

ECCLESHALL PARISH COUNCIL

July 18th, 2012

A meeting of Eccleshall Parish Council was held on July 18th, 2012 at Broughton Parish Rooms at 7.30p.m. This meeting was followed by a meeting of Planning Committee.

96/12). Present Were:-

Councillor G. Dale (Chair)	Councillor D. Pimble
Councillor P. Baskerville	Councillor P. Jones
Councillor J. Allen.	Councillor P. Mullee
Councillor M. Dodkins	Councillor L. Serjeant
Councillor B. Apps	Councillor G. Garner
Councillor D. Jacques	
County Councillor H. Butter	Borough Councillor J. Pert
4 members of the public	Mrs C. Heelis – Clerk
16 residents of the parish	Mr P. Newton – Governor Drake Hall Prison

Apologies were received and accepted from Councillors Delanchy, von Elbing, Starkey and Amos together with Borough Councillor F. Chapman

The meeting opened with prayers.

97/12). Public Participation:- Councillor Dale introduced the session by explaining that technically members of the public were not allowed to speak at the Council meeting but Standing Orders allowed the meeting to be adjourned for a short time to allow residents to make representations, however, questions asked by the public would not require a response or debate.

Mrs J. Watson from 4, Bishops Court referred to a consultation letter, which had been circulated to properties abutting the Bishops Court Open Space and asked whether public meetings were proposed for discussion of the proposals. It was noted that the details of the proposals or the next meeting of the Enhancement Committee, were not on the Parish Council website. Letters from residents were passed to the Clerk and members were asked to consider the local residents and not only the young people who were requesting additional facilities in the town.

Mr D. Wright of 10, Bishops Court referred to the importance of consultation and requested more detailed information of the proposals. Mr Wright indicated that he had understood from previous meetings that it was a goal post that was under consideration and not the goal end and basketball hoop, currently proposed.

Ms R. Till spoke on behalf of Eccleshall pre-School and indicated that they would like to see facilities that the whole of the community could use and not just a small minority.

Mr J. Tapley of 3, Hartlands Road asked if the young people had been consulted? He considered that there were already numerous activities in Eccleshall provided by the Bowls Club, Cricket Club, Tennis Club, Scouts and Football Clubs. Mr Tapley also indicated that he understood that the Parish Council intended to prevent people from exercising their dogs on the area.

Mrs Baines, 5, Stone Road felt that the area was not large enough for the additional facilities and indicated that balls often went into her garden and a youth shelter would encourage anti-social activities.

Emma Austin replied that it could be costly for children to join clubs and not all were sports orientated. What was needed was somewhere that was free facilities for the over 12's as there was an existing park for 2 – 12year olds. Emma invited residents along to the youth club to meet the young people and allay their concerns of unruly and unsocial behaviour.

Mrs Archer, 2, Bishops Court said that as her children had all grown up they had played on the open space and used jumpers and bags for goalposts, they would not welcome additional facilities and the area would lose its flexibility.

Mrs Green, 2, Bishops Court stated that the children played football in the road and a youth shelter would encourage drinking and swearing.

Mrs Watson stated that the grass was not cut often enough and was too long and wet for the children to play ball games.

The Chairman replied that the Council had not bought the land to do nothing with it and hoped to enhance the area with some low key play equipment. There had been no mention of preventing anyone from exercising their dogs on the area providing they cleaned up after their pets.

The residents requested a public meeting and an opportunity to see the proposals in detail, ask questions and discuss the way forward. Councillor Pimble also asked if a public consultation session would be held.

Councillor Dale replied that the young people had been consulted and they had requested a skate park, however, the Parish Council considered that Bishops Court would be an unsuitable location for such a facility. The scheme would be discussed at the next meeting of the Enhancements Committee on September 5th, which the public could attend but they would not be allowed to speak. All the responses received would be taken into consideration and the Committee would make recommendations to the Council when all the information had been collated.

98/12). Mr P. Newton – Governor, Drake Hall Prison:- Mr Newton indicated that he had been in post since February and had observed that there was a lack of involvement between Drake Hall Prison and the Community. The Prison had a number of facilities and a wide range of expertise and skills that could be utilised in the community. There were 315 women in Drake Hall serving varying sentences, with between 20 and 25 going into the community on a daily basis. The prison had a hairdressing facility, which could possibly be expanded and the women could perhaps help with work in the churchyards or on public footpaths. There was a gym, which could be made available for the young people in the community during the winter months and a kitchen with serving facilities that could cater for Christmas parties for the elderly,

Councillor Dodkins suggested that the women could perhaps do work with the young people or assist with the redecoration of Offley Hay Village Hall. Councillor Baskerville referred to the fact that some time ago the women used to water the mangers and baskets and had been welcomed into the community, but this arrangement had been withdrawn. It was agreed to arrange a visit to the prison for the members and Mrs Heelis was asked to liaise with regard to a suitable date in September.

Councillor Serjeant reported that the prison had green houses and horticultural facilities which could perhaps be used to support the town with the floral displays and Christmas Trees. Mr Newton indicated that the women would undergo a suitable risk assessment before being allowed to work in the community and proposed to instruct his staff to consider suitable tasks and activities. Councillor Serjeant was nominated to liaise with Mr Newton and report to future Council meetings.

Mr Newton was thanked for attending the meeting and the possibility of greater involvement between the prison and the community was welcomed.

99/12). To confirm the minutes of the Council Meeting held on June 20th, 2012:- The minutes, which had been previously circulated, were agreed and signed following the addition of Councillor Mullee to those who had tendered apologies.

100/12). Reports from Borough and County Councillors:-

County Councillor Butter indicated that he had attended a meeting with Mr C. Mitchell from County Highways and had raised the issue of HGV's following the receipt of an email from Mr Hilton on Castle Street. Councillor Butter indicated that as Raleigh Hall was a legitimate site for industry and the local roads were used legally by the HGV's there was no action that could be taken and weight restrictions could not be imposed.

Councillor Butter reported that he had given funding from the Local Community Fund to Bishop Lonsdale School for sporting facilities and books.

Borough Councillor Pert:-

Councillor Pert reported that he had attended the well dressing on July 7th at Croxton, which had been a huge success. Councillor Butter had opened the event and the members of the W.I. were to be congratulated on a professional and well attended event.

It was understood that a petition collated by residents of Slindon had now achieved 1000 signatures and would shortly be presented to the Borough Council. Residents were to be reminded that individual

letters should also be written if a planning application was submitted, as a petition only counted as one objection. Members were encouraged to consider policy changes relating to renewable energy resulting from the Localism Bill.

The mobile skate park would be at Bishop Lonsdale School on August 23rd and 24th and Mrs Heelis was asked to advertise this event on the Parish Council website.

A toddler swing had been added to the equipment at Beech Road play area and this had been welcomed by parents.

Borough Councillor Jones reported that he had attended training sessions on the Localism Bill and continued to monitor planning applications for the parish and call in any that may prove controversial.

Borough Councillor Chapman had emailed the Clerk stating that he was awaiting an indication from the Parish concerning the minimum standard of enhancement that would be acceptable for the proposed improvement of Castle Street. Results of a funding application made to SARH and when this information was available he would seek further funding and the working group could be reconvened. This matter would be discussed under the Enhancement Committee report.

The Borough Council had approved the erection of the Rotary Christmas Tree in the area surrounding the public conveniences, subject to a suitable electricity supply and appropriate safeguards.

101/12). Committee Reports:-

Traffic Management Committee:- Councillor Serjeant, who had been elected as Vice-Chairman of the committee at a meeting held on July 4th, 2012 referred to the minutes, which had been previously circulated. Items of note were as follows:-

- **Neighbourhood Highway Team:-** Mr Latham was attempting to reschedule a visit of the team as they had been unable to carry out the specified work in June due to extremely wet weather.
- **Stone Road Parking:-** Mr Mitchell had been advised that several emails expressing concern about the parking situation on Stone Road had been received. Mr Mitchell indicated that a review of parking related Traffic Regulation Orders was to be conducted by the Local Parking Committee in due course and residents were to be asked to raise their concerns with the County Highways.

It was agreed that the situation remained unchanged and that it was important to save parking spaces for the businesses in the town and enhance the vibrancy of the local economy, not create additional problems with further restrictions. Double yellow lines elsewhere in the town were not enforced and would be unlikely to prevent those visiting the Animal Feed Business from parking. Double yellow lines would allow traffic speeds to increase and the parking issue would move further up Stone Road.

Concerns raised about vehicles parking on the pavement had been referred to PCSO Lutwyche, although it was noted that no action could be taken unless the PCSO actually witnessed an obstruction of the pavement, which resulted in pedestrians having to walk in the carriageway. Mrs Heelis had prepared notices asking drivers to refrain from blocking the pavements and Councillors Dale, Pimble, Jones and Garner offered to place on windscreens of offending vehicles. It was agreed to monitor the situation for a further two months to gauge whether the issues improved.

Enhancements Committee:-

- Councillor Dale reported that the seat at the cross roads had been painted by Mr Eaton. It was agreed to ask Mr Eaton to paint that the post at the bus stop, which was rusty.
- **Castle Street Improvements:-** At a previous meeting of the working party Councillor Dale and Pimble had agreed to visit the site to assess whether the cobbles / slabs abutting Selwyn Court needed replacing. The Council agreed that the existing surface would need to be replaced or it would detract from the overall scheme, however, the use of materials other than blue bricks such as tegular paving or the bricks used to delineate vehicle crossing points in the High Street, would be acceptable to reduce costs.

Policy and Resources:- A meeting was scheduled for August 15th, 2012 following the Planning Committee meeting.

Footpaths Committee:- There was no report to receive.

102/12). Liaison Representatives:- There were no reports to receive from the Allotments Association or Bishop Lonsdale School.

Ecclian Society:- The Garden Tools stall at the festival had been successful and congratulations were extended to the Festival Committee on an excellent event. The streamers around the town would be removed after the Olympics.

Offley Hay Village Hall:- Councillor Dodkins reported that the patio has been completed and bookings were good.

Tourism Bureau:- Councillor Jones indicated that he had been unable to attend the last meeting, which had been held at Stafford Castle.

Community Centre:- Councillor Dale reported that bookings were buoyant and new Zumba class and ballet classes had started.

Business Focus Group:- Councillor Jones indicated that future meetings would be held at the Royal Oak on the first Monday in the month. The Clerk had written letters to business seeking co-operation to reduce the proliferation of 'A' boards in the town and ensure that they were located on the cobbles and not obstructing the pavement.

Young People:- Councillor Dodkins reported that a Community Development Worker had been employed to work 15 hours a week with the young people in Eccleshall and Stone from July 23rd, 2012. April Lewis would attend the Council meeting in September to report to the Council. The young people had raised funds during the Open Gardens weekend and at the Festival.

Communities Mean Business:- Councillor Dodkins reported that an application for funding submitted by the Cricket Club had been approved.

Festival:- Councillor Jones reported that fortunately the weather on the day of the Festival had been dry, the event was well attended and good feedback had been received.

103/12). Council Procedures and Code of Conduct:- Councillor Dale made reference to the current Code of Conduct, which required that Councillors should not bring their Council or office into disrepute or misuse their official position to their own advantage or to the advantage or disadvantage of others, should respect confidential information and treat others with respect.

Minutes of a recent meeting had been published on Facebook prior to being ratified by the Council, which was unacceptable. On the site members of the public had been requested to email the Clerk with complaints about the parking situation on Stone Road, when the Council had agreed to take no further action and indicated that residents should contact Mr Mitchell and County Councillor Butter directly.

A meeting of Policy and Resources Committee had been arranged for August 15th when the committee would consider the new Code of Conduct adopted by Stafford Borough Council along with a draft document from NALC. The committee would also be discuss new legislation regarding Disclosable Pecuniary Interests, which had been contained in the Localism Bill requiring members to disclose the interests of spouses and partners along with personal interests. Members current Registers of Interests were now available on the Parish Council Website.

104/12). Clerk's Report and correspondence:-

September Newsletter:- The Clerk requested items for inclusion in the September Parish Council Newsletter.

Buckingham Palace:- Mrs Heelis read a letter received thanking the Council and residents of Eccleshall for their message of loyalty to the Queen on her Diamond Jubilee. Councillor Dale proposed that the letter was framed and displayed at the Community Centre.

Castle Street:- The Clerk read a letter received from Mr D. Hilton, of 35, Castle Street concerning the number of Heavy Goods vehicles using Stafford Street and Castle Street. Mr Hilton indicated that there were no signs at the junction of the Swynnerton Road with the A519 to indicate M6 Northbound and considered that the roads were totally unsuitable for the volume of traffic which was destroying the character of the town. Mrs Heelis indicated that she had forwarded the letter to Mr Mitchell and Councillor Butter. It was agreed to respond that although the Parish Council sympathised with Mr Hilton, the lorries were legally allowed to use the local roads to access Raleigh Hall, which was a legitimate site for industry. The Parish Council had liaised with local firms in the past notably Muller and Wiseman Dairies with some success, and had already met with Mr Piper from Gist to discuss local concerns. It was felt that the lack of signage for the M6 was a valid point, which could be raised with Mr Mitchell.

'A' Boards:- Mr Griffin had contacted the Clerk about the proliferation and siting of 'A' boards to which a response had been submitted indicating the action being taken by the Parish Council.

Stone Road Parking:- Mr Griffin had forwarded a photograph of a vehicle blocking the footpath on Stone Road and the Clerk had responded to the email.

Housing Needs Survey:- A report had been received from the Rural Housing Enabler and would be circulated to members. Mr Lancaster would attend a meeting on September 5th, 2012 at 7pm to present the findings of the survey to the Council.

Tree Croxton Play Area:- The clerk had received a quotation of £968 to remove the tree, which would require traffic lights on the road and turning off the power. Councillor Jacques suggested an alternative contractor and it was agreed to seek alternative quotes for the consideration of the Enhancements Committee.

105/12). Chairman's Report:- Councillor Dale reported that he was to attend the leavers assembly at Bishop Lonsdale School on Friday July 20th to present the prizes for the poems included in the June Newsletter. The Chairman would be accompanied by the Clerk and Councillor Jones, as photographer.

106/12). Accounts:-

Audit Return 2011/12:- Mrs Heelis reported that the Audit Return had been received with no matters raised for the consideration of the Council. The conclusion of the audit had been advertised in the required manner.

The Clerk reported on the accounts paid since the last meeting and the receipt of £2500 from Stafford borough Council towards Bloom and interest of £8.23. Authorisation was sought for payment of the following:-

Salaries and associated costs - July - <i>LGA 1972 s. 112</i>	2214.26
Expenses - <i>Local Government (Financial Provisions) Act 1963</i>	47.00
Salaries and associated costs - August - <i>LGA 1972 s. 112</i>	2214.26
Audit Commission - <i>Accounts and Audit Regs. 1996</i>	480.00
Stafford Borough - Civic Amenity visits - <i>concurrent allowance</i>	100.00

All were in agreement and the cheques were signed.

The Clerk was authorised to pay invoices received prior to the next meeting in consultation with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman.

107/12). Items / Date and Venue for next meeting:- The next meeting would be held on September 19th, 2012 at Eccleshall Community Centre commencing at 7.30pm.

There being no further business, the Chairman declared the meeting closed at 9pm.