

ECCLESHALL PARISH COUNCIL

June 18th, 2014

A meeting of Eccleshall Parish Council was held on June 18th, 2014 at Offley Hay Village Hall, at 7.30pm. This meeting was followed by a meeting of the Planning Committee.

70/14). Present were:-	Councillor G. Dale (Chairman)	Councillor D. Pimble
	Councillor B. Delanchy	Councillor E. Amos
	Councillor P. Baskerville	Councillor L. von Elbing
	Councillor B. Apps	Councillor M. Starkey
	Councillor M. Dodkins	Councillor P. Jones
	Councillor G. Garner	Councillor J. Allen
	Mrs C. Heelis (Clerk)	1 member of the public

Apologies were received and accepted from Councillors Mullee, Jacques and Serjeant, together with Borough Councillor Pert.

71/14). To consider Councillor requests for dispensations:- No requests had been submitted

72/14). Public Participation:- The member of the public present did not wish to raise any issues.

73/14). Minutes of the Council AGM held on May 21st, 2014:- The minutes, which had been circulated previously, were agreed and signed.

74/14) Reports from Borough and County Councillors:-

Councillor Jones reported that the Local Plan would go before the Borough Council for adoption on June 19th, 2014. The Inspector's Report had concluded that the Plan was legally compliant and provided an approximate basis to guide future development across the Borough, subject to a number of modifications. Councillor Jones stated that following the adoption of the Plan, Key Service Villages could be in a better position to refuse developments not in keeping with the area. Although it was expected to take two years to redefine all the settlement boundaries, the numbers of houses required in each Key Service Village was expected to be considerable less than had been previously detailed in the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment, due to the applications already approved in other villages, including Gnosall and Yarnfield.

Councillors expressed disappointment at the handling of the process as the Borough Council had repeatedly advised Parishes to progress their Neighbourhood Plans stressing that it was not an option to allow for no development.

It was noted that Officers would consider the application for The Mount on Stafford Road next week and Officers were recommending approval. Councillor Dodkins referred to inconsistencies in the determination of applications, as a similar development nearby had been refused.

Councillor Chapman referred to an Exhibition on the Great War in Eccleshall Library and a book that had been published by the Group. It was noted that the meeting with Mr Mitchell and representatives of the Traffic Management Committee had been excellent and he was in agreement that the improvement of the grass verge on Church Street would be expensive and a continual financial commitment. Councillor Chapman indicated that he had some funds available from the Local Community Fund and was happy to contribute towards the relocation of the fire tender, which he considered would enhance the street scene. Following representations made about Bus Service 23 amendments to the timetable had been made and would come into effect on July 20th, 2014.

Councillor Chapman had liaised with the County and Borough Councils regarding the cleanliness of the town and offered to work with the Parish Council and frontage owners to try and improve the situation. Councillor and Mrs Chapman were thanked for their proactive approach and assistance with the removal of weeds. The County Council was to consider proposals to reshape library provision in Eccleshall, which would ensure that as a core library it would continue to be managed and led by the County Council.

It was noted that when the Local Plan was adopted it would replace all the saved policies in the Stafford Borough Local Plan 2001 and until the Neighbourhood Plan was adopted any planning applications would be considered with regard to the new guidance. Negotiations were ongoing regarding the development of land to the rear of the Community Centre and it was anticipated that a full Planning

Application would be submitted shortly and the Parish Council and members of the public would be able to comment.

75/14). **Committee Reports:-**

Traffic Management Committee:- Councillor von Elbing reported on a meeting with Mr Mitchell from Staffordshire Highways held on June 17th, 2014 when the following matters had been discussed:-

- **Stafford Road, Castle Street and mini roundabouts:-** Councillors expressed concern at the deterioration of the surface especially around the roundabouts, where large holes had appeared recently. The problems were exacerbated by the volume of HGV's using the A519. Councillor Chapman also referred to the inadequacy of the sewers and additional pressure from proposed new housing developments.

Mr Mitchell reported that the funding for Highway expenditure had been cut significantly and the resurfacing work was not expected to take place until 2016. The roads were subject to a monthly inspection and safety based risk assessment and would continue to be monitored as part of a 2 – 5 year programme. However, local concerns had been referred to the Engineer and **by the close of the meeting Mr Mitchell had received information that the work may possibly be brought forward to 2015.**

Mr Mitchell indicated that Development Control was aware of concerns regarding drainage issues and regular meetings were held with statutory undertakers and works programmers to co-ordinate carriageway repairs. With regard to potential housing developments, Severn Trent would require the developer to fund improvements if deemed necessary. Mrs Heelis had contacted Severn Trent regarding the capacity of the drains and sewerage system and was awaiting a response.

Councillor von Elbing suggested that an item was included in the next Parish Council Newsletter to explain the situation with regard to the resurfacing of the Roads and roundabouts.

- **Parking issues:-** Mr Mitchell indicated that bollards could not be installed on Stone Road outside The George to prevent vehicles parking, due to cables beneath the pavement. It was considered that a Bus Bay identified by thick yellow lines may help to improve the situation, although it would not be enforceable.

Investigations were ongoing with the owners of various land in the town concerning the possible allocation of spaces and it was envisaged that any new car parking facilities could be funded by developer contributions. A response from the Police confirmed that 4 spaces could be made available on the car park providing the vehicles displayed a permit and the Police were advised of the Vehicles details. It was proposed to contact Mr Hulse from the Business Group to help identify traders who could benefit from this arrangement.

- **Raleigh Hall:-** It was noted that a 4 hectare expansion of the site was included in the emerging Local Plan and a response from the Connectivity Strategy Manager had stated that an in principle agreement had been given to a new access road layout to the A519 at Cats Hill Cross via a ghost island. Whether the area would require street lighting was dependent on the proposed volume of traffic that would be detailed in the Travel Plan accompanying any planning application.

According to the Local Plan the following appropriate economic uses would be permitted providing there were no significant adverse impacts on the surrounding environment, nearby residents or transport networks:-

Light Industrial (B1) **excluding** B1 offices, general industrial (B2), and storage and distribution (B8).

It was noted that additional lorries appeared to be visiting the site to deliver wood to the Bio Mass plant and Councillors agreed that traffic to the site required monitoring.

- **Proposed Treatment of Grass verge – Church Street:** following further consideration of this matter it was proposed that as the issue was seasonal and specific to certain residents the work was put on hold pending further consideration and monitoring of the situation. All were in agreement.
- **Ownership of, and responsibility for 'blue brick areas in the High Street:-** Mr Mitchell agreed to investigate this matter further, but it was generally agreed that the blue bricks were the responsibility of the frontages. Therefore, furniture, plants etc could be put on the blue bricks providing no obstruction was caused to the pavement. It was proposed to work with Councillor

Chapman in order to prepare a leaflet for distribution to property owners advising them of their responsibilities and seeking their co-operation to keep their frontages free of weeds and litter.

- **Bus Stop Stafford Road / Green Lane:-** Mr Mitchell agreed to pursue this request to provide an official bus stop with a hardstanding on the A5013 on the Eccleshall side of Green Lane.
- **Neighbourhood Highway Team:-** The Team was to be thanked for removing weeds in the Town the previous week, in preparation for the Festival. It was noted that Eccleshall had a list of works to be undertaken if the team was not fully utilised by other Parishes.
- **Reported accidents** Councillor von Elbing referred to accident details provided by PC Davies at the Annual Parish Meeting, the figures had appeared unusually high and PC Davies had since explained that they covered a wider area than Eccleshall Parish and included the M6 Services. The accidents that had occurred within the Parish were mainly on the A519 and the B50126 at Croxton, with minor damage recorded to vehicles in the High Street. Mr Mitchell advised that details of accidents and various services were available on the County Council website – Local View.

Severn Trent:- A response had received following the meeting, which advised that the company held hydraulic models of sewer networks and the one for Eccleshall showed that the system was capable of taking most rainstorms, although not ones of very high rainfall or of a long duration. The last entry of flooding recorded on the register occurred in 2002.

Referring to the proposed development at the rear of the Community Centre it was stated that the actual discharge from the development would be relatively low and the company would have little concern with regard to the hydraulic performance. Councillor Delanchy expressed concern that the discharge figures quoted appeared to be for foul water and not storm water and run off where the network could be could be limited by silt, roots or displaced joints. Mrs Heelis was asked to respond to Severn Trent and write to Staffordshire Highways to identify these concerns, enquire when a camera survey was last undertaken and request details of the procedure for reporting flood events.

B.T. Exchange:- Mrs Heelis reported that she had discussed whether any land on the site could be made available for Adopt a Trader or parking by identified residents. However, the response had been that due to recent problems with vehicles being parked inconsiderately, blocking the entrance to the exchange it was unlikely that any parking would be permitted.

Enhancements Committee:-

In accordance with Standing Order 1(b) in view of the special nature of the business about to be transacted, it was advisable in the public interest that the public were temporarily excluded and Mrs Stuart was asked to withdraw.

Following the conclusion of the special business, Mrs Stuart was invited to re-join the meeting.

Policy and Resources Committee:- Councillor Allen reported that at a meeting of the Committee held on June 4th, 2014 he had been re-elected as Chairman and Councillor Garner as Vice-Chairman. The following matters were highlighted:-

- **Councils Insurances and Deeds:-** The Clerk circulated details of the land/property owned by the Parish Council and insurance policies relating to the Council and the Community Centre, which were adopted by the Council. Councillor Dale had referred to the conveyance for Cherry Tree Close and the documentation was made available for inspection.
- **Review of Allotment Rents:-** It was noted that historically the rents had been increased every three years with the last increase having been applied from April 2013. The Council resolved to give the requisite twelve months' notice to the Association to increase the rents by 30p from £3.00 per garden rood to £3.30 with effect from April 2016.
- **Clerks Annual Appraisal / Development Review:-** The Clerks Contract and Job Description updated January 2005 referred to an Annual Appraisal / Development Review if requested by either party. It was agreed that a review was unnecessary at this time and that no further action was taken.
- **Review of Financial Risk Assessment and Internal Audit Controls:-** The Council agreed that the current risk assessment and controls remained appropriate.
- **Request for Standing Orders to be available on the Parish Council website:-** Mr Ranson had first raised this matter in July 2011, when the Parish Council had resolved not to accede to this request. It was resolved that no changes to the current availability were required. Councillors Delanchy abstained from the vote.

- **Review of Pension Policies** – Each Scheme Employer was required to review its policy statement in relation to the exercise of a number of discretions under the LGPS and forward a copy of the policies to the Administering Authority by June 30th, 2014. This matter was referred to the Staffing Committee for consideration.

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

Staffing Committee:- At a meeting of the Committee held on June 10th, 2014, Councillor Pimble had been elected as Chairman. The Committee had considered the Policy Statement relating to Discretionary Powers, which had been referred from the Policy and Resources Committee. An amendment was proposed with regard to Regulations 18 and 30 to indicate that the Parish Council **may** exercise discretions regarding flexible retirement and early payment of pension in **certain** circumstances. It was considered that the proposed amendments would allow for increased flexibility although a financial contribution may be involved. The Council was in agreement with the proposed amendments.

Footpaths:- Councillor Allen reported that the Footpaths 13 and 15 had been strimmed. An email received from Mr Allsop reported that the entrance to the field and footpath at the far end of the car park at Offley Hay Village Hall was blocked by vegetation. Mr Smith was to be asked to clear the area.

76/14). Liaison Representatives;- There were no reports to receive from the Allotments Association or Offley Hay Village Hall. .

- **Tourism Bureau:-** Councillor Jones reported that the Bureau had been renamed Visit Stafford.
- **Bishop Lonsdale School:-** Councillor Dodkins reported that the Bishop of Stafford was to bless the school on Monday July 7th, 2014. It was noted that Councillor Pimble had agreed to represent the Parish Council at the service. The sports day was planned for June 19th, 2014 and there would be a Leavers Service on July 18th, 2014.
- **Business Focus Group:-** Councillor Jones referred to the Festival Programme, which included a pictorial map of Eccleshall on the centre pages commissioned by Tim Hulse.
- **Community Centre:-** Councillor Dale reported that the overspill car park had been resurfaced and the Ladies Toilets were being refurbished.
- **Young People:-** Councillor Dodkins reported that plans were being formulated for activities and additional days over the summer holidays.
- **Communities Mean Business:-** Councillor von Elbing indicated that the next meeting would be held on June 25th, 2014 when the group would discuss project criteria.
- **Festival:-** Councillor Jones stated that over 60 stalls were participating in the Street Market on June 20th, 2014, and many attractions would be available for all the family.
- **Remembrance Day:-** Councillor Dodkins indicated that a band was still to be procured for the parade.

77/14). Neighbourhood Plan:- Councillor Pimble stated that although the Local Plan was about to be adopted, housing development in Key Service Villages would be determined by the creation of new settlement boundaries either by Stafford Borough Council or through Neighbourhood Plans. Until the new boundaries had been determined it would be difficult to refuse planning applications.

The group had undertaken site surveys of land abutting the old Rural Development Boundary and the SHLAA had identified several developable sites. The group would consider the areas against a list of criteria to determine the most favourable sites for development. The Parish Council had already resolved to support the application soon to be submitted by Richborough Estates as this development was considered to be low density and would provide provision for play areas, open space and a multi-use games area, as well as traffic calming on Stafford Road.

The draft policies had been forwarded to Raj Bains and Bob Keith for comments and would then be circulated as widely as possible throughout the parish. The Evidence Base was being compiled and would include aspirations for example a ring road or alternative route for HGV's. It was anticipated that the document would be prepared by the end of September and then be subject to a 6 week consultation process. The allocation of houses numbers for each Key Service Village remained instrumental to the development of the Plan.

Councillor Dodkins referred to the protection of Cats Hill Cross as historically this was one of the oldest routes in the parish and Councillor Delanchy queried what number of houses would be acceptable in Croxton.

78/14). Clerk's Report and Correspondence:-

- **Vacancy – Croxton Ward:-** Councillor B. Apps had tendered his resignation as a Councillor as he was moving out of the area. The Clerk was asked to advise the Borough Council and request the appropriate notices for display. Initially the vacancy would be advertised to allow 10 local electors to request an election. If no election was called the Parish Council would be able to co-opt a person to fill the vacancy.
- **Network Rail work on the A5013 –** Councillor Pimble advised that an email had been sent to Network Rail about the delay in the completion of the road improvements on the A5013. The response apologised for the delay to the widening of the junction on the A5013 at the junction with Chebsey Lane, these delays were attributable to issues with the drainage design which were currently being rectified and scheduled for completion at the end of June.
- **Clock Plinth:-** Mrs Heelis reported that a quotation had been received from Mr B. Smith to undertake repairs to the damaged bricks at a cost of £1355.00. There was £100 excess on the Policy and the insurance company had accepted the quote and asked for the invoice to be forwarded to them upon receipt. The Clerk was authorised to request Mr Smith to undertake the work at his earliest convenience.
- **Recycling:-** The Borough Council had been advised that the Biffa lorry had deposited liquid from garden waste on the roads around the town. Assurances had been given that the liquid was not harmful and should wash away over time. Biffa were to check seals and drainage holes on their vehicles.
- **Former BT premises, Claremont Road:-** The site was untidy and overgrown and a letter had been sent to Mr and Mrs Tyre who had received planning permission in 2007 to construct a dwelling on the land asking them to tidy up the site.
- **Proposed building development, Stafford Road:-** Mrs Heelis had been approached by Mr Russell, 23, Badgers Croft who expressed concerns at the design of the development showing a gable end of a property at the rear of this house. Mrs Heelis Had contacted Mr Bloor from Richborough Estates and the Company had liaised with Mr Russell to address his concerns and amend the plans.
- **Scouts:-** Following the Council meeting in May, Mrs Heelis had forwarded future meeting dates to Mr Jackson, who was arranging for representatives of the Scouts who had taken part in the trip to Russia, to attend a Parish Council Meeting and give a short presentation.

79/14). Chairman's Report:- Councillor Dale reported that he had attended a presentation of the Eccleshall Great War Project and been presented with a copy of a commemorative book for the Parish Council.

80/14). Accounts:- Authorisation was requested for payment of the following accounts:-

Salaries & associated costs - LGA 1972 s. 112	2487.84
Expenses - Local Government (Financial Provisions) Act 1963	91.32
C. Heelis - Paint & Varnish	82.05
Trent Grounds Maintenance - Open Spaces Act 1906 s. 10	295.80
Creative Copy n Colour – Newsletters - LGA 1972 s.142	258.00
Stafford Tourism Bureau – LGA 1972 s.144	27.50
Community Centre Insurance - LGA 1972 s.145	1545.65

All were in favour and the cheques were signed.

81/14). Items, date and venue for next meeting:- July 16th, Broughton Parish Rooms, 7.30pm.

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