monitoring of the situation had established that a maximum of nine vehicles were parked in the area at any one time, The situation outside the Telephone Exchange was considered to be unsatisfactory and Councillor Chapman was exploring possibilities for parking opportunities. Councillor Serjeant emphasised that the cobbles were not only unsightly but also extremely dangerous and the current haphazard parking and use of the pavement was a hazard.

Copies of the draft plan were circulated and it was noted that it may be possible to replace proposed wooden bollards with decorative railings, which would be set far enough back from the kerb to allow a car door to be fully opened. The detail contained in the plans with regard to trees, bollards and delineating parking spaces was subject to discussion and community involvement would increase funding opportunities. Councillor Chapman proposed that a further meeting was arranged between the Parish Council representatives and Borough and County Officers as soon as possible.

Councillor Chapman reported that he had requested Network Rail to consult Eccleshall Parish Council with regard to proposals submitted for improvements to Norton Bridge Junction. These proposals involved diversions of the B5026 and the County Council would be considering the options.

**Councillor Jones:-** Councillor Jones reported that he and Councillor Pert had attended a meeting with Mr T. Manders concerning proposals for development at Walk Mill and the restoration of The Maltings, as well as a meeting of the joint parking Committee. Councillor Jones had also collected for the Mayor's Charity and was to hold a surgery at Eccleshall Library on Saturday April 21<sup>st</sup>, 2012.

#### 42/12). Committee Reports:-

**Traffic Management Committee:-** Mr Mitchell had advised the Clerk that he was unable to attend the meeting on April 25<sup>th</sup>, 2012 and this would be re-arranged. The next meeting of the Traffic Management Committee would be held on May 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2012 following the meeting of Planning Committee.

#### **Enhancements Committee:-**

- **Pillar Clock:-** Peter The Painter had submitted a quote of £380 to paint the pillar clock with materials supplied by the Parish Council. It was agreed to accept this quote and Councillor Dale would arrange for the work to be carried out as soon as possible.
- **Pictorial Meadow:-** Thanks were expressed to those who had helped to dig the area in preparation for sowing, which would be undertaken by Councillor Dale.
- Councillor Serjeant reported that he had spoken to the Governor at Drake Hall Prison and it was hoped to discuss ways in which the inmates could help with and be involved in, projects around the town. It was agreed to invite the Governor to attend a future council meeting to discuss this proposal.

**Policy and Resources Committee:-** Councillor Allen referred to minutes of a meeting held on April 4<sup>th</sup>, 2012, which had been circulated to members.

- **Allotments Lease:-** Further to a request from the Allotments Association for a lease to accompany funding applications towards the toilets, shelter and store the Council agreed that the Tenancy Agreement between the Association and the Parish Council should be amended to include the following sentence:- *The lease of the land for use of allotments shall remain in force for 25 years from the date of the revised Tenancy Agreement (April 18<sup>th</sup>, 2012) subject to an annual rent.*
- **Repairs to roof over Jubilee Room:- Repairs to roof over Jubilee Room:-** A letter had been received from the Community Centre Association indicating that the cost of repairs to the flat roof had cost £5,280.00. Councillors Dale, Allen and Amos declared an interest in this item. It was noted that various improvements had been carried out recently funded from Association funds and grants. Further to a recommendation from the Policy and Resources Committee it was agreed that the Parish Council, as the owner of the building, should pay for these repairs from reserves.
- **Request from Mr Ranson to put Standing Orders on the Council website:-** Mr Ranson had first raised this matter in July 2011, when the Parish Council had resolved not to accede to this request. The Committee recommended that no changes to the current availability were required. All were in agreement.
- **Castle Street:- Castle Street Refurbishment:-** Councillor Dale had reported on a meeting with Officers of the County and Borough Councils concerning the Castle Street project. Members were in favour of the core plan, which would be subject to detailed discussions. Funding may be available from other sources if the scheme included some community involvement. The committee recommended that a project was devised to involve local people in the design of decorative railings to be positioned to the rear of the parking spaces and /or possibly a paving design or sculpture to be located on the area in front of The George Hotel. The requirement for railings was of panels 2 metres in length with spaces between no greater than 2 metres to prevent vehicles accessing the pavement. The suggested design themes were the Royal Jubilee and Coronation and the coaching history of Eccleshall and the Civil War. The Council agreed to proceed with a competition, which would be launched in the Jubilee edition of the June newsletter.

The minutes of the Policy and Resources Committee were adopted by the Council.

**Footpaths Committee:-** Councillor Allen reported that there had been no meeting of the Committee. The Favourite Walks Booklet had been printed and thanks were extended to all Councillors and members of the public who had assisted with this project.

**43/12). Liaison Representatives:-** There were no report to receive from the Allotments Association.

**Ecclian Society:-** Councillor Jones reported that the Booklet on Pubs and Inns of Eccleshall was ready to go to print.

**Offley Hay Village Hall:-** Councillor von Elbing advised that the AGM would be held next week.

**Tourism Bureau:-** Councillor Jones indicated that the last meeting held at The Royal Oak in Eccleshall had been well attended and that refreshments had been funded from The Eccleshall Guide.

**Business Focus Group:-** A meeting held on April 22<sup>nd</sup> at The Royal Oak had been well attended. Advice had been received from Truly Local on how to encourage people to spend locally. The next meeting would be a social event at The Star at Copmere on May 17<sup>th</sup>.

**Community Centre:** Councillor Dale reported that works to install a ceiling on the verandah and landscape the garden were almost complete and refurbishments of the toilets were underway. A grant had been received from Stafford Borough Council together with the first instalment of funding from the Environmental Fund.

**Young People:-** In the absence of Councillor Dodkins, Councillor Jones indicated that the young people had done a fantastic job on a community garden project at the rear of Eccleshall Library and Local businesses had donated materials.

**Communities Mean Business:-** Councillor von Elbing reported that two grants had been awarded recently and finance had been granted to Eccleshall Cricket Club and Stafford Furniture Recycling as well as funding a youth worker for Eccleshall.

**Eccleshall Festival:-** Councillor Jones indicated that the Festival week would be from June 16<sup>th</sup> – 24<sup>th</sup>. Over 52 stalls were already booked for the street market on June 23<sup>rd</sup>.

**44/12). Parish Council Newsletter – June:-** It was noted that the June Newsletter was being compiled and poems would be included by pupils from Bishop Lonsdale School. It was hoped to have proofs available for the May Council Meeting.

**45/12). Norton Bridge Railway Junction:-** Councillors Pimble and Apps had attended a consultation session in Chebsey and Councillor Pimble had prepared a short paper for the consideration of the Council. Option 4 would involve several important changes, which were considered detrimental to the locality:-

- The construction of an additional roundabout on the B5026
- Street lighting to two roundabouts, which would be which visually intrusive in a rural location
- An additional crossing of the Meece Brook on a large embankment – A site of Biological Importance together with a more extensive diversion of the Brook
- Traffic on the B5026 would be taken away from the old garage site, a commercial premises and Norton Bridge would become much more isolated from Eccleshall due to the longer road journey.
- There would be no change in the junction of Station Road and the current B5026 and priority would be the road at a right angle as the old road to Eccleshall would only access 2 houses and a field. There would be a dangerous bend when travelling from the Stone direction as once over the bridge, there would be a sharp turn left.

The Council does not believe option 4 provides a localised improvement on the standard of the highway as it introduces an additional roundabout on the route to Stone and the existing bridge over the Meece Brook is not a serious impediment to traffic. Although option 3 would require a 12 week closure of Station Road, members considered this was a price worth paying and that this was the preferred option

**Proposed Footpath Options:-**

Regarding footpath diversions resulting from the highway alignment option 3 is preferred by this council, footpath option 3 would avoid the cost and future maintenance of a footbridge, it would be routed along the new railway and highway embankment affording views over the surrounding landscape and not require a subway under the railway. Members agreed that this was the most suitable option and could be of benefit to local residents linking The Scannel area more directly with Norton Bridge.

Mrs Heelis was asked to advise Network Rail that options 3 for both the Footpath and road diversions were preferred by Eccleshall Parish Council.

**46/12) Watering Contract 2012:-** It was agreed to accept the quotation from Stafford Borough Council of £4205.44 for 64 days watering over 16 weeks. It was noted that the Borough Council would provide a grant of £2500.00 towards these costs.

**47/12). Clerks report and correspondence:-**

Eccleshall Churches Together invited Councillors to attend a Service of Thanksgiving for the Queen's Diamond Jubilee at 10.30am on Sunday June 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2012 in Holy Trinity Church.

**Housing Needs Survey:-** The surveys were due to be sent out on April 30<sup>th</sup>, 2012 with a return date of May 18<sup>th</sup>.

The Clerk was authorised to attend an SLCC Conference in Crewe on Tuesday April 24<sup>th</sup> concerning the Localism Bill and The Power of Competence at a cost f £39 plus VAT.

**48/12). Chairman's Report:-** The Chairman reported that he had represented the Council at the Newport Town Council Ball and would attend the Mayor's Charity Ball and the Mayor making Ceremony in Stafford on May 12<sup>th</sup>.

**Neighbourhood Plans:-** Councillor Delanchy queried progress with a Neighbourhood Plan and it was noted that some Councils in Staffordshire were producing plans without the benefit of funding from the Front Runners Scheme. It was agreed to include the item on future Planning Committee agendas with a view to producing a plan and check on progress made by other Councils together with any funding opportunities.

**49/12). Accounts:-**

- 2011/12- 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, there were no questions and the accounts for 2011/12 were approved by the Council.
- The Annual Governance Statement was considered by the Council and members agreed all matters had been adequately complied with.

#### **Accounts – April 2012**

- Retrospective authorisation was granted for the following accounts paid since the last meeting:-  
D. Smith - Footpaths Maintenance - HA 1980 s.143 24.32  
4M Property Developments - LGA 1972 s.227 25.00  
SPCA Training - LGA 1972 s. 111 30.00
- Payments received include half the precept payment and concurrent allowance together with allotment rents and a donation towards the footpath leaflets from Eccleshall Guide.

- Authorisation was sought for payment of the accounts listed below:-

|  |         |
|--|---------|
| Salaries and associated costs - LGA 1972 s. 112                  | 2214.26 |
| Expenses - Local Government (Financial Provisions) Act 1963      | 95.84   |
| Annual subscription - CPRE - s.137                               | 50.00   |
| Annual subscription - Community Council - LGA 1972 s. 111        | 22.00   |
| SPCA Subscription - LGA 1972 s.111                               | 597.33  |
| Eccleshall in Bloom Baskets x 4 - Concurrent Allowance           | 120.00  |
| R. Sheard - repairs to Notice board - LGA 1972 s.227             | 49.00   |
| SLCC Conference - LGA 1972 s. 11                                 | 46.80   |
| Malcolm Gray photocopying - LGA 1972 s.111                       | 40.85   |
| Subscription Local Council Review - LGA 1972 s.111               | 15.50   |
| Stafford Tourism Bureau – LGA 1972 s.144                         | 27.50   |
| Community Centre roof repairs - LG Misc Provisions Act 1978 s.19 | 5280.00 |
| Eccleshall Festival Insurance - LGA Act 1972 s. 145              | 266.40  |

*It was noted that Historically the Parish Council had paid for the Festival Insurance (minutes of July 19<sup>th</sup>, 2000 refer)*

All were in favour and the cheques were signed.

**50/12). Item / Date and Venue for next meeting:-** Members were reminded that it was the Annual Parish Meeting on April 25<sup>th</sup>, 2012 at Eccleshall Community Centre, commencing at 7.30pm. The next Council meeting would be the Annual General Meeting on May 16<sup>th</sup>, 2012 at Eccleshall Community Centre at 7.30pm.

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