

## ECCLESHALL PARISH COUNCIL

February 17<sup>th</sup> 2010

A meeting of Eccleshall Parish Council was held on February 17<sup>th</sup> 2010, at Eccleshall Community Centre, Shaws Lane, Eccleshall at 7.30pm.

**13/10). Present were:-**

Councillor G. Dale (Chair)	Councillor D. Pimble (Vice–Chair)
Councillor B. Delanchy	Councillor J. Pert
Councillor P. Baskerville	Councillor B. Apps
Councillor J. Allen	Councillor G. Garner
Councillor M. Starkey	Councillor P. Jones
Councillor Holl,	Councillor J. Jones
Borough Councillor F. Chapman	1 member of the public
Borough / County Councillor H. Butter	1 member of the press
Mrs. C. Heelis (Clerk)	

Apologies were received and accepted from Councillors Allsop, Amos and von Elbing and P.C. K. Green

*The meeting opened with prayers.*

**14/10). Public Participation:-** Mr. E. Ranson referred to the fact that Staffordshire County Council was currently compiling the third Local Transport Plan and were inviting people to become involved and submit their views. The Council was asked to consider an integrated transport system and repeat the request for the 432 bus service to go to Stafford Railway Station. Councillors were also urged to submit individual comments. It was noted that Mrs. Heelis had referred to the Transport Plan at a meeting of the Traffic Management Committee on February 3<sup>rd</sup> 2010 and the matter would be included on the agenda for the next meeting of the Committee on May 5<sup>th</sup>.

Mr. Ranson made reference to the minutes of Council meetings held in October and November 2009 when Councillors had expressed concern regarding the lack of police presence in the town and referred to a television advert pledging that local police would spend 80% of their time on the beat in their local area. Mr. Ranson considered that the Police were not meeting the needs of the community, contrary to the mission statement of the Staffordshire Police Authority. Councillor Dale stated that the Council would take note of these comments and the Borough and County Councillors were also asked to do so.

**15/10). To confirm the minutes of the Council meeting held on January 20<sup>th</sup> 2010:-** The minutes, which had been previously circulated, were agreed and signed.

Councillor Starkey referred to the decision to order a notice board from Greenbarnes at the last meeting. Councillor Dale indicated that only the accuracy of the minutes could be discussed not content. A decision of the council could not be reversed within 6 months except by a special resolution of the Council. The Council had accepted a recommendation from the Enhancements Committee, which had considered the matter in detail. Councillor Starkey was asked to raise the issue with the Enhancements Committee.

**16/10). Police:-** The Clerk indicated that P.C. Green had been unable to submit a report as he had been called out to attend an RTC. It was noted that PCSO Anderson no longer worked in Eccleshall and PCSO Lutwyche was on sick leave. Councillors agreed that the level of Policing in the town was disappointing and it appeared that no additional officers were to be appointed. Mrs. Heelis was asked to write to Ian Parry the Police Authority member for Stone and the Chairman, David Pearsall, to indicate that the Council considered that the level of policing in Eccleshall did not reflect either the television pledge or the mission statement. More communication was required with the community to identify and address local needs.

It was stressed that the Council had no issues with P.C. Green, who worked enthusiastically with the Parish Council and local groups as far possible, within the constraints of his other duties.

**17/10). Borough Councillors:-** County / Borough Councillor Butter indicated that he had spent £5,590 of his £10,000 Local Community Fund for 2009/10 in Eccleshall Parish to the benefit of local groups and towards Parish Council projects.

Thanks were extended to Councillor Butter for his continued support and assistance.

Councillor Butter reported that he had met Mr. Mitchell, from Staffordshire Highways to discuss and prioritise works in Eccleshall Parish in the coming financial year. Works to be undertaken included improvements to the road surface at Walton Bends and Wootton, together with SLOW markings on the carriageway at Wetwood. Councillor Butter indicated that he continued to pursue a resolution to the drainage issues on Footpath 13 and had requested an investigation into improved signage at Redhills.

Councillor Butter was to attend a photo shoot on February 18<sup>th</sup> at the Green Lane / Newport Road junction following completion of improvement works.

**Councillor Chapman** reported that he had made enquiries into a Section 106 agreement in connection with the apartments under construction at 30, Castle Street to establish whether the contributions could be used towards restoring the pool at Elford Common. The planning permission included a condition to the effect that details were to be submitted for the provision and management of a play area prior to commencement of the development. Councillor Chapman indicated that he would continue to pursue the matter with the relevant authorities.

Councillor Chapman referred to the problem with water from the fields on the highway at Walton Bends and after liaising with the farmer, Mr. Deane and would arrange for the blocked gully to be cleared out.

**18/10). Committee Reports:-**

**Traffic Management:-** Minutes from two meetings with Highway Officers and from the meeting of the Traffic Management Committee held on February 3<sup>rd</sup> 2010 had been circulated.

**Newport Road:-** Councillor Pert reported that several residents of Spring Hollow had attended the meeting expressing concern about the speed and volume of traffic on the A519. It was proposed to write to Donnington Rail Freight Terminal to request details of the number of vehicles leaving the terminal that were expected to travel through Eccleshall to access major road networks.

Data of traffic and speeds was to be collected shortly following the completion of the Green Lane / Newport Road improvements to compare with readings taken prior to the implementation of the scheme. It was proposed to use this data to gauge any increase in the speed of traffic and number of HGV's using the route. If the survey showed that vehicle speeds had not reduced then other traffic calming measures would need to be considered.

Mrs. Heelis indicated that problems with a drain cover in the carriageway near the entrance to Spring Hollow had been reported to the Highways Department.

The recommendations of the committee were accepted by the Council.

**Bus Stop request, Newport Road:-** A response received from Arriva indicated that the County Council had been consulted and were unable to make any changes at the present time. The committee considered that it had been a small number of residents who had requested the additional bus stop and resolved to take no further action, as the buses generally stopped on request.

**Pavement – Horsefair:-** It was noted that the pavement had been resurfaced in October 2009 when Gaol Butts was being surface dressed. However, vehicles often parked on the pavement and the grassed area, which had been badly damaged. The matter was referred to the Enhancements Committee with a view to approaching Mr. Mitchell about the possibility of making a feature of the area by installing railway sleepers and plating wild flowers.

**Green Lane / Newport Road Junction:-** The scheme was now complete and letters of thanks had been sent out from the Parish and County Councils to Mr & Mrs. Reynolds and Mr & Mrs Derry who had dedicated / sold land. The white visibility railings on the corner of Green Lane had been replaced by verge marker posts. A photo shoot would take place on Thursday February 18<sup>th</sup>.

A notice under Section 79 of the Highways Act had been served on the owners of Elder Cottage to ensure that safety and visibility at the junction were not compromised by any planting or the erection of 'A' boards.

The creation of a footpath outside 36, Newport Road remained a possibility if the ownership of the property changed in the future. The situation could be revisited by contacting Mr. Mitchell in the first instance.

**Walton Bends:-** Mr. Mitchell had provided data regarding accidents recorded on the A5013 and agreed to facilitate a site visit with representatives of the Road Safety Team, the First Responders and local Police. Mr. Knowles considered that a review of signage and verge markers, together with the location of the bus stops may be worthwhile. Flooding remained a problem just past Walton School and appeared to be a result of run off from the fields.

Mr. Mitchell stated that the bends were in the programme for high friction surface dressing in summer 2010 and that the bends would be added to the list for prioritisation by Councillor Butter with a strong representation for action from the community. Councillor Pert stated that this was the main area of concern on the Traffic Management Committee list and that it was necessary to ensure that everything possible was done to improve the situation.

**Clifford's Wood –** A Stage 4 Road Safety Audit undertaken 12 months after the installation of a roundabout at Clifford's Wood indicated that the scheme had been a success. Safety at the junction with the A51 was greatly improved, with just one minor collision being recorded since the completion of the scheme.

**Wootton Bank:-** Surface dressing was programmed for 2011/12, when a review of lining and signage would also be undertaken. However, the edge of carriageway markings may be removed in summer 2010.

**Grit Bins:-** It had been suggested that the Parish Council could create a list of high priority stretches of roads/pavements that should be hand gritted and locations where grit bins would be beneficial. Members were asked to contact the Clerk with details of any priority sites.

**Five Year Plan and Priorities for the next 12 months:-** Copies of the plan had been circulated with the minutes and members were asked for any additional items for inclusion. The item would be discussed at the next meeting of the Committee, scheduled for May 5<sup>th</sup> 2010.

The Council commended the tenacity of Councillor Pert and the Traffic Management Committee in achieving the improvements at the Green Lane / Newport Road Junction, which had made a significant improvement to safety.

The minutes of the meeting of the Traffic Management Committee were adopted by the Council.

**Enhancements Committee:-** The next meeting of the Committee was scheduled for March 3<sup>rd</sup>, following the meeting of the Planning Committee. Councillor Starkey referred to the specifications for Notice Boards, which had been considered at the last Parish Council meeting and asked that in future details could be made available to all Councillors prior to the meeting. Councillor Dale indicated that the details had been discussed by the Enhancements Committee with a recommendation made to the Council meeting.

**Policy and Resources:-** There was no report to receive. The next meeting would be held on April 7<sup>th</sup>.

**Footpaths Committee:-** Councillor Allen reported that the Kissing Gates were due to be installed on the Leys Footpath in early March. Councillor Allen was authorised to investigate the possibility of installing kissing gates on another footpath in the Parish and explore the availability of funding from the County Council.

#### **19/10). Liaison Representatives:-**

There were no reports to receive from The Eccles Society, Offley Hay Village Hall, Farmers' Market, Tourism Bureau, Slindon Village Hall, Young People, Communities Mean Business, Eccleshall Community Centre or Bishop Lonsdale School.

**Allotments Association:-** There was no report to receive. It was noted that the next meeting of the Association would be held on March 9<sup>th</sup>.

**First Responders:-** Councillor Garner indicated that following the last Council meeting he had made enquiries regarding the extension to the area covered by the First Responders but had received no response to date.

**Eccleshall Festival:-** Councillor P. Jones reported that the Festival would be held from June 19<sup>th</sup> – 27<sup>th</sup> with the Street Market being held on June 27<sup>th</sup>. Insurance had been obtained from the NFU at a cost of £304.00, which would be covered by the Parish Council in accordance with the Council resolution of July 19<sup>th</sup> 2000. Councillors were thanked for their continued support and Councillor Jones indicated that further financial assistance may be required from the Parish Council.

**Business Focus Group:-** Councillor P. Jones reported that Business Meeting arranged for February 22<sup>nd</sup> had met with a good response.

- 20/10). Seat – Stone Road:-** The Clerk had written to the landlord of ‘The George’ but no formal objection had been received. Mr. Mitchell stated that he had no objection to a seat in principle providing the potential safety issues had been discussed. The Clerk had made enquiries about the height of the seat and Broxap advised that the seat was only available 420mm high. Councillors considered that there were other seats nearby and the young people tended to congregate on the corner, the proposed site was also opposite the Police Station. As no formal objections had been received it was agreed to order a seat to match others in the town at a cost of £596.00 plus VAT.

Mr. Mitchell had agreed to the installation of a notice board on the setts outside Katherine House Hospice. Both items were subject to an exchange of letters confirming insurance cover to indemnify the County Council and accepting responsibility for maintenance. Mr. Mitchell agreed that the items could be delivered to the Stone Depot for installation by the Highway Authority, following site visits to determine the locations.

- 21/10). Elford Common and Pool:-** Following the Council meeting in January Jackson and Pugh had been requested to undertake 1 days work clearing trees and vegetation from the north side of the pool at a cost of £300.00, to enable Councillors to assess how much additional work would be required.

Following advice from the Environmental Agency Fisheries Officer – Mick Buxton, regarding the dredging work required one quotation had been received and alternative quotes were being sought. Concerns were raised regarding spawning and bird nesting times and whether an Environmental Survey would be required. The Council agreed that in the past the pool and common had provided valuable recreational and leisure opportunities for local people and any future management should be subject to detailed debate. The matter was referred to the Enhancements Committee for further consideration of the associated issues.

- 22/10). Clerks report and correspondence:-**

**March Newsletter:-** Mrs. Heelis had circulated copies of a draft newsletter and requested further items for inclusion as soon as possible.

**Councillor Jennings:-** The Clerk had received a telephone message from Mr. J. Prendergast, Chairman of the Stone Constituency Conservative Association, who had indicated that he had previously advised Councillor Jennings not to absent himself from his constituencies. A letter from Councillor M. Heenan, Leader of Stafford Borough Council stated that he had discussed the position with Councillor Jennings and that he did attend meetings of the Borough Council on a regular basis and made a valuable contribution. It was proposed to email Councillor Jennings and ask if he had any interest in Eccleshall matters, the situation could then be discussed further at the next council meeting. The motion was carried with 1 abstention.

**Footpaths Leaflets:-** The Clerk was authorised to order reprints of some Footpaths Leaflets.

**Stafford and Rural Homes:-** Councillors were invited to attend an exhibition and consultation event on March 1<sup>st</sup> at Rising Brook Baptist Church or March 3<sup>rd</sup> at The David Jones Centre, Stafford.

- 23/10). Chairman’s Report:-** Councillor Dale reported that he had been invited to attend the Newport Town Council Annual Ball.

- 24/10). Accounts:-** Copies of the accounts had been circulated. Authorisation was requested for payment of the following:-

Salaries and associated costs - <i>LGA 1972 s. 112</i>	2158.29
Expenses - <i>Local Government (Financial Provisions) Act 1963</i>	44.81
Holy Trinity - Churchyard maintenance - <i>Section 137</i>	195.00

Holy Trinity - Floodlighting Contribution - <i>Concurrent Allowance</i>	150.00
Broughton C of E - Churchyard maintenance - <i>Section 137</i>	135.00
Croxton C of E - Churchyard maintenance - <i>Section 137</i>	135.00
Croxton Methodist - Churchyard maintenance - <i>Section 137</i>	85.00
Slindon PCC - Churchyard maintenance - <i>Section 137</i>	135.00
Eccleshall Methodist - Churchyard maintenance - <i>Section 137</i>	85.00
Broughton Parish Rooms - Grounds maintenance - <i>Section 137</i>	55.00
Eccleshall Community Centre - Hall Hire - <i>LGA 1972 s.134</i>	750.00
Offley Hay Village Hall - Hall Hire - <i>LGA 1972 s.134</i>	125.00
Broughton Parish Rooms - Hire - <i>LGA Act 1972 s.134</i>	125.00
D. Jacques - storage of footpath materials - <i>Concurrent allowance</i>	5.00
Paul Cartwright – seat cross roads - <i>Parish Councils Act 1957 Section 1</i>	58.75
Malcolm Gray photocopying - <i>LGA 1972 s.111</i>	7.39
Stafford Borough - Civic Amenity visits - <i>concurrent allowance</i>	189.41
B.T. Telephone Bill - <i>LGA 1972 s.111</i>	116.81

All were in favour and the cheques were signed.

**25/10). Land at rear of Eccleshall Community Centre:-** A meeting had been arranged with Mr. J. MacDonald, Head of Strategic Property, Staffordshire County Council, on February 26<sup>th</sup> 2010.

**26/10). Items / Date and venue for next meeting:-** March 17<sup>th</sup>, 2010, Eccleshall Community Centre 7.30pm.

There being no further business, the Chairman declared the meeting closed at 8.30pm.