

## ECCLESHALL PARISH COUNCIL

March 15<sup>th</sup>, 2017

A meeting of Eccleshall Parish Council was held on March 15<sup>th</sup>, 2017, at Eccleshall Community Centre at 7.30pm. This meeting was followed by a meeting of the Planning Committee at 8.55pm.

**29/17). Present were:-**

Councillor G. Garner (Chairman)	Councillor P. Jones
Councillor B. Delanchy	Councillor C. Marshall
Councillor P. Baskerville	Councillor R. Langford
Councillor T. Price	Councillor D. Jacques
Councillor P. Alcock	Councillor E. Amos
Councillor A. Le Monnier	Councillor J. Jones
Councillor M. Starkey	Councillor J. Leather
County Councillor Chapman	Borough Councillor J. Pert
3 members of the public	Mrs C. Heelis (Clerk)
Mrs S. Worden	

Apologies were received from Councillor Mullee.

*The meeting opened with prayers*

**30/17). To consider Councillor requests for dispensations:-** There were no requests to receive.

**31/17). Public Participation:-** The members of the public present did not wish to address the meeting.

**32/17). To confirm the minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on February 15<sup>th</sup>, 2017:-** The minutes, which had been previously circulated were agreed and signed.

**33/17). Reports from Borough and County Councillors:-**

**County Councillor F. Chapman referred to the following matters:-**

- The Traffic lights were still in place on the A519 over the railway bridge at Mill Meece and the condition of the carriageway still in use was deteriorating, this together with the closure of Winghouse Lane was having a detrimental effect on local business, especially the driving range at Cold Meece. Added to the problems locally were impending works and traffic light control on the B5026 going into the Stone near the new Taylor Wimpey development. Councillor Chapman indicated that he intended to raise these issues of local concern at a meeting of the County Council next week.
- The Governance of the Fire Authority was likely to change over the next few years with the Police and Crime Commissioner putting forward a business case for amalgamation of the support services. The proposals would be subject to consultation in due course.
- Councillor Chapman had been working closely with Councillor Pert and Stafford Borough Council to improve the area around the Public Toilets. Mr B. Thompson of 21, The Burgage had undertaken a lot of work on the area, the troughs had been planted along with snowdrops in the grassed areas.

The Chairman thanked Councillor Chapman for his persistence in trying to reduce the issues caused by road closures in the area and efforts to improve the toilet area.

Borough Councillor Pert commented on the following:-

- The amalgamation of support services for the Fire Service and Police would be an effective use of limited resources, reflecting reductions in crime levels and also serious fires.
- Credit was due to Taylor Wimpey for their handling of the meeting earlier that evening. Some of the issues had been addressed and communications had improved.
- The improvements on the Toilet Area were a good example of collaborative working and it was hoped that a useable power supply would be installed before Easter. The fence around the area was to be removed.
- A meeting of the Flood Action Group was potentially useful. However, many issues discussed concerned the Taylor Wimpey site. Problems with the increased volumes of surface / foul water needed to be addressed and evidence of flooding incidents was still required.
- The annual awards of Sport Stafford Borough had recognised a variety of sports, with an increased number local people competing at a national and international level. The proposed new leisure centre in Stone would provide increased opportunities and benefits.

- Councillor Pert updated the meeting on the findings of the Clinical Commissioning Group responsible for the planning and commissioning of healthcare in the local area, benefits for the Borough from further funding for the Women's Refuge and Mental Health.

The Chairman thanked Councillor Pert for his help and support in resolving issues with Taylor Wimpey.

Borough Councillor P. Jones reported that an access survey had been conducted in Eccleshall to assess user friendliness for those with disabilities. The Parish Council would receive a copy of the report in due course. Following the survey of locations for Cycle Parking in the town the Partnerships Co-ordinator was liaising with Planning Officers about possible sites. The Parish Council would be consulted in advance of the submission of a planning application.

**34/17). Committee Reports:-**

**Traffic Management Committee:-** The next meeting of the Committee would be held on July 5<sup>th</sup>, 2017. A list was to be compiled of features on the carriageway that required re-painting at the entrances to Croxton and Eccleshall and faded / new SLOW markings. A survey was also being undertaken of local roads which may benefit from 'Unsuitable for HGV' signs.

Councillors expressed concern at the condition of Small Lane, which was a serious safety hazard to pedestrians and especially patients visiting the surgery. Mrs Heelis was asked to again report the matter to Highways and also Mr Rayson.

Councillor Leather indicated that Ankerton Lane was also in need at urgent attention.

**Enhancements Committee:-** Councillor Baskerville reported that the next meeting of the Committee would be held on May 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2017. The appearance of the toilet area was much improved and the planters were looking good. The Bloom Committee had not received any funding from Stafford Borough Council towards the purchase of the troughs and no further action had been taken to remove trees or improve the area off Hartlands Road. Mrs Heelis was asked to follow these matters up with Mr Gammon.

**Watering Contract:-** The Council resolved to suspend Standing Orders and invite Stafford Borough Council to submit a quotation to undertake the watering of the mangers and baskets throughout the summer. It was noted that the specification would require some amendments to reflect the additional troughs. Members were unaware of anyone else who may be able / willing to undertake the work as cost effectively as the Borough Council.

**Policy and Resources / Staffing Committee:-** Councillor Garner referred to the minutes from the Staffing Committee meeting held on March 1<sup>st</sup>, 2017, which had been circulated. It was reported that three candidates had been interviewed on March 10<sup>th</sup>, 2017. Mrs Worden had subsequently been appointed and would commence in post on May 1<sup>st</sup>, 2017. Thanks were expressed to Councillors P. Jones, Baskerville and Mrs Heelis. A contract had been prepared and was to be signed by the Chair and the new Clerk.

**The minutes of the Staffing Committee were accepted by the Council.**

**Footpaths Committee:-** In the absence of Councillor Mullee Mrs Heelis reported that a meeting of the Committee had been held on March 1<sup>st</sup>, 2017. Work was continuing to identify grids references for inclusion in the walk leaflets. No reports had been received recently from Footpath Marshalls, possibly due to the inclement weather. Councillors Baskerville, Mullee and Alcock had inspected the hedge on the Eyeswells Footpath, which had been layed some years ago but now had several large gaps. It was proposed to plant approximately 150 whips in the gaps to help reduce the accumulation of litter. **The Council was in favour of this course of action.**

The minutes of the Footpaths Committee were accepted by the Council and it was noted that the next meeting would be held in July 5<sup>th</sup>, 2017, preceding the Planning Committee meeting.

**35/17)). Liaison Representatives:-** There were no reports to receive from the Allotments Association, The Community Centre Association, Slindon Residents or Young People.

**Ecclian Society:-** The Society continued to produce Welcome Packs to deliver to newcomers to Eccleshall. Committee meetings had been held to plan for activities during 2017. The March newsletter had been printed and distributed to all addresses in Eccleshall and the Ecclian Society Dinner had been held on March 12<sup>th</sup>, 2107 at The Old Smithy.

**Offley Hay Village Hall:-** Councillor Le Monnier reported that an Auction was to be held at The Star Inn on Saturday March 18<sup>th</sup>, 2017.

**Croxton News** – Councillor Langford reported the following:-

- Arisings from hedge cutting had been removed by Streetscene.
- The damaged chevrons at Sugall had been replaced, although the sign indicating Offley Hay Village Hall was still pointing in the wrong direction.
- Broughton Community Choir was holding a charity concert with Bishop Lonsdale School on Friday March 17<sup>th</sup>, 2017.
- A litter pick was planned in early April and Mrs Heelis was asked to locate the hi-vis vests and litter pickers.

**36/17). Community Transport:-** Councillor Jones presented the following report from a meeting of the group held on March 7<sup>th</sup>, 2017:-

- The group was formed of people representatives from a wide range of local groups and included two officers from the Community Transport Department at Staffordshire County Council.
- The meeting discussed whether the community would benefit from a voluntary drivers scheme and if so, what form should it take.
- The scheme would require a pool of volunteer drivers to take people on pre-arranged journeys using their own vehicles.
- It was usual to have a co-ordinator to manage bookings and arrange to pay drivers.
- Public Liability and Insurance would be required and it was suggested that the group could be linked to Parish Council for this purpose.

Councillor Jones asked whether the Parish Council would be willing / able to support such a scheme.

**It was resolved to refer this matter to the Policy and Resources Committee for consideration of the requirements and implications involved.**

It was noted that the Crown Surgery had stated that the 24 hour answer service for repeat prescriptions would not be available after April 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2017. Members expressed concern that the decision to discontinue this service would increase problems for many patients, who may already have transport issues and would disadvantage those without access to the internet. Mrs Heelis was asked to write to the Surgery and also the Heath Scrutiny Committee of Stafford Borough Council about the impact the withdrawal of this service would have on local residents.

**37/17). Review of Standing Orders, Financial Regulations and Risk Assessments:-** Members had been asked to review the documents in advance of the meeting. Mrs Heelis indicated that the Standing Orders and Financial Regulations had been update in 2015 and was unaware of any omissions or problems. The Risk Assessment had been reviewed by the Policy and Resources Committee in June 2016. The Council agreed that the documents remained appropriate and no changes were required.

**38/17). New Developments:-**

**Taylor Wimpey site:-** It was agreed that the Officers from Taylor Wimpey had attended the meeting equipped with the relevant information and provided appropriate answers. The situation would be monitored to ensure that the promised actions were implemented.

Councillor Pert indicated that he continued to liaise with Taylor Wimpey regarding the resurfacing of Footpath 13 whilst the contractors and equipment were on site, although the developer had indicated a preference to support other community requirements.

**Roundabout feature:-** Mrs Heelis reported receipt of an email from Mr Ratcliffe regarding the proposed surface treatment of the roundabout. Once this had been agreed then the planning application could be submitted. Mr Ratcliffe indicated that he would contact the Borough and County Council to seek their advice and recommendations. The options for the area ranged from grass to soft landscaping and granite setts / cobbles. It was agreed that ease of maintenance was important. Councillors Baskerville, Garner and the Clerk were authorised to meet with Mr Ratcliffe to discuss the options and enable the planning application to be submitted.

**39/17). Clerk's report and correspondence:-**

- Mrs Heelis asked Committee Chairman to prepare reports for the Annual Parish Meeting on April 26<sup>th</sup>, 2017.
- Mrs Heelis reported receipt of a letter from Stone Lions Club seeking funding towards Prostate Cancer Screening blood tests.

Councillor Garner expressed an interest in this item and withdrew from the meeting.  
Councillor P. Jones took the Chair.

Following due consideration of this request the Council resolved that in accordance with Council policy, financial support should not be given for this event as the organising body was outside the Parish and screening was available through other channels.

*It was noted that the Chairman was able to make a donation towards the cause from the Chairman's Allowance if he so wished.*

*Councillor Garner re-joined the meeting and resumed the chair,*

- **Stafford in the World event – May 20<sup>th</sup>, 2017** – details of this event in Stafford Market Square had been circulated to members.
- **Flooding:-** A meeting of the Flood Forum held on March 13<sup>th</sup>, 2017 had been attended by Councillors Marshall, Amos and Price. The meeting had been dominated by residents with issues resulting from the Taylor Wimpey development. The issue of rural flooding due to the lack of river dredging had been discussed and Councillor Pert had agreed to raise this matter with the Environment Agency. Generally the meeting had been poorly attended, although a further meeting had been arranged.

**40/17). Chairman's Report:-** There was no report to receive.

**41/17). Accounts:-**

**Precept 2016/17 update and earmarked reserves:-**

Spreadsheets showing the estimated total spend, estimated reserves and earmarked reserves, had been circulated as per the attached copy. It was noted that the balances at the end of March would be slightly higher than last year.

Mrs Heelis reported that the Pillar Clock had been repaired at a cost of £1503.50 excluding VAT.

The Coach and Horses railings would be installed at the end of the week.

The Council resolved to approve the following:-

- £212 from contingencies would be vired to cover the shortfall in funding earmarked for repairs to the Pillar Clock.
- Funding from Letterheaded paper / Newsletters and contingencies would be vired to Advertising to cover the cost of the advert for the vacancy for a Clerk
- The transfer of the following funds to earmarked reserves:-
  - ❖ £200 - Elections -
  - ❖ £250 - Croxton Play Area -
  - ❖ £2250 - from Enhancements towards the cost of the power supply & Eagle sculpture.
  - ❖ £500 - from Traffic Management for Traffic calming measures.

Retrospective approval was granted for the payment of the following account:-

Staffordshire Parish Councils' Association – <i>Training</i> - LGA 1972 s.111	35.00
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Authorisation was requested for payment of the following accounts:-

Salaries & associated costs- LGA 1972 s. 112	2426.80
Expenses - <i>Local Government (Financial Provisions) Act 1963</i>	57.77
Hawkins Clock Co. - Repairs - <i>Parish Councils Act 1957 s.2</i>	1804.20
Chairman's Allowance	120.00

All were in favour and the cheques were signed.

**Increase in the National Minimum / Living Wage from 1/4/2017:-** The hourly increase from £7.20 to £7.50 was noted and would be applied to future payment made to the Handyman.

It was agreed that Councillor P. Baskerville would be added to the signatories for the signing of cheques, the addition would be made together with amendments to the Clerk's details.

**42/17). Items / Date and Venue for next meeting:-** April 19<sup>th</sup>, 2017, Broughton Parish Rooms, 7.30pm.

There being no further business, the Chairman declared the meeting closed at 8.55pm.