

ECCLESHALL PARISH COUNCIL

Sept 20th, 2017

A meeting of Eccleshall Parish Council was held on September 20th, 2017, at Eccleshall Community Centre, at 7.30pm. This meeting was followed by a meeting of the Planning Committee at 10.05pm.

101/17). Present were:-

Councillor G. Garner (Chairman)	Councillor P. Baskerville
Councillor B. Delanchy	Councillor P. Jones
Councillor E. Amos	Councillor J. Leather
Councillor R. Langford	Councillor A. Le Monnier
Councillor M. Starkey	Councillor J. Jones
Councillor T. Price	
Borough and County Councillor J. Pert	
Mrs S.J. Worden (Clerk)	7 members of the public

Apologies were received and accepted from Councillors Alcock, Marshall, Jacques and Mullee

The meeting opened with prayers

102/17). To consider Councillor requests for dispensations:- There were no requests to receive.

103/17). Public Participation:- Mr Peter Chamberlain addressed the meeting on behalf of Eccleshall Historical Society, to provide an update on the project to clean and add missing names to the Eccleshall War Memorial, located in the grounds of Holy Trinity Church. Mr Chamberlain reported that due to limited available funding, the War Memorials Trust had turned down their application for project funding. Subject to the granting of a faculty from the Diocese, which will allow for completion of the work, the Historical Society is committed to continuing with the project. The best quote obtained to date was £1546 plus VAT, for cleaning, re-pointing and inscription of the seventeen missing names. The society advised they were in the process of obtaining fundraising pledges to contribute to this cost, and requested that the Parish Council consider a grant request, as custodians of the War Memorial. To mark the completion of the project, a Consecration Service will be held in June 2018, and attended by the Bishop of Lichfield and hopefully the Lord Lieutenant. There will also be an 'Eve of the Armistice' concert held on 10 November 2018, in Holy Trinity Church.

104/17). CASS representatives – Launch of the Carer's Café:- Mack Cock, Chief Operating Officer of CASS, the Carer's Association, provided an overview of the new Carer's Café, launching on the 28th September, and running on the last Thursday of every month, at Eccleshall Community Centre, 10.30am-12.30pm. The café is open to all Carers, and they are welcome to bring along the person they are caring for. It will provide peer support, and a rolling programme of games and activities, as well as the opportunity to talk to representatives from various organisations. The Parish Council was requested to publicise the café to any organisations they were involved in, and leaflets were provided for distribution.

105/17). To confirm the minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on July 19th, 2017:- The minutes, which had been previously circulated were agreed and signed.

106/17). Reports from Borough and County Councillors:-

Councillor Pert provided a report on the following:

- The fire service has been approached to host a community defibrillator, but it is not clear whether the fire station is a suitable location. Councillors were requested to provide feedback as to a suitable location where there is high footfall, and a defibrillator is not already close by.
- The environmental consultation for HS2 closes on 30th September, and Councillor Pert advised the Parish Council to ensure they submit a response ahead of the deadline, with regards to the proposed siting of motorway access within Yarnfield, which will be earmarked for use by construction traffic only. The consultation provides the opportunity to comment on alternative locations for the motorway junction, the possibility of opening up the access to the public in order to help with the reduction of HGV traffic on local roads, and also to consider the impact of increased traffic on the currently unsuitable junction of Yarnfield Road and the A34, and provide

alternative suggestions. After discussions, and due to the approaching deadline of the consultation, the Council **resolved** for the Clerk and the Chair to submit a response on behalf of the Council, collating any emailed responses sent to the Clerk ahead of the deadline date.

- Councillors were advised of a fundraising Curry Weekend, to be held on Sunday 29th October at London House. Sittings were at 12pm, 5.30pm and 7.30pm, at a cost of £15/head. Tickets were available from Councillor Pert.
- A trip to Brussels to visit the European Parliament is being arranged from 27th Feb 2018- Thurs 1st March. The subsidised cost is estimated to be around £200, and there will be the chance to view a plenary debate. Anyone interested in going is requested to contact Cllr Pert by the end of October.

Cllr Pert was made aware of the issue with the 13A bus service, and the likelihood of many other rural services being withdrawn next year, as a result of subsidies for a number of services being removed, irrespective of the outcome of the Bus Consultation. As valuable commuter services for work, education, health and social purposes, Cllr Pert was asked if anything could be done to prevent these potential losses. Cllr Pert agreed to look into this further.

Cllr P. Jones reported that the Victoria Park project was ongoing and that he had been mainly involved with the Planning Applications Committee. He had also attended an accounts training session.

107/17). **Committee Reports:-**

Traffic Management Committee:- Cllr P. Jones advised there had been no meeting since the last Parish Meeting.

The Committee had been asked to review traffic calming measures in their area and these will be considered at the next meeting. The Committee have a £500 budget to spend on new markings in these areas.

Enhancements Committee:- A meeting of the Enhancements Committee was held on 6th September. Councillor Baskerville had the following updates:

- **Risk Assessments-** some of the annual risk and asset surveys were still outstanding, and members were asked to complete their reports and submit to the Clerk at the earliest opportunity.
- **Croxton Play Area** – The Clerk had noted some areas of concern on her last inspection, where the play surface had lifted and could be a potential trip hazard. The committee recommended that the annual inspection by Wicksteed should be brought forward so that they can inspect the area and provide a quote for repair. The Parish Council voted **in favour** of this action. The Clerk would ask if there were any more permanent solutions to the ongoing problem with the surface, as the problem is recurring.
- **Pillar Clock** – Following approval of the Parish Council to replace the current lighting system with more efficient LED bulbs, Cllr Baskerville advised that he had seen E.ON working on the clock, but no confirmation of work has been sent to the Clerk to date. The Clerk will chase this up. Cllr Baskerville also updated the Council with regards to the repainting of the gilding on the clock. The gilding had faded very quickly since the last repaint, so the painter has tested a new paint on a small area of the clock, which Cllr Baskerville will review to determine if this is a more long lasting alternative.
- **BT Phone boxes** – Discussion took place regarding possible uses for the newly acquired BT phone boxes at Fair Oak and Croxton. It was noted that repair work would be needed on both boxes prior to repurposing. Both phone boxes would need new door handles, and some repainting, but the Fair Oak box was in the worse state with peeling paint and missing glass panes. As a community resource, the Committee felt that the community should have input into what they wanted to use the phone boxes for. The Clerk was asked to put signs up in each box, asking for feedback to be submitted for discussion at the next Committee meeting. Cllr Langford advised there is also an announcement in the ABC magazine, requesting feedback.

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

Policy and Resources Committee:- The P&R committee met on 16th August 2017, and Cllr Garner provided the following summary:

- **Staffing Committee report regarding the Clerk's probationary period** - The staffing committee met on Wednesday 8th August with the Clerk, to consider the completion of the thirteen week probationary period in the post. The committee considered the job description and criteria set out for the role and expressed complete satisfaction with the excellent way in which Stacey has fulfilled every aspect of the post. Mrs. Worden was invited to make any comment or ask any questions regarding the work from her point of view. She had none to make other than to express her thanks to the councillors and others for their help and support. The committee and Mrs. Worden particularly wished to thank Mrs. Heelis for her valuable contribution to ensuring a seamless transfer from herself to Mrs. Worden.
Councillor Garner requested that the Parish Council endorsed this report, which was accepted by the Policy and Resources Committee. The Council were **in favour** of this action.
- **Policy regarding Grant Applications** – The Committee discussed the current process for deciding on grant applications, and agreed that the Chair and the Clerk would look into the Parish Council Standing Orders, and the appropriate external regulation, to report back to the Committee at the next meeting. The P&R Committee wish to ensure that an appropriate policy is in place regarding the criteria for grant application approval.
- **NALC Pay Claim** – The Committee responded to advise that the documentation had been seen and that one of the changes, regarding the removal of the lowest pay scales, would have no impact on the Parish Council, as the pay scales were lower than the National Living Wage, which the Council adheres to.
- **Procedure Regarding Gypsy/Traveller Encampments** – Following investigations by the Clerk and Cllr P. Jones, it was concluded that in the event of any encampment upon Parish land, this would need to be reported to the Borough Council either via the main telephone number (01785 616500) during their usual office hours, or by email to ehtechsupport@staffordbc.gov.uk and they would investigate and issue the relevant enforcement notices to ensure the camp was moved on as soon as possible. Councillor P. Jones advised that Streetscene would facilitate the removal and tidy up of the site. Unless causing a nuisance, there would be a 7 day period before they were moved on. Cllr Pert advised that he would see if there was a weekend number that could be used for reporting an encampment.
- **Death of a Monarch Condolence Papers** – Holy Trinity Church has agreed to host condolence papers and floral tributes in the case of such an event, and the Clerk has since written to Croxton and Slindon churches to determine if they would also like to host papers and floral tributes.

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

108/17). Liaison Representatives:- There were no reports to receive from Eccleshall Community Centre, Tourism, Slindon Residents, The Ecclian Society or Croxton.

The Allotments Association:-

- The Summer BBQ was held on the August 12th and went well. It was attended by 41 people, including the Chairman and Cllr Starkey.

Young People:-

- Councillor Price advised that a meeting with the newly appointed Youth Worker was due to take place next week

Ecclian Society:-

- Apologies were sent on behalf of the Society's Chair as a report was not available. It was reported that as a result of participating in the Eccleshall Show, the Society signed up 12 new families as members. The management team will be meeting on Tuesday 26th September.

Offley Hay Village Hall – The next meeting is on the 21st September, and it was reported that the Open Day on 10th September went well.

109/17). Community Transport:- Councillor P. Jones provided the following update:

- A public meeting of the Eccleshall Community Drivers' Scheme will be held on Thursday 5th October, 10.30am, at the Methodist Church schoolroom, where officers will be appointed. This will then allow the scheme to open a bank account.
- A number of areas need to be clarified, including car insurance, DBS requirements, personal liability insurance, and the process of assessing passengers to ensure that the service is suitable for their needs.
- Mileage charges will be 45p/mile. Passengers will be charged from collection to their destination and return journey, and will not be charged for any mileage the volunteer incurs from their home to the pickup address.
- It is expected to be a slow building project, and it will be receiving some financial support from the County Council.

With regards to local transport issues, the Chair advised that the Bus Consultation response, as compiled by Cllrs Garner, J. Jones, Amos and the Clerk, had been submitted to the County Council, as agreed by the Parish Council.

110/17). New Developments:-
Taylor Wimpey site:-

- The current application for trimming of the trees has yet to go before the Borough Planning Committee, and a date is to be confirmed.
- Staffordshire County Council has contacted the Parish Council requesting feedback on the proposed parking restrictions to be introduced on Shaws Lane, following the road realignment and construction of the new roundabout. The Parish Council discussed the proposal and noted that the biggest impact is the introduction of double yellow lines everywhere apart from designated parking bays. This will be in response to recommendations from the Road Safety Audit. The Parish Council accepted that the measures would be appropriate from a safety perspective. However, Councillors expressed concerns regarding the impact of the parking restrictions for the school, as parents would have nowhere to park to drop off and collect their children. The Clerk was advised to feed this back to Staffordshire County Council.

Bovis:- Despite the regular contact with Bovis regarding the tidying of Badgers Croft, this had still not been completed, even though the latest completion date was advised as Friday 15th September. The Clerk had contacted Bovis, and the issue has been flagged up to the directors for action, but no new completion date has been advised. The Clerk will continue to press for action in this area.

The Clerk also followed up on a complaint from resident who are backing onto the Bovis development near to Badgers Croft. Due to removal of hedges, and the elevated position of the new development, additional screening and landscape work had been agreed with the residents, and confirmed with the Borough Council enforcement officers as to be completed by April 2017. The Borough Council enforcement officer had been in contact with Bovis about the issue, and had been advised that due to delays in construction, the work had been put back until the end of the year.

Roundabout feature:- Cllr Pert provided a report on the Eagle project:

- Cllr Pert outlined the project plan and total costs for the Eagle roundabout feature. The total project cost was estimated to be £13,627. With the £5000 funding support from Bovis, and the initial construction costs of £3000 to be covered by Amey, this left a shortfall of £5,627.

As agreed by the Parish Council at the Planning Meeting on 7th December 2016, The Council had resolved to earmark up to £4,000 from reserves to complete the process if required, in addition to the financing of costs associated with design, drawings, licences, planning applications and structural surveys.

Cllr Pert further advised that the County Council Community Fund would also be in a position to cover some of the costs to make up the shortfall.

- Cllr Pert was now in possession of all the relevant information and technical details to enable the project to start on the pre-planning and planning elements. This will entail a cost of £970 plus VAT for a Road Safety Audit, structural design work at a cost of £300, and the submission of a planning application, at a reduced cost of £100. In total, £1370, plus VAT.
- The timescale for the project, from start of the pre-planning work, is estimated at around 19 weeks.

In order to start work on the pre-planning and planning stages, Cllr Pert requested sign off for the budget on the initial stages of the work, capped at £1400 plus VAT, which would take the project up to the required stage for planning approval. Further sign offs could then be agreed if planning is approved. As the project, with the support of the Community Fund, would fall within the previously agreed budget for the project, the Council **resolved to approve** the initial spend of up to £1400 plus VAT, to allow the project to move forward.

Cross Butts:- Further to the complaints about contractor vehicles parking on the pavement and blocking pedestrian access, the Clerk advised that this has been reported to the local PCSO, and they have been patrolling the area. Parking has been noted as improved since the initial visit. Cllr P. Jones advised that he has spoken to the CEO of Pickstock Homes, Nick Scott. Mr Scott has advised he will contact the Clerk with details of the site manager, when available.

111/17). Review of online presence/social media:-

The Clerk suggested that the Parish Council would benefit from a Facebook page, improving their engagement with the local community, and providing them with a means to provide information on a variety of topics, including planning issues, road delays, hedge cutting updates, refuse collections, thefts, and community events. The Clerk had researched other Facebook pages and also looked into the writing of an appropriate social media policy, to cover the main concerns and etiquette in using social media on behalf of the Parish Council. The council voted **in favour** of progressing the setting up of a page, and writing of an appropriate social media policy to support this action.

The Clerk also requested that the Councillors review the current website, and advise of any updates or amendments that would be of use.

112/17). War memorial project:-

Following on from the project update provided by Mr. Chamberlain in the meeting, the Parish Council discussed the project, and their role in it.

As custodians, if the donations raised by the Historical Society were donated to the Council, The Parish Council will then be able to commission both the remedial work and the new inscription work.

The Council felt that as custodians of the memorial, it should consider funding the remedial work on the monument, at a cost of £550 plus VAT. Cllr Pert advised that if the Parish Council were to provide a grant of £550 towards the project, an application could be made to the County Council Community Fund, to match fund the grant awarded, giving a total of £1100 towards the total project cost of £1546 plus VAT. It was noted that the project cost did not include any costs towards the planned ceremonies but the Historical Society were confident they would be able to raise the additional funds to support these activities.

The Council **resolved to approve** a grant of £550 to cover the remedial work on the monument, subject to the relevant faculty being approved by the diocese in October. The Clerk would submit a grant application to the Community Fund, via Cllr Pert, for match funding of £550.

At this point, the Chair requested permission from the Council to extend the meeting past 9.30pm, in line with the Standing Orders, and the Council voted **in favour** of continuation.

113/17). Winter Newsletter content:-

The Clerk advised that in order to meet the distribution deadline of w/c 20th November, Parish Councillors need to email any items to be included to the Clerk at the earliest opportunity, so that a draft could be available for approval by the end of October. The Clerk suggested a number of items for inclusion, which included Christmas event information, advertisement of the new Facebook page, updates on the Eagle and War Memorial projects, a CASS café article, the bus consultation response, dog fouling reminders, community services information and information on the County Council service reductions.

114/17). Clerk's report and correspondence:-

- **NOx sensors** – the sensor has not yet been sited due to the originally contacted officer not being available to follow up on his action. It has now been brought to the attention of another officer at the Borough Council for action.
- **Elford Common/Dog Fouling** – The Clerk was requested to find out if the signs used on footpaths could be used on the Common in lieu of the orange stickering supplied by the Borough Council, but the County Council have advised this is not possible.
- **Collaboration Group Meeting 27th July 2017** – The County Council are close to launching a microsite, aiming to provide help and support to Parishes who may consider taking on extra responsibilities. It will include sample risk assessments and case studies, amongst other resources. Parish Councils still have a number of concerns regarding the cutting back of services, including cost, public liability, increased workload for the Clerk, lack of volunteers, impact on the precept and the perception of double taxation. No information has yet been provided with regards to potential costs for taking on additional work. The County Council stance is that they will still be completing the work to maintain their statutory requirements, but visits will be less often, and it was noted that villages will look 'shabbier' if no extra work is taken on by Parish Councils. The next meeting is on Thursday 19th October, 7.30pm, in Bradley. The Clerk requested Councillors to advise if they were able to attend.
- **Neighbourhood Highways Team** – they were able to fit in one final visit ahead of the service being cancelled, and cleared the overgrowth encroaching on the footpath between Cross Butts and Johnsons Hall nurseries. As they were unable to fit any more work in, this leaves outstanding issues such as the footpath along the Stone Road up to Fletchers, the path from Church Lane to Kerry Lane (both of which have been reported to the County Council separately), and the weeds in the footpath area between the Little George up to Animal Health.
- **Tree on 50 Churchfield Road** – following concerns raised that the tree may be damaging the wall that backs onto the public footpath, The Clerk reported this to the diocese, and the issue is under investigation by Fisher German, the agents for the Church.
- **Good Councillor Guides 2017** – the SPCA advised that the update version of the guide was now available to purchase, at a cost of £3.75 each plus p&p. The Council **agreed** to purchase one new guide for reference purposes.
- **Public Feedback regarding the Eagle Sculpture** – An email was read out from a resident, expressing their concerns as to the suitability of the Eagle sculpture. The Council noted the concerns of the resident.
- **Future of the Library Service** - A letter from the County Council was received, updating the Council on upcoming conversations regarding the twenty County Council managed libraries, which include Eccleshall, Stone and Stafford. The County Council need to save £430,000 a year, for the next 3 years in this area. A Select committee met on the 12th September to consider the potential for self-service options with swipe card access, and also whether further libraries could become community managed and delivered. A public consultation will be launched in the New Year.
- **Building Better Opportunities Stafford and South Staffordshire** – A lottery funded project, the group has been set up with the aim to help people with multiple barriers to work, to get closer to finding employment. Assistance will include support with basic maths and English, volunteering work placements, confidence building and financial advice. The Clerk has been provided with posters, to put up in the notice boards.
- **Community Council of Staffordshire AGM** – an invitation was received to attend the AGM on the 3rd October, along with a copy of their annual report. The main purpose of the

meeting was to review the annual report, and as this was a comprehensive report, the Council did not feel it necessary to attend.

- **NALC Consultation on Broadband Universal Service Obligation, design consultation** – NALC was in support of the consultation, which required a response from Parish Councils by 2nd October. Councillor Le Monnier is in the process of looking into the requirements for improved Broadband access in rural areas, and was happy to respond to the consultation on behalf of the Council. As the response would also be supportive of NALC's response, and involved commenting on design elements only, the Council voted **in favour** of this action.
- **Email regarding Copmere End** – a resident had emailed concerning the status of the Cheshire Railing repairs and potential for clearance of the area by the Sugnall estate, now that it was autumn. The Clerk advised that there had been no further information received regarding the scheduled date for repairs. The Clerk would email the request for clearance of vegetation onto Cllr Jacques for comment, as he was not in attendance at the meeting.
- **Email regarding lamp post poppies** – an email was received regarding the option to purchase lamp post poppies as part of the Poppy Appeal. The Council felt this was not necessary as they already provided a donation to the Poppy Appeal in the provision of a commemorative wreath.

115/17). Chairman's Report:- The Chairman advised that a prominent local resident, Donald Gray, had passed away. Mr Gray had served in the Arctic convoys during WW2, and had been closely involved in many remembrance services in Eccleshall over the years. The council were **in favour** of sending a sympathy card to the family.

The Chairman reminded the Council that the Civic Service was due to be held in Slindon on October 15th at 11.30am. The Council were also advised that they were welcome to attend the presentation of the Queens Award for voluntary service to Eccleshall Community First Responders, to be held Tuesday 3rd October at 7pm, at the Kings Arms.

116/17). Accounts:-

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

S. Worden - Salary - LGA 1972 s. 112	969.35
Expenses - Local Government (Financial Provisions) Act 1963	74.06
PAYE - LGA (Financial Provisions) 1963	14.80
NHI - LGA (Financial Provisions)1963	106.81
Pension LG Pensions Scheme Regs. 1995	303.04
Chairman's Allowance 2017/18 - LGA 1972 ss. 15 (5)	35.00
Subscription Local Council Review - LGA 1972 s.111	17.00
TGM Grass and hedge cutting - Open Space Act 1906 s10	258.00
C. Heelis - salary for handover period, LGA 1972 s. 112	200.00
Grant Thornton – Accounts and Audit Regs. 2015	360.00
Parton Agriplant Ltd – hedge cutting - Open Spaces Act 1906 s.10	186.00
Stafford BC, Streetscene clean Croxton Play area - Open Spaces Act 1906 s10	220.76
Eccleshall Guide (Peter Jones) - Web Hosting - LGA 1972 s.111	128.88
SLCC – Cheshire Branch Conference - Training - LGA 1972 s.111	30.00
Eccleshall Guide LGA 1972 s.142	135.00
Rod Sheard seat repair, Linacre Road - Parish Council Act 1957 s.2*	50.00

Authorisation was requested for payment of the following:-

S. Worden - Salary - LGA 1972 s. 112	969.15
Expenses - Local Government (Financial Provisions) Act 1963	185.62
PAYE - LGA (Financial Provisions) 1963	15.00
NHI - LGA (Financial Provisions)1963	106.81
Pension LG Pensions Scheme Regs. 1995	303.04
TGM Grass and hedge cutting - Open Space Act 1906 s10	245.40
Poppy Appeal Wreath - Section 137	25.00

All were in favour and the cheques were signed.

A printed copy of the bank transactions for the last month was presented to Cllr P. Jones for review, to confirm that in line with the financial regulations, no online transactions had been actioned other than transfers of money between accounts.

The Clerk requested permission to suspend the Standing Orders requesting 3 quotes, in order to proceed with placing an order with Wood's Christmas Tree Farm at Solihull for supply of Christmas trees, subject to receipt of an acceptable quotation. Wood's had supplied the trees and crane hire for the last 4 years, with good quality trees and reliable service. The Council voted **in favour** of this action. The Clerk will also write to the Borough Council to request the annual grant to support the purchase of the trees.

117/17). Items / Date and Venue for next meeting:- October 18th, 2017 at Offley Hay Village Hall, 7.30pm.

There being no further business, the Chairman declared the meeting closed at 10.00pm.