

ECCLESHALL PARISH COUNCIL

February 20th, 2013

A meeting of Eccleshall Parish Council was held on February 20th, 2013 at Eccleshall Community Centre, at 7.30pm. This meeting was followed by a meeting of the Planning Committee.

17/13). Present were:-

Councillor G. Dale (Chairman)	Councillor D. Pimble (Vice-Chairman)
Councillor J. Allen	Councillor B. Apps
Councillor M. Dodkins	Councillor D. Jacques
Councillor G. Garner	Councillor L. von Elbing
Councillor M. Starkey	Borough Councillor F. Chapman
Ms A. Lewis (Community Development Specialist)	
Mr M. Watson	PCSO Lutwyche
7 members of the public	Mrs C. Heelis (Clerk).

Apologies were received and accepted from Councillors Delanchy, Mullee, Baskerville, Amos, Jones and Serjeant together with Borough Councillor Pert and County Councillor H. Butter.

The meeting opened with prayers

18/13). To consider Councillor requests for Dispensations:- Councillor D. Pimble declared a Pecuniary Interest in certain areas of land which may be involved in discussions with the Neighbourhood Plan and Affordable Housing. **The Council resolved to grant a dispensation when discussing either of these issues for a period of two years.**

19/13). Report from Borough Councillor F. Chapman:- Councillor Chapman referred to the Francis Report into the care provided by the Mid Staffordshire NHS Foundation Trust and indicated that the Borough and County Councils would take note of the recommendations contained in the report and seek to address the failings identified.

Councillor Chapman gave a brief overview of the preferred route of Phase 2 of the HS2 through Staffordshire. The County Council had adopted the policy that the link would bring no financial or economic benefits for Staffordshire. Compensation to landowners affected was reported to be inadequate and representatives of Councils along the route had formed an alliance to challenge to proposals. Councillors queried the need for the link when business travel was declining and the conferences could be held on the internet. Councillor Chapman indicated that he could be contacted for further information if required.

20/13). To confirm the minutes of the Council Meeting held on January 23rd, 2013:- The minutes, which had been previously circulated, were agreed and signed.

21/13). Youth Survey:- April Lewis presented the results of a Youth Survey that had recently been completed. The report had been sent to those members with email access prior to the meeting. The survey had covered three age groups; eight to ten years, eleven to fifteen years and sixteen to twenty years, sixty percent of the respondents were in the eleven and over age group. Ninety-nine percent of the young people made at least one comment regarding safety, not only their own personal and physical safety that that of younger children and the wider community.

Many of the children in the eleven and over age range wanted to somewhere to sit and chat but also commented that seating areas and shelters should be positioned in the open so that they could see anyone approaching and passersby could see who was there and what was happening.

Many of the young people wanted an open space or play area to be within half a mile of where they lived however, 35 percent were happy to travel up to a mile. The distance of travel depended on ease and safety of access. The most popular pieces of equipment the young people would like were swings, a basketball hoop, football posts and outdoor gym and over half the young people, surveyed would like facilities for wheeled sports including a BMX track, skateboarding and bike ramps.

The young people had been asked if there were some open spaces they would like to remain unchanged. Twenty percent had identified Bishops Court and ten percent Badgers Croft.

April was thanked for providing an excellent and very informative report.

PCSO Lutwyche indicated that she had discussed various items of equipment with PC Green and expressed concerns about the provision of a youth shelter. The Police advised that there were no youth shelters locally, either in Stafford town, Stone or Gnosall and considered that it could attract people from other areas who may create problems. There were currently no problems with anti-social behaviour in Eccleshall and it was felt that the youth club had been instrumental in reducing problems. A shelter could create ownership issues and lead to bullying problems.

22/13). Mr M. Watson – First Responders:- Mr Watson referred to Heartstart courses which were being run in Eccleshall in conjunction with the West Midlands Ambulance Service and The British Heart Foundation. Defibrillators had been provided outside The George and in the old telephone kiosk at The Star at Copmere and the First Responders were seeking funding to enable the equipment to be provided at rural locations in the Parish. An AED (Automated External Defibrillator) cost approximately £1500, which included the equipment and a cabinet. Maintenance cover would be provided by West Midlands Ambulance Service for 7 years. The cabinets were located on an outside wall to afford 24 hour access and required a power supply to keep the cabinet warm. On dialling 999 the location of the nearest equipment would be given together with a PIN number to access the cabinet. The meeting was shown a video on the use and benefits of an AED.

Mr Watson was thanked for his invaluable work, which was of benefit to the whole community.

23/13). Committee Reports:

Traffic Management:- Although no committee meeting had been held representatives had met with Mr C. Mitchell on February 19th, 2013 when the following issues had been discussed:-

- **Gist and HGV's** – It was noted that the majority of complaints concerned the increase in traffic, particularly during the night, although the Parish Council had not received any complaints recently. Mr Piper had stated that the company employed over 200 people from the ST21 postcode area and was operating legally in accordance with the existing planning permission. It was a difficult balance between benefits the company brought to the area versus the traffic issues.

Monitoring of traffic on local routes would hopefully be undertaken before the end of March and this would help to gauge the traffic going to and from Raleigh Hall and quantify the amount of vehicles using the A519 and other routes. Monitoring could only be undertaken at optimum times, which did not allow for data to be gathered during the winter months as this may flaw the results.

- **Expansion of Raleigh Hall** - Councillor Pimble had referred to the 6 hectare increase in the site defined in the Stafford Borough Plan and the understanding that a new roundabout would be constructed on the A519 to facilitate this expansion. When asked if the additional traffic to the site would justify the cost of installing the roundabout Mr Mitchell replied that he was not aware of these proposals and that the County Council would have to consider the benefits opposed to the costs involved. It would be possible to object through the planning process due to the overload of traffic through Eccleshall and potential mitigation measures would have to be formulated. Councillor Butter stressed the need for the monitoring process to be carried out as soon as possible to enable the data to be used.
- **Flooding and pot holes** - Mr Mitchell indicated that the unusually high level of rainfall had caused widespread problems with flooding and the volume of water and material being washed off the fields, together with severe frost caused pot holes. Work was being undertaken at the bottom of Badgers Croft to install a new manhole and jetting had been carried out at Hilcote. Problems at Woodwall Green were being investigated and pipes were blocked with tree roots. Residents were advised to report pot holes on rural roads to the Hotline by email or telephone.
- **Castle Street Improvement Scheme:-** Several questions had been raised regarding the implementation of the scheme and Mrs Heelis had been asked to contact the Project Engineer, Guy Pryer.
- **Tree Roots** – issues with roots damaging the pavement had been reported and the problem at the junction of Green Lane and Stafford Road had been assessed and prioritised. The County Council was to survey and assess all trees on A and B roads in the ownership of the County Council.
- **'A' Boards** - The problems had improved since letters and leaflets had been circulated and the Council would continue to monitor the situation. Councillor Dodkins referred to the Board advertising the Barbers Shop, which was often obstructing the pavement. It agreed this was a safety issues and Councillor Dale offered to speak to the owner.

- **Podmore Lane:-** Mr Mitchell explained that the County Council had received £20 million for the structural maintenance of rural roads over a 2 year period. £2 million was directly apportioned to rural roads and a survey had been conducted of the c category road network. Podmore Lane had been rated as the highest priority in Stafford Borough. Work was expected to take up to 10 months.
- **Front of BT Exchange, Castle Street:-** It was noted that this area was not in the ownership of the County Council.

The next meeting of the Traffic Management Committee would be held on April 3rd, 2013 following the Planning Committee Meeting.

Enhancements Committee:- Councillor Dale reported that he had been contacted by Dr M. Greenway concerning a worldwide game Geocaching and the fact that there were already numerous caches hidden around the Town. Permission was sought to place a cache on Elford Common and the Council raised no objections to the proposal.

Policy and Resources and Footpaths Committees – There had been no meeting of these committees.

24/13). Liaison Representatives:- There were no reports to receive from the Business Group, Tourism Bureau, Bishop Lonsdale School or Communities Mean Business.

Allotments Association:- Councillor Starkey reported that at a meeting held on January 30th, 2013 two new members had been welcomed. Finances were healthy and three plots were currently available for a waiting list of five. Battery powered lights were to be installed in the cabin and keys would be available to plot holders for £15. A monthly newsletter was to be emailed to members.

Ecclian Society:- Councillor Jones had reported the following:-

- The next Newsletter was to be sent out in March
- Plans to install the Council crest above Reeds Rains corner were still progressing. A reply was awaited from the Borough Council
- Castle Street. 4 new oak posts were ready for installation.
- The 3 flower barrels outside the George would be renewed / positioned when the work improvement had been completed.
- The rotten tubs near the telephone box would be replaced.
- The watering trolley was being refurbished ready for the weekend watering.
- Open Gardens 15 and 16 June and the committee needed new gardens to open.
- Neighbourhood plan - the Ecclians were pleased to have input into this working party
- The lunch club celebrated their 100th meeting today.
- The next walking group would be on February 24th.

Offley Hay Village Hall: Councillor von Elbing reported that three new members had joined the committee who represented the various activities at the hall and they were making a significant contribution.

Community Centre:- Councillor Dale reported that the programme of redecoration and improvements continued with plans to tile the Ladies toilets and seek quotations for replacing the ceiling, along with all the internal doors.

Young People:- Councillor Dodkins reported that a group of young people were currently visiting from Finland. Work was progressing at the Cricket Club and it was anticipated that the Youth Club would be able to move into the new facilities in June.

25/13). Twinning With Sancerre:- Councillor Dale had received an enquiry from a resident about the Twinning with Sancerre and asked if any members of the Council were interested in renewing the links? Councillor Jacques stated that he visited the area on occasion and the French did not seem to have any knowledge of the Twinning with Eccleshall. Councillor von Elbing reported that she worked with the West Midlands Co-ordinator and would pass on the contact details. It was suggested that the young people could perhaps make contact with their counterparts in Sancerre and Councillor Dale was to advise the resident that she was welcome to attempt to revive the link if desired.

26/13). Neighbourhood Plan:- Councillor Pimble reported that a formal application had been made to Stafford Borough Council designating the Parish Boundary as the Neighbourhood Area. The Borough would advertise the application for six weeks as part of the consultation process. A meeting had been called on March 5th, 2013 for anyone interested in joining the working party.

27/13). Clerk's Report and Correspondence:-

Old Fire Engine:- There followed some discussion about alternative locations for the engine. The Co-op had been suggested, but this would involve some building work to enclose the front of the building to house the equipment and the dimensions of the equipment would be needed before approaching the Co-op. Claremont Garage had been approached but were not interested. Councillor Garner suggested Fletchers Garden Centre and agreed to make enquiries. It was agreed to ask the Historical Society to become involved and include an item in the March Newsletter. It was also suggested that the equipment could be temporarily loaned to the Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Museum that was to be opened in Burton-on-Trent or to the County Museum at Shugborough.

Drake Hall Prison – Community Engagement- There was no work to be carried out at either Offley Hay Village Hall or Eccleshall Community Centre that could involve the women. However, suggested areas of work included clearing footpaths and open spaces. Members were asked to contact Mrs Heelis with any other suggestions.

Grass Cutting Tenders 2013/14 & 2014/15:- Copies of a spreadsheet showing the tenders received had been circulated. It was resolved to award the contracts as follows:-

- Elford Heath, Triangle Kerry Lane and Offley Hay Village Hall – Jacksons of Eccleshall
- Badgers Croft, Washpits, Picnic Site, Croxton Playing Field and Bishops Court – Trent Grounds Maintenance.
- Pump Site and Eyeswells Footpath – Stafford Borough Council.

All the votes were unanimous with the exception of the picnic site where the contract was awarded to TGM although this was not the cheapest price. Members considered that the work had been exemplary in the past and that TGM should continue with the contract. Councillor Pimble voted against the motion. It was proposed that in future the areas should be grouped together by location for tendering purposes.

Community Centre – flat roof repairs:- Councillors Dale and Allen expressed an interest in this matter. It was noted that the flat roof over the Pre-School was leaking and needed to be replaced. The Parish Council, as owner of the property was asked to fund the repair. Details had been circulated of a quote received from Greenhill Roofing and the Community Centre Association Accounts for 2011/12. Members queried the level of reserves held by the Association and Councillor Dale stated that a refurbishment programme was underway and that boiler repairs were needed. It was necessary to continue to improve the facility to attract new business. It was resolved that the Parish Council should seek alternative quotes and make enquiries into the addition of insulation material to reduce heating costs. The Parish Council could then order the work as this would enable the VAT to be reclaimed. It was further resolved that upon receipt of the quotes the successful contractor could be determined by the Policy and Resources Committee.

Network Rail:- A response had been received from Network Rail addressing the issues raised in July by the Parish Council to the proposed improvements at Norton Bridge Junction. Copies of the letter had been circulated.

Croxton Playing Field Annual Inspection – Wicksteed had undertaken the annual inspection and the report was referred to the Enhancements Committee for consideration at the meeting on March 6th, 2013.

Queen Elizabeth II Feld – Jubilee Recreation Area:- The Council was asked to consider how the plaque which was coated aluminium and 400mm in diameter, would be displayed. This matter was referred to the Enhancements Committee for consideration.

March Newsletter:- Draft copies had been circulated and Mrs Heelis requested comments as soon as possible.

Marston Gate, Stafford:- Members were invited to a Public Exhibition at Tillington Hall from 12pm – 1pm on Tuesday February 26th, 2013 to view and comment on proposals for residential development at Marston Gate, Stafford.

Eccleshall Parish Room:- A representative of the Council was invited to attend the official opening of the new kitchen at the Parish Rooms on April 10th, 2013 at 12 noon.

Eccleshall Allotments:- The Association had written to thank the Council for their supportive comments and suggested that Parish Councillors could visit the site in the summer once the cabin was complete. A formal invitation would be extended in due course.

Staffordshire Diary of Village Festivals and Events 2013 – It was proposed to pass this letter onto Councillor Jones to enable any events to be publicised by the Community Council.

28/13). Chairman's Report:- Councillor Dale reported that he had been invited to attend the Civic Dinners of both Newport and Stone Town Councils.

29/13). Accounts:- Mrs Heelis reported receipt of £9.06 interest and a Wayleaves Payment of £31.59.

The following account had been paid since the last meeting:-

Peter Jones – website domain name £11.99

Authorisation was requested for payment of the following accounts:-

Salaries & associated costs - LGA 1972 s. 112	2214.26
Expenses - Local Government (Financial Provisions) Act 1963	51.82
Holy Trinity - Churchyard maintenance - Section 137	195.00
Holy Trinity - Floodlighting Contribution - Concurrent Allowance	150.00
Broughton C of E - Churchyard maintenance - Section 137	135.00
Croxton C of E - Churchyard maintenance - Section 137	135.00
Croxton Methodist - Churchyard maintenance - Section 137	85.00
Slindon PCC - Churchyard maintenance - Section 137	135.00
Eccleshall Methodist - Churchyard maintenance - Section 137	85.00
Broughton Parish Rooms - Grounds maintenance - Section 137	55.00
Eccleshall Community Centre - Hall Hire - LGA 1972 s.134	750.00
Offley Hay Village Hall - Hall Hire - LGA 1972 s.134	125.00
Broughton Parish Rooms - Hire - LGA Act 1972 s.134	125.00
D. Jacques - storage of footpath materials - Concurrent allowance	5.00
B.T. Telephone Bill - LGA 1972 s.111	117.31
Stafford Borough - Civic Amenity visits - concurrent allowance	200.00
Pictorial Meadows - Open Spaces Act 1906 s.10	48.00

All were in favour and the cheques were signed.

30/13). Items/ date and venue for the next meeting:- March 20th, 2013. Eccleshall Community Centre 7.30pm.

There being no further business, the Chairman declared the meeting closed at 9.15pm.