

## ECCLESHALL PARISH COUNCIL

January 21<sup>st</sup>, 2015

A meeting of Eccleshall Parish Council was held on January 21<sup>st</sup>, 2015 at Eccleshall Community Centre at 7.30pm. This meeting was followed by a meeting of the Planning Committee at 8.45pm.

**1/15). Present were:-**

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

Apologies were received and accepted from Councillors Delanchy, Serjeant and Jones, together with Borough / County Councillor Chapman and Borough Councillor J. Pert.

**2/15). To receive Councillor Requests for dispensations:-** No requests had been received.

**3/15). Public Participation:-** The members of the public present did not wish to raise any matters.

**4/15). To confirm the minutes of the Council Meeting held on November 19<sup>th</sup>, 2014:-** The minutes, which had been previously circulated, were agreed and signed.

**5/15). Reports from Borough and County Councillors:-** There were no Borough / County Councillors present.

**6/15). Committee Reports:-**

**Traffic Management Committee:-** Councillor Taylor-Potts reported that the following matters had been discussed with Mr Mitchell, Highways Community Liaison Officer, however, the notes from the meeting held on Tuesday January 20<sup>th</sup>, would be considered at the next meeting of the Traffic Management Committee on March 4<sup>th</sup>, 2015.

- Mr Mitchell had indicated that residents / drivers should report all problems / highway defects directly to the Highways Hotline – 0300 1118000 or email [highways@staffordshire.gov.uk](mailto:highways@staffordshire.gov.uk) they would then be issued with a reference number to check the progress of repairs. It was suggested that these details were published in the next Parish Council newsletter.
- Stafford Road / Mini Roundabouts:- reconstruction was expected to take place this financial year causing some disruption. Severn Trent has advised that they had no improvements / upgrade works programmed in the vicinity. They also indicated that the planned survey was abandoned and didn't take place.
- The visits of the NHT were soon to be programmed in – Councillors were asked to advise the Clerk of specific dates of events that may benefit from clearing or tidying up works by the Team, and details of any works that were required.

**Speedwatch:-** Councillor Taylor-Potts reported that Loggerheads Parish Council had asked if they may 'borrow' a radar device for their speedwatch group and in exchange the group was prepared to do the odd speedwatch session in Eccleshall Parish. Peter Jones had one device the other was believed to be in Croxton. The Council had no objections, although neither device had been used for some time and Loggerheads Parish Council would need to establish whether the devices were still legal or in need of recalibration. A six month loan period was agreed with an opportunity for review at the end of the period.

**Enhancements Committee:-** Councillor Dale presented the following report from a meeting of the Committee held on December 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2014.

- **Eyeswells Footpath:-** Councillor Dale reported that a meeting had taken place with Nik Pearson (from Rob Keyzor) regarding the raising of tree crowns and felling of trees on the site. A schedule of proposed works and costs had been submitted together with a daily rate of £375.00.
- The committee had resolved to proceed with the quotation for two days work at £375 per day plus stump grinding at an additional £375.00. **Retrospective authorisation for this decision was**

**granted by the Council** and it was agreed that funds of £615.68 remaining from the Milwood Homes payment for open space projects could be used towards the cost.

- **Croxton Play Area:-** Councillor Langford and Mrs Heelis had met the Inspector from Wicksteed on site and discuss the repairs required. A quotation had been received of £554.00 to dig out and reset 3 posts and cut back and infill areas of wetpour where the edges had lifted. The Committee had resolved to accept this quotation and the repairs had been undertaken. **Retrospective authorisation was granted by the Council.**

Councillor Jacques commented that the area did not appear to be well used, and suggested that the equipment could be moved. Councillor Pimble suggested that may be helpful to have the hedge reduced in height. It was agreed that the local Councillors should conduct a survey asking the residents if they wished the play equipment to remain and to establish how well used the area was. Councillor Langford agreed to arrange for an item to be included in the community magazine. Councillors from Eccleshall indicated that they took grandchildren to use the facility and that although there was no parking a vehicle could be pulled into the gate entrance without obstructing access along the pavement. Further action to reduce the height of the hedge was to be left in abeyance pending a report from local councillors regarding usage of the site.

- **Seat** - A request had been received from Tracey O'Flaherty to site a bench in the High Street possibly outside the Star Café in memory of her brother Mark Forrester. Mrs O'Flaherty indicated that she would be happy to purchase a bench of the Parish Council's preferred design and that her husband would maintain it. Highways had been approached about siting a bench and Mr Mitchell had indicated that the blue bricks were the responsibility of the frontages. It was agreed to consider this request and review existing benches and possible locations in the High Street as the area outside the Café would not be in the sun.
- **Pillar Clock:-** It was noted that Mr Smith had replaced the damaged bricks and the cost would be covered by the insurance other than £100 excess on the Policy. The bricks at each of the four corners of the plinth also required replacement and Mr Smith had been requested to undertake this work as soon as possible at a cost of £375.00. One of the faces of the clock had stopped working and Hawkins had quoted £495 to visit and carry out repairs. It was agreed to accept this quotation on this occasion and also request Mr Hawkins to repair the chimes. However, it was also agreed to establish whether the clock could be repaired more locally in the future.
- **Village Sign:-** Harry Stebbing who had cast the sign for Eccleshall quoted approximately £1,200 to transport and refurbish it. The sign would need to be removed ready for collection from Eccleshall on February 24<sup>th</sup>, 2015. The Council accepted this quotation and it was agreed to vire unspent funds allocated in the precept to the Pillar Clock and Traffic Management
- **Grass cutting 2015/16 & 2016/17:-** Specifications for the grass cutting tenders had been circulated. It was agreed to increase the numbers of cuts on Badgers Croft, Bishops Court and Croxton Playing Field to fortnightly rather than 12 times throughout the growing season. The other areas could then be cut on every alternate occasion. The Clerk was requested to invite tenders from Jacksons of Eccleshall, Trent Grounds Maintenance and Stafford Borough Council.
- **Hedge on the Eyewells between the footpath and the Perle Brook car park.** The hedge, which had been layed some years ago appeared to have been trampled when the laurel at the rear of the car park had been cut. The Clerk had written a letter of complaint to Mrs Beaumont-Eardley of the management committee and received a response from Alan Hateley Gardening refuting allegations that the damage had been caused during hedge cutting.

#### **Policy and Resources Committee:**

- **Fire Tender:-** Work had started on the refurbishments to the Co-op Store and plans were underway to move the Fire Tender on January 25<sup>th</sup>, 2015 with an unveiling and store opening planned on February 6<sup>th</sup>, 2015. The Parish Council had previously resolved to contribute a grant of £5000 towards the relocation project - (£2619.68 Parish Council Funds and £2380.32 Local Community Fund).
- **Precept 2015/16:-** copies of the draft budget had been circulated with the minutes of the Committee meeting. **It was agreed to levy a precept of £50,160 the same amount as in 2014/15. Councillors Dodkins, Jacques and Langford abstained from voting.** Councillor Jacques queried amounts earmarked in the reserves for the maintenance of the community centre, a building owned by the Parish Council. The local council tax support grant of £2,807

would be deducted from the amount of precept to be raised locally and the Concurrent Allowance was to remain at £3733.00.

- **NJC National Salary Award recommendations:-** A Salary Award recommended by NALC and SLCC from January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2015 was reported. The increase to SCP 25 was £478 per annum together with a recommended one off payment of £100. **The Council resolved to adopted the advised increase and payment.**
- **Increase in National Minimum Wage:-** An increase in the National Minimum Wage from October 1<sup>st</sup>, 2014 from £6.31 to £6.50 per hour was reported. **The Committee agreed that this increase should be applied to future remunerations received by the Handyman.**
- **Quality Council Scheme:-** The Scheme had been reviewed and re-launched. It was noted that Parish Councils that had previously been awarded Quality Status could apply for automatic transition to the Foundation Level Accreditation expiring in January 2016. The Committee resolved to accept this course of action, which would allow members to consider the accreditation process and the benefits of working towards a Quality Award or Quality Gold Award.
- **Grant request -** A funding application had been received from Lucie Talbot, who ran a dance class at the community centre. Ms Talbot requested funding of £305 towards the purchase of 3 mirrors, which she considered would also benefit other users of the centre. Members considered that it was inappropriate to give funding to a business and that the mirrors would not benefit other users of the centre and could present a safety hazard. Also the mirrors would remain the property of Ms Talbot if she moved the classes to another venue.

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

**Footpaths Committee:-** Councillor Allen reported that there were no outstanding items. Mrs Heelis requested authorisation to place an order for a reprint of the footpaths leaflets at an approximate cost of £500. All were in favour.

Councillor Mullee requested information regarding vegetation on FP IR/2964. It was reported that a rabbit warren had encroached across the footpath making walking dangerous. The County Ranger had been requested to carry out an inspection.

**7/15). Liaison Representatives;-** There were no reports to receive from the Allotments Association, Young People or Tourism Bureau.

**Ecclian Society** – It was reported that the wooden troughs by John Pershall Court were to be replaced by 6 stone troughs. Thanks were extended to Councillor Chapman for supporting this improvement. The next meeting of the Management Committee would be held on February 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2015.

**Offley Hay Village Hall:-** Councillor Taylor-Potts reported that bookings were good and events were booked every day for the next month.

**Community Centre:-** Councillor Dale reported that the New Year's Eve Dance had been well attended and the programme of Community Dances was proving very popular with artists booked throughout 2015.

**Bishop Lonsdale School:-** Councillor Dodkins reported that she was no longer a Governor at the School Mrs Heelis was asked to write to the Headteacher to seek information regarding the current situation.

**8/15). Clerk's Report and Correspondence:-**

**Civic Amenity Visits 2015/16** – It was resolved to request bi-monthly visits of two hours duration as previously.

**Grant request – Broughton Women's Institute** – Councillor Langford declared an interest in this item. It was agreed to provide the sum of £100 towards the cost of materials for the 2015 well dressing.

**Sarah Louise Jolliffe** – Ms Jolliffe had been selected to represent the National Federation of Young Farmers Clubs as an ambassador in Austria and requested funding towards an exchange. It was resolved that it would be inappropriate to provide funding to an individual as this could set a precedent. Mrs Heelis was asked to suggest other funding opportunities such as the Rotary Club and Round Table and also The Prince of Wales Trust.

**NatWest Closure:-** Following the meeting of the Planning Committee Mrs Heelis had written letters objecting to the proposed closure to the Chief Executive of the RBS, Sir Bill Cash and Sir Vince Cable. Residents and groups were urged to write individual letters of objection. The Clerk was asked to write to the Co-op and suggest that they opened a Co-op Bank in the store.

**Fire Tender Insurance:-** Mrs Heelis indicated that the Station Manager had forwarded a valuation of the tender as at March 2012. These details had been forwarded to Zurich who had advised that an additional

premium of £84.25 would be required to add cover for the Pump to the Council Policy. It was agreed to continue with this course of action.

**HGV's:-** an email had been received from Mr D. Joyner registering his objection to further development at Raleigh Hall, which could lead to increased HGV traffic through Eccleshall.

**Pride in your Patch awards:** Nominations were being sought by SBC for awards to celebrate and recognise the work of an individual or group who has contributed to their community by keeping their neighbour clean and tidy or by making a difference to their area. The award groups covered five categories:- Young People (up to eighteen years), Action in the Community (Group), Action in the Community (Individual), Inspiring Others and Recycling Counts. Councillor Langford indicated that Councillor Pert had nominated The Broughton WI for organising the Croxton Well Dressing and Councillor Dodkins suggested a young person and agreed to forward further details to Mrs Heelis. Councillor Langford commented that Croxton Well Dressing had been entered into the Keep Britain Tidy awards and although the group had not been amongst the prize winners they had been put forward as an example of best practice.

**9/15). Chairman's Report:-** Councillor Dale reported that he had been invited to attend Drake Hall Prison to visit the new Family Unit on Thursday 5th February, when Simon Hughes, Minister for Prisons, was scheduled to visit the prison.

**10/15). Accounts:-** Mrs Heelis reported receipt of funds from the Local Community Fund, Zurich Insurance and Western Power.

The following accounts had been paid since the last meeting and these received retrospective authorisation:-

SLCC Membership - LGA 1972 s.143	187.00
Data Protection - LGA 1972 s.111	35.00
Creative Copy 'n' Colour - Newsletters - LGA 1972 s.142	258.00
Woods Christmas Tree Farm - Concurrent Allowance	1394.00
Trent Grounds Maint - Croxton Playing Field - Open Spaces Act 1906 s.10	432.00
C. Heelis - Cartridges - Neighbourhood Plan funding	52.45
AS Electrical Services install tree lights - Concurrent Allowance	300.00
Royal Mail - Neighbourhood Plan funding	600.00
Creative Copy 'n' Colour - Neighbourhood Plan funding	827.80
Creative Copy 'n' Colour - Neighbourhood Plan funding	244.00
Zurich Municipal - Council Insurance - LGA 1972 s.111	2217.94
Reissue cheque to Tourism Bureau - LGA 1972 s.144	27.50
AS Electrical Services remove tree lights - Concurrent Allowance	120.00

Authorisation was sought for payment of the following accounts:-

Salaries & associated costs - LGA 1972 s.112	2807.83
Expenses - Local Government (Financial Provisions) Act 1963	67.60
PAYE - LGA (Financial Provisions) 1963	385.20
NHI - LGA (Financial Provisions) 1963	319.89
Pension LG Pensions Scheme Regs. 1995	568.13
Stafford Borough - Civic Amenity visits - concurrent allowance	206.00
SBC- Open Spaces Act 1906 s.10	432.00

All were in favour and the cheques were signed.

**11/15). Neighbourhood Plan:-** Councillor Pimble referred to the six week consultation period, which was due to end on February 28<sup>th</sup>, 2015 and the Public Meeting at the Community Centre at 7.30pm on January 28<sup>th</sup>, 2015. Any responses received would be recorded and analysed and submitted to the Planning Authority at the end of the period for further consultation and ensuring that the Plan was compliant with the proper legal process.

Councillor Pimble referred to a planning application at Baldwins Gate for 113 homes which had been refused by the Borough Council but approved by the Inspector at Appeal. It was considered that this decision vindicated the Parish Council for their support of the Richborough Homes application off Stafford Road as it would most likely have been approved on appeal and the community would have gained nothing.

**12/15). Items/date and venue for next meeting:-** February 18<sup>th</sup>, 2015, Eccleshall Community Centre 7.30pm.