

ECCLESHALL PARISH COUNCIL

July 17th, 2013

A meeting of Eccleshall Parish Council was held on July 17th, 2013 at Broughton Parish Rooms, at 7.30pm, this meeting was followed by a meeting of the Planning Committee.

85/13). Present were:-

Councillor G. Dale (Chairman)	Councillor D. Pimble (Vice-Chairman)
Councillor B. Apps	Councillor P. Mullee
Councillor M. Starkey	Councillor L. von Elbing
Councillor J. Allen	Councillor G. Garner
Councillor L. Serjeant	Councillor E. Amos
Councillor M. Dodkins	Councillor D. Jacques
Councillor B. Delanchy	Councillor P. Baskerville
Mrs C. Heelis (Clerk)	6 electors
Borough Councillor J. Pert	

Apologies – Apologies were received and accepted from Councillor P. Jones together with Borough / County Councillor F. Chapman.

The meeting opened with prayers

86/13). To consider Councillor requests for dispensations:- No requests had been submitted.

87/13). Public Participation:-

Croxton:- Mrs Langford reported that the well dressing held on July 6th, 2013 had been well attended and that from now on the event would be held bi-annually, with the next well dressing being in 2015.

Mrs Langford sought the support of the Parish Council to place a seat on the newly levelled and seeded grass verge on the B5026 opposite Boughey's well in Croxton, with wooden posts around the site and plant some wild flowers. This would make a very attractive (and environmentally friendly) display at the entrance to the lane into the 'old' Croxton Village. In the past the grass verge had been badly rutted by tractors and had been temporarily fenced off for the well dressing event. Councillor Dale indicated that permission would be required from the Highways and advised Mrs Langford to contact Mr Mitchell. The matter would be referred to the next meeting of the Enhancements Committee in September.

With regard to the condition road surfaces along Woodwall Green Lane and Windmill Lane Mrs Langford indicated that no repairs had been made to the collapsed road along Windmill Lane. Some potholes were filled in about 2 weeks after the Council Meeting on April 17th, but had reappeared along Woodwall Green Lane, although reports had been submitted to the Highways at the start of June, no action had yet been taken. However, Highways did make a good effort to re-instate the B5026 road, disturbed land in the Millennium Wood, and the uneven land on the corner / by the lane leading into old Croxton prior to the Well Dressing and Mrs Langford thanked the Parish Councillors for their assistance.

It was noted that the B5026 through Croxton had been surfaced dressed over the last week.

Mrs Langford reported that thanks to Broughton WI, funds had been raised to purchase a defibrillator, which would be stored at Broughton Parish Rooms.

Elford Heath:- Ms N. Towle spoke on behalf of the residents of Elford Heath to seek the support of the Parish Council to extend the 30mph speed limit on Shaws Lane and Kerry Lane to cover Elford Heath. A letter had been circulated to 22 households, with 19 expressing support so far. The residents expressed concern at the speed of traffic passing through Elford Heath and County Councillor Chapman and Mr Mitchell had been contacted for advice. The Chairman indicated that the matter would be referred to the Traffic Management Committee and discussed with Mr Mitchell at a meeting on October 15th, 2013.

It was suggested that the Community Speedwatch could carry out checks on the route but members commented that neither the Eccleshall or Croxton groups were operating, due to a shortage of volunteers. Mrs Heelis had been asked to include an item in the September Parish Council Newsletter to try to recruit new members who would undergo the necessary training. It was felt that it may not be

possible to carry out checks at Elford Heath from a health and safety point of view due to visibility issues, but that Mr Mitchell would ensure that relevant information was obtained in order to judge whether a 30mph or a 40mph limit was appropriate.

88/13). To confirm the minutes of the Council Meeting held on June 19th, 2013:- The minutes, which had been previously circulated, were agreed and signed.

89/13). Reports from Borough and County Councillors:

Borough Councillor Pert referred to an 'Eccleshall Join In Campaign' which was organised for the weekend July 27th and 28th when Eccleshall Sports Clubs would be open to people of all ages and abilities to enjoy a festival of sport.

90/13). Committee Reports:-

Traffic Management Committee:- Councillor von Elbing referred to the minutes from a meeting held on July 3rd, 2013, which had been circulated to members.

- **Gist:-** Mr Baugh, Midlands Business Controller, explained about the pro-active approach that was being taken by the Company to reduce noise levels and improve the quality of life for local residents. A 30mph speed limit was being enforced on the Swynnerton Road through the use of Isotrak navigation technology and vehicles were being parked at the rear of the site once loaded, following noise complaints during the recent hot weather.

Mr Baugh indicated that there were approximately 100 vehicle movements over a 24 hour period with 50% passing through Eccleshall and the remainder heading north to the join the M6. It was interesting to learn that 70% of the vehicle movements were between 8pm and 12 noon with a higher concentration approaching the weekends to fulfil the demand for chilled foods, which conflicted with information provided previously and confirmed reports received from residents.

Mr Baugh stated that noise testing had been carried out at speeds of 20, 30, and 40mph and whilst vehicle speeds could be managed much of the noise generated was attributed to the poor road surface.

- **Traffic monitoring:-** Mr Mitchell indicated that he did not see what would be achieved by monitoring the traffic on local routes or what value the results would have. Mr Mitchell was asked to provide any information which could be used as part of the evidence base for the Neighbourhood Plan to support the aspirations of the electorate.
- **Stafford Street and roundabouts:-** Mr Mitchell stated that resurfacing work was not expected to be carried out until 2014/15
- **Condition of local roads and flooding issues:-** The majority of pot holes had been patched, however, flooding problems at Woodwall Green were due to a spring fed well overflowing. A possible solution was being considered to install an overflow to disperse the water into an adjacent field.

The footways in Slindon were being resurfaced and the engineer was liaising with Mrs Bramall, who had experienced problems with flooding of her property, to discuss mitigation measures.

- **BT Exchange:-** Wooden posts and chains had been installed and the situation would be monitored to assess whether the posts were a sufficient deterrent to prevent vehicles from parking on the verge.
- **Neighbourhood Highway Team:-** The Team had carried out various tasks including siding out footpaths at Croxton and on Newport Road and reseeded the verge past Holy Trinity Church. Additional days had been allocated to Eccleshall for the wooden posts to be installed on The Washpits, members felt that the posts were too far apart to prevent vehicles parking and it was agreed to monitor the situation. The next visit of the Team was scheduled for October 15th and members were asked to advise the Clerk of any suggested works.
- **Speed of traffic – Croxton:-** At the last Council meeting John Day from Croxton had expressed concern about the speed of traffic on the B5026. Mr Mitchell suggested that the Community Speedwatch was resurrected and Mrs Heelis had contacted Councillor Pert to ascertain the current location of the equipment and whether there were any volunteers willing to undergo training and monitor the speed of traffic. It was proposed to contact the Road Safety Partnership to request visits from the Community Safety Camera Van.
- **Wetwood accidents:-** Mrs Heelis indicated that she had been approached by Mrs Palmer from Wetwood who had reported 2 further accidents at the junction by Broughton Parish Rooms. Mr

Mitchell was not aware of these incidents but indicated that he would ask the inspector to check that all the warning signs were in place for the staggered junction. Councillor Pert was compiling a list of accidents and details to forward to Mr Mitchell who had stated that the junction was being monitored and links were maintained with the Safer Roads Partnership. Advice to motorcyclists was being given at County wide events throughout the summer.

- **The Highfields, Croxton:-** In response to a letter sent to the 20 properties, only 7 had replied requesting a meeting to be called. It was agreed that there had been insufficient interest shown from the residents to warrant any further action being taken and the Clerk was asked to advise the respondents accordingly.
- **Five Year Plan and Priorities for the next twelve months:-** It was agreed that the resurfacing of the roundabouts and Stafford Street / Castle Street was a priority. Extensive work was required to mitigate the noise from Heavy Goods Vehicles and the committee would continue to press for the works to be undertaken as soon as possible.

The minutes of the Traffic Management Committee were accepted by the Council and it was noted that the next meeting of the committee would be held on November 6th, 2013 following the meeting of the Planning Committee.

Enhancements Committee:- Councillor Baskerville was thanked for removing a large branch from the Eyeswells Footpath and Councillor Mullee for removing a broken flower tub from the High Street. Councillor Mullee had also agreed to remove the broken seat by the entrance to Johnson Hall as ownership of this seat was unknown. The Ladies from Drake Hall Prison had been clearing weeds and tidying the Co-op garden and Mrs Heelis had sent a list of seats and furniture that required treatment and cleaning. Councillor Serjeant was asked to ascertain an approximate timescale for undertaking this work if acceptable. Mr Smith had been asked to trim the vegetation along the Eyeswells Footpath.

Policy and Resources Committee:- Councillor Allen referred to the minutes of a meeting held on June 19th, 2013.

- Details of the Councils Insurances and Deeds had been circulated and were adopted by the Council.
- The Council reviewed the Financial Risk Assessment and Internal Audit Controls and agreed that they remained appropriate.
- **Review of Pension Policies and additional new regulation BReg30A:-** The County Council advised that existing Policies must be kept under review and in addition Scheme Employers were required to publish a policy on the exercise of their discretion to:
 1. Grant an application for early payment, on or after age 55 and before 60, in respect of previously suspended Tier 3 ill health retirement pension.
 2. To waive on compassionate grounds, any actuarial reduction that would otherwise be applied to benefits paid early.

It was resolved to recommend that the Pension Services be advised that Eccleshall Parish Council would not exercise either of these discretions and that the existing Policies remained appropriate.

- A grant request had been received from The Royal British Legion to enable The Scout Band to lead the Remembrance Day Parade. It was agreed to forward a grant of £70 for this purpose.

Footpaths Committee:- Councillor Allen was authorised to undertake investigative work into the supply of kissing gates on a further four footpaths in the Parish and Councillor Chapman had agreed to support such a project through the Local Community Fund.

91/13). Liaison Representatives:-

There were no reports to receive from the Business Group, Communities Mean Business or the Tourism Bureau.

Allotments Association:- Councillor Starkey reported that Councillor Butter had officially opened the Storage and toilet facility and the event had been so well attended that the Association was considering holding a barbeque later in the year. There was currently a waiting list for plots and although the damage to the entrance gate had been repaired members were not happy with the quality of the work.

Ecclian Society:- The formal presentation of the Queen's Award for Voluntary Service was to take place on Monday August 19th, 2013 at Holy Trinity Church at 3pm and would be made by the Lord

Lieutenant of Staffordshire, Mr Ian Dudson, CBE. The Ecclesham Barbeque would be held on August 17th, 2013 and the Society was to have a display at the Ecclesham Show on August 31st, 2013.

Offley Hay Village Hall:- Councillor von Elbing reported that bookings were increasing and Councillor Chapman had donated £500 from the Local Community Fund towards the redecoration of the Copmere Room.

Bishop Lonsdale School:- Councillor Dodkins reported that everything was ready to be moved to the new site. Councillor Dodkins had been appointed as a school governor from September.

Community Centre:- Councillor Dale reported that the Day Centre was to close at the end of July as part of a Government Policy to care for the elderly in their own homes. It was a shame for the people who had enjoyed the opportunity to socialise and have a meal at the Centre and also a serious reduction in funds for the Association.

Young People:- Councillor Dodkins reported that membership continued to increase and the Youth Club would be open every Tuesday afternoon during the school holidays.

92/13). Neighbourhood Plan:- Councillor Pimble reported that a meeting had been held on July 11th with Ms R. Bains, the newly appointed Neighbourhood Planning Officer at Stafford Borough Council. The application for the area designation had been considered by Cabinet on July 4th and the group would be advised of the decision shortly. Only 150 questionnaires had been received, which was disappointing and these had been divided between 5 members of the group for analysis. Once the main issues had been extracted from the returned questionnaires a more detailed document would be prepared for distribution in September. Members of the group were to meet with Mr R. Keith, who was the Officer appointed by Planning Aid to provide direct support, on July 23rd. There was no financial provision for secretarial support, but funding had been provided for the purchase of a display unit. The next meeting of the group was arranged for July 24th to discuss the consultation strategy and develop a more detailed questionnaire.

93/13). Clerk's report and correspondence:-

Affordable Homes – Public consultation:- Mrs Heelis reported that a public consultation event had been arranged by Housing Plus for the proposed development of 25 homes on land to the rear of The Burgage, for people with a local connection to Ecclesham on July 31st, 2013 at the Methodist Rooms from 3.30 to 7pm.

William Cash MP – Mr Cash had written to ask if the Parish Council would like him to make representations on any specific matters.

Queen's Award for Voluntary Service – The award was to be presented to the Ecclesham Society on August 19th, 2013 by The Lord Lieutenant of Staffordshire, Mr Ian Dudson, CBE at 3pm at Holy Trinity Church. Parish Councillors and their partners were invited to attend.

Parcel service at Ecclesham Post Office:- Complaints had been received that the Post Office was no longer holding parcels for customers in the village who were not at home when delivery was attempted, resulting in residents having to get to Stafford in order to collect parcels. It was noted that a delivery collection service had been in place at the Post Office in Ecclesham, which the new owner wished to continue. Mrs Heelis was asked to write to Royal Mail to seek clarification of the official policy with regard to parcels and whether they could be left with a neighbour?

350 Bus Service:- Mrs Heelis reported that a revised service was to be operated by Baker buses from July 29th, 2013 and a new timetable would be available shortly.

94/13). Accounts:- The Clerk reported receipt of a grant from the Community Development Fund towards the Neighbourhood Plan of £1258 and interest of £6.89. Payment of the following invoices had been authorised at the Planning Committee Meeting on July 3rd, 2013:-

Clerk – cartridges - <i>Local Government (Financial Provisions) Act 1963</i>	42.35
R. Sheard – repairs to Croxton - Bus Shelter - <i>Parish Councils Act 1957 ss.1</i>	50.00
Community Centre Insurance - <i>LGA 1972 s.145</i>	1517.93
Creative Copy n Colour – June Newsletters - <i>LGA 1972 s.142</i>	307.00
D. Smith Footpaths - <i>HA 1980 s.143</i>	12.38
N&J Tree Services Fell Tree at Croxton - <i>Open Spaces Act 1906 s. 10</i>	1161.60
Trent Grounds Maintenance - <i>Open Spaces Act 1906 s.10</i>	249.00
Display system - Marler Haley - <i>Neighbourhood Plan Funding (VAT £115.40)</i>	692.40
Stall at Ecclesham Show - <i>Neighbourhood Plan Funding</i>	59.50

Authorisation was sought for payment of the following:-	
Salaries & associated costs - <i>July LGA 1972 s. 112</i>	2309.11
Expenses - <i>Local Government (Financial Provisions) Act 1963</i>	53.19
Salaries & associated costs - August - <i>LGA 1972 s. 112</i>	2230.16
Chairman's Allowance 2012/13 - <i>LGA 1972 ss. 15 (5)</i>	200.00
D. Smith Footpaths - <i>HA 1980 s.143</i>	49.52

All were in favour and the cheques were signed.

Mrs Heelis was authorised to pay any invoices received prior to the next meeting in consultation with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman.

95/13). Chairman's Report:- The Chairman had nothing further to report.

96/13). Items/date and venue for the next meeting;- September 18th, 2013 Eccleshall Community Centre.

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