

[ECCLESHALL PARISH COUNCIL

November 16th, 2011

A meeting of Eccleshall Parish Council was held on November 16th, 2011, at Eccleshall Community Centre at 7.30pm, this meeting was followed by a meeting of the Planning Committee.

109/11). Present were:-

Councillor G. Dale (Chair)	Councillor Pimble
Councillor L. von Elbing.	Councillor J. Allen
Councillor M. Starkey	Councillor E. Amos
Councillor B. Apps	Councillor P. Baskerville
Councillor P. Mullee	Councillor D. Jacques
Councillor P. Jones	Councillor G. Garner
Councillor M. Dodkins	Councillor B. Delanchy
County Councillor H. Butter	Borough Councillor F. Chapman
6 members of the public	Mrs C. Heelis (Clerk)

The meeting opened with prayers

Apologies were received from Borough Councillor J. Pert

110/11). Public Participation:- Emma Smith spoke about the lack of facilities for young people in Eccleshall that had been highlighted by a campaign on Facebook. Councillors were invited to a meeting at Bishop Lonsdale School on November 25th, 2011 when it was hoped to rally the community with a view to re-opening a youth Club in Eccleshall. It was noted that the Parish Council had tried to support the young people over the years but the youth club had been unable to continue when the County Council withdrew funding for a Leader and the Parish Council was asked to support this new venture.

Although the drop in at the Library was very successful the venue did not have the capacity to cater for all the interested youngsters. The survey conducted by Jessica had identified approximately 600 young people in the parish between 10 and 18 years of age. Councillor Dale stated that youth clubs required good leaders and parental support and hoped that with the support of Lee Featherstone and Jessica Wilkes-Mellor the meeting would encourage people to volunteer.

Borough Councillor Chapman expressed his support and indicated that he intended to attend the meeting and would research the availability of help from the Borough and County Councils prior to the meeting.

Gill Fox reinforced concerns that there were no facilities for young people in Eccleshall and the Beech Road play area, which was owned by Stafford Borough Council, had been set alight during the summer was unsafe and in need of refurbishment. The new homes planned to the rear of Bishop Lonsdale School would exacerbate the problems and it was hoped that the meeting would give the young people an opportunity to state what facilities they would like in Eccleshall.

Councillor Dale thanked the Parents for attending the meeting and bringing these concerns to the attention of the Parish Council. The Parish Council sympathised with the plight of the young people and members were currently investigating the provision of some equipment on the recently purchased Open Space on Bishops Court.

111/11). To confirm the minutes of the Council Meeting held on October 19th, 2011:- Following an amendment to indicate that Borough Councillors Chapman and Pert submitted apologies as they were unable to attend the meeting, the minutes, which had been previously circulated, were agreed and signed.

112/11). Vacancy on the Council:- The clerk indicated that no election had been called and therefore, the Council could co-opt a member to represent the Horsley Ward. The vacancy had been advertised and anyone interested was asked to contact Mrs Heelis before December 21st, 2011 with co-option taking place at the Council meeting on January 18th, 2012. Several expressions of interest had already been received.

113/11). Reports from Borough and County Councillors:-

Borough Councillor Jones reported that he would monitor the progress of several planning applications in Eccleshall Parish, which had been validated recently.

Borough Councillor Chapman indicated that he continued to pursue the refurbishment of Castle Street, but was disappointed that the funding bid submitted to Stafford and Rural Homes had been unsuccessful. It would be possible to reapply in 2012 and negotiations about possible funding for the scheme were on going with Staffordshire County Council. Councillor Chapman also offered to assist with the acquisition of Section 106 funding from the Castle Street Apartments towards the provision of equipment on the Bishops Court Open Space.

County Councillor Butter reported that staff had been moving into the new County Council Offices in Stafford. It was anticipated that the new facilities would be cost effective, although there was also the loss of car parking revenue to be taken into account. The vacant buildings were to be put on the market with the exception of the County Building on Market Street, which would continue to be used. Councillor Butter also reported that a plaque stolen from the Broughton War Memorial had been replaced with one made of resin, which had no scrap value. The Remembrance Day service at St. Peter's Church had been well attended.

114/11). Committee Reports:-

Traffic Management – There was no report to receive, the next meeting of the committee would be held on February 1st, 2012 following the meeting of the Planning Committee. The Council voted in favour of Councillor Jacques joining the Traffic Management Committee.

Parking – High Street:- Following the committee meeting in October Mrs Heelis had written to Mr S. Allen and the response indicated that 'limited waiting parking is provided for short stay parking only and provides a turnover of parking spaces for shoppers and visitors. The facilities provide parking for up to 2 hours and prevent return for a further hour. It is not intended for all day parking or for vehicles to park and return repeatedly to the bays and it is not possible to authorise anyone to park for longer than the period or to return before they are entitled to'.

The Clerk was asked to reply to Mr Allen to emphasize that the situation was not being enforced in a fair and correct way as people were being booked who had parked for a time, moved off and returned later in the day to a different location and so had not contravened the restrictions. It was not the restrictions that were no longer suitable but the enforcement procedure that needed to be reviewed.

Councillor Jones had not received a response from the Cabinet Member concerning his request for information regarding the rules and regulations that applied and indicated that he would pursue the matter.

Enhancements Committee:- The Council voted in favour of Councillor Mullee joining the Enhancements Committee. Councillor Dale referred to the minutes from the meeting held on October 26th, 2011 which had been circulated with the agenda.

- **Picnic Site:-** It was noted that young volunteers from BTCV had done an excellent job clearing nettles and weeds from the site and digging out the dew pond. There was no charge for the work but the Council agreed that the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Enhancements Committee could arrange either a donation or the purchase of a picnic table or bird/bat boxes up to £50. Mrs Heelis was asked to write and thank the volunteers for their time and effort.
- **Toilet Area:-** Mrs Heelis had asked Stafford Borough Council to undertake the annual trimming of the shrubs and Councillor Dale and Baskerville had volunteered to undertake the work if it had not been done by the end of November.
- **Gritting:-** The Committee had discussed this matter at length and it was agreed that the Parish Council should decline to take on the full responsibility of treating pavements in the town at this time. Mr Mitchell had stated that it would not be possible to communicate with Parish Councils to co-ordinate gritting. Either the Parish Council agreed to take on the responsibility for certain footpaths, which would then be removed from the Highways schedules, or the County would continue to carry out gritting in accordance with the time available. Councillors who resided in

the High Street indicated that they would be prepared to spread grit on an ad hoc basis using grit from the bin outside John Pershall Court, but this would not be a formal arrangement.

Bethan Ward had asked Councillor Jones if a grit bin could be provided in Stafford Street and it was proposed to request the County Highways Department to assess whether this location met the criteria. Mrs Heelis had written to MP W. Cash to seek clarification about whether shopkeepers could be liable for injuries sustained by someone falling on a pavement they had gritted and Mr Mitchell had forwarded details of the Good Samaritan Clause taken from the principals contained in Lord Young's paper 'Common Sense, Common Safety'. The clause stated that 'People who seek to do good in our society should not fear litigation as a result of their actions'. Councillor Jones, Chairman of the Business Focus Group was asked to suggest that shopkeepers purchased their own supplies of grit to treat the pavements outside their premises.

- **Castle Street Enhancements:-** Mrs Heelis reported that several completed questionnaires had been received and most indicated support for the scheme. Many residents considered that the trees were old and should be removed but would like to see them replaced by something more suitable.

Comments had been received about the parking, especially by residents of Selwyn Court. The Committee considered that additional spaces could be created by creating herringbone parking and members referred to other areas of the Country where vehicles parked at right angles to the street and the system appeared to be satisfactory. It was agreed to request County Highways to provide a copy of the statute or written documentation which indicated that parking at right angles to the traffic flow would be unsuitable in this location. Vehicles were regularly parked at right angles to the road currently both on Castle Street and on the grass verge by Holy Trinity Church.

The Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Clerk were to attend a meeting on November 25th, 2012 with representatives from the Borough Council, County Council and Communities Mean Business.

- **Land at Bishops Court:-** Councillor Dale indicated that the committee had discussed possible equipment for the site including swings, a goal post and youth shelter. Councillor Dale, Baskerville and the Clerk were authorised to gather information concerning types of equipment available and costs, with a view to devising a scheme for public consultation. It was noted that proposals would have to comply with the terms and conditions of the purchase of the land and planning permission may be required.

Policy and Resources:- The meeting of the Committee on November 2nd, 2011 had been inquorate. The Council voted in favour of Councillors Garner and Mullee joining the Committee. The next meeting would be held on January 4th, 2012 when details of funding available from the Borough Council for 2012/13 should be available, which may affect the amount of precept required.

Grant application – Eccleshall Cricket Club:- This application for funding towards the purchase of a new scoreboard had been reported to the Council in September and reported to the Policy and Resources Committee. Copies of the application had been circulated with the agenda. Councillor Allen declared an interest in the application.

It was proposed to make a grant of £225 from the £450 remaining of finance allocated for grants in the current year. The motion was passed with 13 votes in favour and one abstention.

Staffing Committee:- The committee had met to consider a method of monitoring overtime hours worked by the Clerk undertaking various tasks in addition to those detailed on the job description. A spreadsheet had been devised to show normal and overtime hours with effect from October 17th, 2011, Following certification by Councillors Dale and Pimble, details would be reported to Council on a monthly basis and the arrangement would be subject to a three monthly review. Six hours overtime had been recorded to date and the Council agreed that remuneration should be made on accordance with the appropriate payscale, together with the Clerk's monthly salary.

It was noted the Clerk did not wish to be paid for hours accumulated in excess of the contracted hours, whilst undertaking general administration of the Council, but preferred to carry them forward and take time off in lieu when convenient.

115/11). Liaison Representatives:- There were no reports to receive from the Allotments Association or Community Centre Association.

Ecclian Society:- Councillor Jones reported that volunteers were needed to trim the Christmas trees on November 24th and help to install them on November 27th. 2011. At the AGM on November 15th, 2011 all the Officers were re-elected.

Offley Hay Village Hall:- Councillor von Elbing reported that bookings were increasing and a notice had been erected in the car park requesting walkers using the car park to give a small donation for using the facility.

Tourism Bureau:- Councillor P. Jones reported that the Bureau continued to promote events in Eccleshall and throughout the Borough. A new web site would be launched shortly.

Bishop Lonsdale School:- Councillor Dodkins reported that a very successful Remembrance Day service had been held at the school on Thursday November 10th, 2011.

Business Focus Group:- Councillor Jones advised members that a Late Night Opening Event was to be held on December 1st, 2011 and a Christmas Meal had been arranged for members at The Badger on December 8th, 2011.

Communities Mean Business:- Councillor von Elbing stated that money had been awarded to the Young Firefighters in Eccleshall. Changes were proposed to the scheme to enable funding bids for less than £15,000 to be subject to a less onerous process.

Young People:- Councillor Dodkins indicated that the role of Youth Support Worker was funded from the Communities Means Business Scheme and Jessica Wilkes-Mellor was required to move on at the end of November to assist young people in other areas. A committee had been formed to enable the Drop-in sessions at the Library to continue. Mrs Heelis was asked to send a letter to Jessica thanking her for working with the young people in the parish, the summer activities, Friday night drop-ins and student firefighter scheme had been a huge success.

116/11). Clerk's report and correspondence;- The Clerk referred to draft copies of the Newsletter for December which had been circulated and asked for any comments as soon as possible. Mrs Heelis advised members that the new web site would be launched shortly.

117/11). Chairman's Report:- Councillor Dale thanked those members who had attended the Civic Service at St. Paul's Church, Croxton on October 23rd. 2011. Remembrance Services in the Parish had been well attended and thanks were extended to Councillor Pimble for laying the Wreath at Holy Trinity Church and to Councillor Delanchy for representing the Council at St. Paul's Church, Croxton.

118/11). Accounts:- Copies of the accounts had been circulated it was noted that a grant of £475 had been received from the Borough Council towards the Christmas Trees together with funding from the Community Paths Initiative towards the cost of kissing gates and a reprint of the footpath booklet. Authorisation was sought for payment of the following:-

Salaries & associated costs – November - LGA 1972 s. 112	2280.98
Expenses - Local Government (Financial Provisions) Act 1963	43.27
Salaries & associated costs - December - LGA 1972 s. 112	2196.36
Poppy Appeal Wreath - Section 137	25.00
SBC Grass cutting - Open Spaces Act 1906 s.10	672.00
SBC Watering - Concurrent Allowance	4464.00
SBC - Tree Croxton - Open Spaces Act 1906 s.10	300.00
Creative Copy 'n' Colour - Orders of Service – LGA 1972 s.142	62.40
Trent Grounds Maintenance – Open Spaces Act 1906 s.10	91.20
B.T. Telephone Bill – LGA 1972 s.111	121.59

All were in favour 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.

119/11). Items / Date and Venue for next meeting:- January 18th, 2012, Eccleshall Community Centre 7.30pm.

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