

## ECCLESHALL PARISH COUNCIL – March 16<sup>th</sup>, 2011

A meeting of Eccleshall Parish Council was held on March 16<sup>th</sup>, 2011 at Eccleshall Community Centre, Shaws Lane, Eccleshall at 7.30pm. This meeting was followed by a meeting of the Planning Committee.

**24/11). Present were:-**

Councillor G. Dale (Chair)	Councillor D. Pimble (Vice-Chair)
Councillor B. Delanchy	Councillor P. Baskerville
Councillor L. von Elbing	Councillor M. Starkey
Councillor J. Allen	Councillor J. Pert
Councillor B. Apps	Councillor P. Jones
Councillor A. Holl.	Councillor P. Allsop
Councillor G. Garner	
Mrs. C. Heelis (Clerk)	Borough Councillor F. Chapman
1 member of the press	

Apologies were received and accepted from Councillor J. Jones and E. Amos together with Borough/County Councillor H. Butter and the Police.

*The meeting opened with prayers*

**25/11). Public Participation:-** There were no members of the public present

**26/11). To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on February 16<sup>th</sup>, 2011:-** The minutes, which had been previously circulated, were agreed and signed.

**27/11). Police:-** The Clerk reported that PCSO Lutwyche had advised that Officers would be unable to attend Parish Council meetings in the future unless members wishes to discuss specific issues and no reports would be issued. Crime details for the Parish could be accessed on the Staffordshire Police website under Crime Mapping. Mrs Heelis advised members that the latest information on the website appeared to be from January 2011. It was resolved to write to Sergeant D. Ingham to indicate that the information on the website was out of date and Councillor Chapman also agreed to pursue this matter.

**28/11). Reports from Borough Councillors:-** Councillor Chapman indicated that he was still awaiting the hearing regarding the planning application for 85 houses on land at Bishop Lonsdale School. In addition Mr Chapman had called in applications for three wind turbines in Chebsey and Sports Pitches on Swynnerton Road, which had attracted strong objections from local residents. A debate was on going concerning the proposed High Speed Two railway link and whether it would be beneficial to the area.

**29/11). Committee Reports:-**

**Traffic Management:-** Councillor von Elbing reported that there had been no meeting of the Committee. However, a meeting was scheduled on Friday March 18<sup>th</sup>, to discuss Bank Holiday Markets with Mr C. Mitchell and representatives of the Police and Borough Council.

**Enhancements Committee:-** Councillor Dale referred to the minutes of the meeting of the Enhancements Committee held on February 23<sup>rd</sup> 2011, which had been circulated with the agenda.

**Elford Common and Pool:-** A site visit had been held with Dave Haslam from Staffordshire Ecological Services on January 25<sup>th</sup>, and the Committee recommended the following

- Push back the bushes at the rear of the spring to open it up
- Scrape the silt build up from around the spring and create a shallow pond – scraping the surface vegetation to a depth of 10 centimetres and spreading the soil around the spring area.
- Create a shallow pond (between 30 and 45 centimetres deep) to control the drainage of the spring water through a shallow channel into the pond, which would then seep away into the adjacent woodland.

The Council agreed to undertaken these works to enhance the area.

Mr Boulton had quoted £350 + VAT to undertake the work, which the committee considered to reflect value for money and Mr Boulton was a local contractor who had undertaken exemplary work for the

Council on previous occasions. The Council resolved to waive Standing Orders on this occasion and accept the quote submitted by Mr Boulton.

Mr Boulton had quoted a further £280 to lay 3 sleepers with a covering of mesh across the channel. It was agreed to seek alternative quotes for this work and consider the matter further at the next meeting of the Enhancements Committee.

It was noted that the quality of the water had improved slightly with the introduction of aquatic plants and silt, as recommended by Mr Haslam and Councillor Baskerville had removed the new growth from the willows around the pool. The committee would continue to monitor the situation.

Councillor Baskerville reported that Mr Silvester of Heath View had queried whether anything could be done to encourage people to park in the car park provided at the Common as cars were often parked on the Garmelow Road obstructing the pedestrian access to the area. Mrs Heelis was asked to write asking Mr Silvester to monitor the situation for three months, if the problem continued the Enhancements Committee would consider erecting signage for the car park.

**Allotments:-** The Association had supplied details of a shelter/storage and toilet facility and photographs of the anti-vandal steel cabin proposed, which was similar to those found on other allotment sites. The dimensions of the cabin were 24ft x 9ft and the proposed location was on the car parking area at the far left hand corner of the site, which would be barely visible from the road and appropriately screened. The Association intended to apply for funding to finance the structure and would be responsible for the emptying and cleaning of the toilet facility and maintenance of the cabin. The Council agreed to indicate support for the scheme, subject to planning permission being obtained from Stafford Borough Council.

**Gritting:-** Councillor Dale referred to the treacherous condition of the pavements in the High Street during the cold weather before Christmas. The County Council had approached the Parish Councils to seek assistance from volunteers to treat footways that would not otherwise be gritted. The Community Liaison Manager, Chris Mitchell had supplied the following information:-

- The Parish Council would be required to purchase a grit bin or other receptacle which would be locked. The County Council would provide the salt and refill as necessary.
- The Parish Council would identify areas to be treated (footways only).
- An action plan was required indicating who would distribute the grit and when (information on the optimum time to spread grit could be found on the County Council website or through the local weather forecast).
- Councillors should consider spread ratios and the possible purchase of a spreader. Another option was to use a brine solution, which could be sprayed onto the footway.

There followed some discussion regarding liability and the practicalities of relying on volunteers to assess when was the optimum time to treat the pavements and also the availability of those willing to spread grit. Mr Mitchell had indicated that providing the Council acted in good faith by taking precautionary measures to prevent the formation of ice and frost, it was unlikely to be found liable for any accidents. However, some members considered that it would be a huge undertaking and that further exploration was required to identify exactly which areas of pavements would be treated by the Parish Council. Councillor Allsop proposed that the Parish Council supported accepting this responsibility in principle, subject to further consideration of the practicalities and legal implications of agreeing to undertake the gritting. The motion was carried with two votes against and one abstention.

Mrs Heelis was asked to circulate to all members various documentation received from the Insurance Company, NALC and SLCC concerning the clearing of snow and ice from pavements.

**Seat refurbishment:-** Some seats in the town were treated by Mr Wallace who only requested reimbursement of the cost of the materials. Mr R. Sheard had quoted £25 per seat to re-varnish the wood and re-paint the arms of other seats in the Parish with materials provided by the Parish Council. It was agreed to accept this quote and provide Mr Sheard with a list of seats in need of treatment. Mrs Heelis was asked to contact Mr Cartwright to obtain a quotation for the repainting of the seat at the crossroads.

**Grass Cutting Tenders 2011/12 & 2012/13:-** Details had been circulated of Tenders received from Jackson & Pugh, Trent Grounds Maintenance and Stafford Borough Council. It was agreed to accept the tenders as follows:-

- Elford Heath, Elford Triangle and Offley Hay Village Hall – Jackson & Pugh
- Badgers Croft, Washpits, Picnic Site and Pump Site – Trent Grounds Maintenance
- Eyewells Footpath, Croxton Playing Field and Bishops Court – Stafford Borough Council.

**Land at Bishops Court:-** The purchase of the land was now complete and members had been asked for any suggestions. The committee suggested that a metal goal post could be installed at one end of the area along with some swings suitable for use by teenagers and perhaps a seat.

- Mrs Heelis was asked to contact Jessica Wilkes-Mellor to establish the results of a recent questionnaire distributed to the young people.
- The Solicitor had been asked to clarify whether permission would need to be obtained from the Treasury Solicitor to place such items on the land.
- It was proposed to seek the views of local residents
- Councillor Pimble was requested to prepare a plan for consideration of the committee.

Councillor Dale proposed that the committee was authorised to seek further information regarding equipment and requirements for safety surfacing with a view to producing a detailed proposal. The motion was carried with two votes against and two abstentions.

**Additional seating:-** The committee was exploring details of rustic type seating for Elford Common, A request had been received from a resident for a seat of at the corner of Churchfield Road and Gaol Butts. It was agreed that further information of possible usage was required as this was not a particularly attractive location and the Council already owned a large number of seats throughout the Parish.

The minutes of the Enhancements Committee were adopted by the Council.

**30/11). Policy and Resources:-** Minutes of a meeting held on March 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2011 had been circulated.

Councillor Allen had reported that he was investigating the possibility of installing two kissing gates on Footpath 119 between Johnson Hall and Newport Road and verbal consent had been obtained from the landowner. A quotation for the installation of the two kissing gates was being sought from Mr D. Greenaway and a circular walk leaflet was proposed. The Parish Council agreed to fund one third of the total cost together with contributions from the Community Paths Initiative and County Councillor Butter's Local Community Fund.

Councillor Allen had also been in discussion with a landowner regarding the installation of two further gates on Footpath 4 off the Sturbridge Road. However, the landowner had declined to cooperate.

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

**Footpaths Committee:-** There had been no meeting.

**31/11). Liaison Representatives:-**

There were no reports to receive from the Allotments Association, Tourism Bureau, Slindon Residents or First Responders.

**Ecclian Society:-** Councillor Jones reported that the Society now had 162 Family memberships. Mrs J. Fox had been appointed as Secretary of the Society. The flowers had been ordered for the floral displays and the watering trolley was serviced. An inspection of post mangers and brackets had been undertaken.

**Offley Hay Village Hall:-** Councillor von Elbing reported that the drains had been repaired and bookings were good.

**Farmers' Market:-** Councillor Allsop indicated that the next market would be held on March 26<sup>th</sup>. There would be no market in April as the stall holders would be representing Eccleshall at an event in Norbury.

**Business Focus Group:-** Councillor Jones reported that the next monthly social would be held at The Bell. At a recent AGM Peter Jones had been re-elected as Chairman of the Group.

**Bishop Lonsdale School:-** The 'meet and greet' visit which had been cancelled in December, had been re-arranged for March 28<sup>th</sup>, at 2pm.

**Communities Mean Business:-** Councillor von Elbing reported that a meeting would be held on March 31<sup>st</sup> when changes to the funding from Advantage West Midlands would be discussed.

**Young People:-** Councillor Holl indicated that the Climbing Wall available during half term had been very popular with the young people.

**Community Centre:-** Councillor Dale reported that the Jubilee Room would be re-carpeted in the near future and an application had been submitted to Communities Mean Business for funding

**32/11). Clerk's Report and Correspondence:-**

**Elections- issue of Poll Cards:-** The Borough Council had advised that the following wording could be included on the Poll Cards for the Borough Council elections and Referendum which would be despatched on March 25<sup>th</sup>, before the close of nominations for Parish Councils.

'Election to Parish Council – on 5<sup>th</sup> May.

You will only be asked to vote in this parish council election if there are more candidates than the number of vacancies, If so you will be given a ballot paper at the Polling Station'.

The Parish was asked to decide if separate poll cards would be required in the event of a Parish Election in any ward. The cost of production and delivery would have to be met by the Parish Council. The Clerk was asked to advice the Counting and Returning Officer that Poll Cards would NOT be required.

**Eccleshall First Responders** – A grant application had been received for £490 to purchase a new uniform and protection wear for a First Responder. This matter was referred to the Policy and Resources Committee for consideration for funding from the 2011/12 grant allocation.

**Parish Meeting:-** It was agreed to retain the same format as previously for the Parish Meeting. Helen Dale from the Staffordshire Wildlife Trust was to be invited to give a short report on Jackson's Coppice and Marsh. Committee Chairmen were requested to submit annual reports to the Clerk.

**33/11). Chairman's Report:-** Councillor Dale reported that he had been invited to attend the Stone Mayor's Ball.

**34/11). Accounts:-** Authorisation was requested for payment of the following accounts:-

Salaries and associated costs - LGA 1972 s. 112	2180.24
Expenses - Local Government (Financial Provisions) Act 1963	71.54
Japhlin computer updates and anti virus - LGA 1972 s.111	171.60
Creative Copy 'n' Colour - LGA 1972 s.142	258.00
Malcolm Gray photocopying - LGA 1972 s.111	20.49
Jackson & Pugh – Elford - Open Spaces Act 1906 s.10	515.20
Chairman's Allowance LGA 1972 ss. 15 (5)	100.00

All were in favour and the cheques were signed.

The Clerk was authorised to pay any invoices received before March 31<sup>st</sup>, in consultation with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman.

**35/11). Date and Venue for next meeting:-** April 20<sup>th</sup>, 2011 Broughton Parish Rooms, 7.30pm.

There being no further business, the Chairman declared the meeting closed at 8.40pm.