

ECCLESHALL PARISH COUNCIL

September 23rd, 2015

A meeting of Eccleshall Parish Council was held on September 23rd, 2015, at Eccleshall Community Centre, at 7.30pm.

- 112/15). Present were:-**
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| Councillor G. Garner (Vice-Chairman) | Councillor P. Baskerville |
| Councillor B. Delanchy | Councillor P. Jones |
| Councillor M. Starkey | Councillor P. Mullee |
| Councillor L. Taylor-Potts | Councillor M. Dodkins |
| Councillor D. Dyer | Councillor E. Amos |
| Councillor R. Langford | County Councillor Chapman. |
| Mrs C. Heelis (Clerk) | 4 members of the public |
| Mr R. Perrins, Mr A. Holmes and Mr G. Mann – Taylor Wimpey | 1 member of the press |

Apologies were received from:- Councillors Pimble, Marshall, Davies and Jacques together with Borough Councillor Pert.

The meeting opened with prayers

- 113/15). To consider Councillor requests for dispensations:-** There were no requests to receive.
- 114/15). Public Participation:-** Mrs K. Lunn enquired what the Council's intentions were regarding the provision of play facilities for 8 -12 year olds in the light of new developments in the offing. Councillor Delanchy indicated that the Parish Council had been unable to find a suitable location for a play area in the past. Each new development should include an element of recreational space however, a section 106 agreement did not necessarily mean that the funds would be able to be spent in Eccleshall.

Councillor Garner stated that the Parish Council shared the concerns expressed about insufficient play facilities. It was hoped that the new developments would help to achieve appropriate facilities.

- 115/15). Taylor Wimpey – Development off Shaws Lane:-** Mr R. Perrins indicated that the company wished to progress the development on the site and work with the Parish Council and local residents. A meeting had been held with representatives from the Parish Council and Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group to provide an update on the current situation regarding the development. It was stated that the purchase of the land had still to be finalised but that completion was imminent. The following matters had been raised:-
- The delay had been caused by lengthy negotiations between the landowners and their legal teams.
 - The proposed scheme closely reflected the scheme which had already been granted outline planning permission.
 - Play facilities had been discussed and Taylor Wimpey had suggested that the company may be able to contribute towards the provision of teenage facilities off site. An area was to be provided on site for up to 12 year olds and Taylor Wimpey proposed the installation of Natural Play facilities. The area of open space remained the same as that detailed in the approved outline planning permission.
 - Taylor Wimpey felt that the drainage issues had been addressed through a comprehensive Flood Risk Assessment and suitable measures would be in place to deal with the water on site.
 - Members of the Parish Council had suggested that a pedestrian link through to St. Chad's Road would be advantageous and encourage people to walk to town. It had been suggested that the Parish Council would contact the residents of St. Chad's Road to ascertain their views.
 - An improvement to the surface of the public footpath to the west of the site could be considered and future maintenance being handed over to a management company.
 - It was hoped to retain as many of the mature trees in the centre of the site as possible.

- Mr Perrins asked members to consider whether there was a project or aspiration in the Neighbourhood Plan to which the company could contribute.

116/15). To confirm the minutes of the Council Meeting held on July 15th, 2015:- It was noted that minute number 105/15 should read Committee Reports not Liaison Representatives. Mrs Heelis indicated that the copy in the minute book had been changed accordingly. With this amendment the minutes, which had been previously circulated, were agreed and signed.

117/15). Reports from County and Borough Councillors:-

County Councillor F. Chapman:- County Councillor Chapman reported the following:-

- He had been involved in a review of the County Councils decision to sell the land at the rear of the Community Centre and was aware that the developer was negotiating to provide play facilities off site.
- At a quarterly meeting with Dermot Hogan (Western Service Delivery Lead, Staffs Fire and Rescue) concerns about the reductions in services had been discussed, together with the future governance of the Police and Fire Service, which was currently the subject of a consultation exercise.

Bus Services:-Thanks were extended to Councillor Amos for help in addressing local concerns arising from the revised bus service timetable. Councillor Chapman indicated that 85% of bus services across the County were commercially run. The recent review was a result of some services proving to be unsustainable. Those present agreed that the level of consultation had been unsatisfactory.

Councillor Amos referred to the following issues:-

- The visit of D&G on September 3rd, 2015 had not been advertised locally by the County Council or the bus company.
 - Arriva had indicated that they would not be running a bus service on September 5th, 2015 and D&G had agreed to operate a service without taking any fares. **It was agreed to write and thank Mr Almond the Network Manager.**
 - The service on Monday mornings did not arrive in Stafford until 8.45pm and subsequently was too late for workers and school children. It was queried why the 7.50am bus had been withdrawn when this had been previously been well used.
 - The 8am bus used a route through Norton Bridge and was currently affected by the Network Rail roadworks. It was unclear how the upcoming road closures and severe weather would affect the service during the winter months.
- Mrs Heelis was asked to invite Mr Almond to a meeting with the Parish Council.
 - Councillor Chapman agreed to establish which bus routes were supported by the County Council.
 - It was noted that D&G buses had provided excellent services in the past and were prepared to operate a 'hail and stop' service.
 - Councillor Chapman reported that he hoped a bus stop would be provided on the Newport Road shortly.

Borough Councillor P. Jones reported that he had chaired a meeting of the Borough Council and it had been agreed to accommodate some refugees in the area.

118/15). Committee Reports:-

Traffic Management:- Councillor Taylor-Potts indicated that a meeting with Mr Rayson would be held on September 24th, 2015 at 4.30pm at Eccleshall Community Centre. Mrs Heelis reported that the next visit of the Neighbourhood Highway Team was scheduled for the week commencing October 12th, and requested members to advise her of any items requiring attention. Issues on the list already included siding out the pavement from the Cricket Club on Chester Road past the Tennis Club.

Councillor Delanchy indicated that the team were often prevented from clearing the pavement of vegetation due to overgrown hedges, which were the responsibility of the landowner. Although letters were sent out by the Highways Department this was a lengthy and involved process. Councillor Mullee stated that farmers were only allowed to cut hedges between September 1st and March 1st. Previously they had been able to cut hedges from August 1st but to do this permission was now required from DEFRA.

Enhancements Committee:- Councillor Baskerville reported the following matters discussed at a meeting of the committee on August 19th, 2015 when he had been elected as Chairman.

- **Grass verge – Croxton:-** Councillor Langford indicated that in her opinion the issue of the grass verge opposite Boughey's Well in Croxton remained unresolved and this item would be included on the next committee agenda.
- **Picnic Site:-** The area was being well used and the benches were in need of refurbishment.
- **Eyeswells Footpath:-** Councillor Baskerville and Mrs Heelis had visited the site to inspect an overhanging tree reported by a nearby resident. The Council agreed to request Colin Jackson to spend half a day tidying up the top left hand corner of the site and removing the tree.
- **Elford Common and Pool:-** Councillor Baskerville had fixed chicken wire to the wooden bridge across the Rill. Mr Jackson had agreed to remove the dead tree in the centre of the site.
- **Community Action:-** A meeting arranged by Councillor Davies to form a group of volunteers to undertake various tasks in the town had been attended by four residents. It had been agreed to organise a litter pick in October 17th, 2015 meeting at the corner of Stafford Street / Stone Road at 10am with emphasis being placed on visibility and publicity to attract more volunteers.
- **Litter / dog bins:-** Councillor Davies had conducted a survey and marked existing bins on a map to identify where additional receptacles were needed. Thanks were extended to Councillor Davies for initiating these projects.
- **Christmas Tree - corner of Stone Road / Stafford Street;-** Councillor Mullee had conducted some enquiries and been advised to contact Mr P. Bates from Streetscene to assess the viability of the site. Councillor Mullee was authorised to continue exploring the possibility of erecting a tree at this location.
- **The Council agreed to place an order for the 62 small trees and one 25' tree with Woods Christmas Trees in Solihull as previously.**

The next meeting of the committee would be held on October 14th, 2015 at Eccleshall Community centre at 7.30pm

The minutes of the committee were adopted by the Council.

Policy and Resources Committee:- Councillor Garner reported the following matters arising from the meeting of the committee held on September 2nd, 2015:-

- **Local Council Award Scheme:-**The committee recommended that accreditation to any level of the new scheme was not pursued until a comprehensive review of the scheme had been undertaken by NALC and inadequacies had been addressed. The committee considered that the format of the current scheme was unsatisfactory and the following issues were noted:-
 - ❖ There were no tangible advantages of being a Quality Council. The initial scheme had benefitted from the availability of funding, but this was no longer available.
 - ❖ Participation required a great deal of work to collate the information for submission and involved the display of more details on the website.
 - ❖ The scheme in its present form was not being promoted by County Associations.

The Council accepted the recommendation of the committee and it was noted that the Quality Logo would have to be removed from the Councils notepaper and newsletter with an explanation being included in the December newsletter.

- **Handyman's Remuneration and increase in National Minimum Wage:-** The Committee recommended that the Handyman's remuneration was increased from October 1st, 2015 from £6.50 per hour to £6.70 in accordance with the National Minimum Wage. It was reported that the handyman had found someone to assist him with the footpath maintenance and the Committee recommended that the hours worked by Mr Smith and Mr Bullock should be recorded separately, the total remuneration being paid to Mr Smith, who would pass on the appropriate amount to his colleague. Mr Smith continued to work for the Council in a self-employed capacity and was responsible for the payment of any Income Tax and NHI which was due.

The above recommendations were accepted unanimously by the Council.

The next meeting of the committee would be held on December 2nd, 2015 following the Planning Committee meeting.

The minutes of the committee were adopted by the Council.

Footpaths Committee:- Councillor Mullee reported that a meeting of the committee had been held on July 16th, 2015, when he had been elected as Chairman. The committee had discussed some outstanding issues. It had been agreed to advertise for Footpath Marshalls to walk various footpaths periodically and report any problems. A similar scheme had proved successful previously. Mrs Heelis indicated that approximately 10 residents had expressed an interest in being involved in the scheme so far. Mr Wright from the Ramblers Association had indicated that he would like to attend the next meeting.

Councillor Mullee reported that cattle had damaged a kissing gate near Johnson Hall and the footpath was consequently impassable as the farmer had erected temporary barricades to keep the cows in. The Clerk was asked to report this matter to the Rights of Way Team.

The next meeting was arranged for November 4th, 2015 at 6.30pm.

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

119/15). Liaison Representatives:- There were no reports to receive from the Tourism Bureau or Slindon residents.

Allotment Association:- Councillor Starkey reported on a recent meeting of the Association. Signage had been erected on the gate to indicate No Trespassing and asking the last person to leave the site to close the gate. It was proposed to write to the tenants of five plots that were not being worked despite the fact that they were rented. There were currently five names on the waiting list for plots. A barbecue held recently had been well attended and it was planned to arrange another in October.

Business Group:- Councillor Jones reported that the group was to visit the Mayor's Parlour on October.

Offley Hay Village Hall:- Councillor Dodkins reported that a new committee had been formed and Jennifer Perks was Chair.

Community Centre:- Councillor Amos reported that the regular groups were resuming meetings after the summer break. The Jubilee Roof had been examined but the cause of the leak was not apparent. The lead flashing had been adjusted to direct the rainwater into the hopper and the situation would be monitored. The flat roof over the storeroom was being replaced at a cost of £735 from Association funds. The partition doors had been repaired, the boilers serviced and fire extinguishers tested. Councillor Starkey added that the electrics and fittings were to be inspected.

Young People:- Councillor Dodkins indicated the Councillor Dyer would be replacing her on the committee. Thanks were extended to Councillor Dodkins for her part in getting the youth club established and to Emma for her enthusiasm and commitment.

Ecclian Society:- Councillor Jones reported that the baskets would be removed on October 11th, 2015 and any volunteers would be welcome.

Well Dressing:- Councillor Langford reported that the next event would be held in 2017.

Festival:- Councillor Jones indicated that arrangements were underway for the Festival on June 18th, 2016.

120/15). Eccleshall Community Centre:- Councillor Dodkins had requested that this item be added to the agenda and requested certain information from the Clerk. Mrs Heelis had supplied some history from the files which indicated that the Centre had been purchased in 1993 from the County Council. The total cost was £144,000 of which £100,000 had been paid by the Borough Council and the remainder by the Parish Council. Over the last 10 years approximately £24,000 had been spent by the Parish Council on repairs and extensions. Councillor Dodkins indicated that in her opinion the following matters should be addressed:-

- As the largest asset the Parish Council owned, the centre should be run as a business and it was currently underused.
- A building survey should be undertaken – Councillor Dodkins referred to the lease between the Parish Council and the Community Centre Association.
- Charges for the centre should be advertised on the internet.
- Councillor Dodkins considered there should be a five year plan for the Centre to specify repairs and reasonable and proper fees.

Councillor Baskerville stated that the Centre was perfectly well run and there were no signs of dilapidation. Improvements were dealt with by the Association and he considered Councillor Dodkins remarks to be a slur on the operation of the Centre. Councillor Dodkins denied that her comments were intended as a personal attack.

Councillor Garner indicated that he felt that more time was required for consideration of these matters and proposed that the issues were referred to Policy and Resources Committee. After some debate the motion was agreed with all in favour.

121/15). New Developments:- Mrs Heelis reported that Councillor Pimble wished to draw the attention of the Council to a document concerning the Bovis Planning Application that he found to be of concern. The document questioned the layout and location of the proposed play equipment and the size of the MUGA and requested a breakdown of the cost of the development of the open space and the installation of the play equipment. It was suggested that a total capital amount of spend on open space should be almost £200,000. It was considered that if such a large amount of money was to be spent in the equipment on site then the Parish Council and the community should be consulted on the type and location.

- Mrs Heelis read a proposal from Councillor Pimble that the Parish Council would wish to be consulted on the recreational facilities to be provided on the site to ensure that they are appropriate to the requirements of the town.

The Council unanimously accepted this resolution and agreed to request Councillor Pert to arrange a meeting with the appropriate officers at the Borough Council to discuss the proposals for the Bovis and the Taylor Wimpey Site.

- Following the presentation from Taylor Wimpey Mrs Heelis was asked to write to the residents of St. Chads Road to ascertain their views on the creation of a pedestrian access from the new development into St. Chad's Road.
- Councillor Pimble had indicated that a report on proposals for a feature on the new roundabout on Stafford Road would be presented to the next Planning Committee meeting.

122/15). Clerk's Report and correspondence:-

Tractors Parked on Eagle Crescent:- Councillor Taylor-Potts reported that she had received complaints of tractors parking on pavements in Eagle Crescent. It was agreed to raise these concerns with Mr Rayson the following day, although members agreed that this type of obstruction was a Police matter.

Broughton Parish Rooms funding application:- It was reported that the Broughton Parish Rooms had needed some major unforeseen repairs that had depleted their reserve funds. The Council resolved that this matter should be referred to the Policy and Resources Committee for consideration. Mrs Heelis was asked to indicate possible sources of additional funding to the committee.

Fire tender display and lectern:- Mrs Heelis indicated that both these items were now in situ and favourable comments had been received.

Croxton Play Area:- Mrs Heelis indicated that following a report from Councillor Langford of overhanging branches, sharp edges on new trim trail posts and lifting safety matting she had visited the site accompanied by Councillor Marshall. The safety matting had been assessed and was not considered to be a trip hazard, however the inspection from Wicksteed was due shortly and this would be checked along with the equipment. Subsequently Councillor Marshall had sanded the posts and trimmed the overhanging branches.

Grants were available from Broughton and Croxton Jubilee Fund and it was agreed to submit an expression of interest for a grant of £250 towards the provision of two benches on the Playing Field – this would have to be match funded by the Parish Council. The Clerk referred to oak bench seats, which were available from Ingestre Sawmill at £240 each. This matter was to be referred to the Enhancements Committee for further consideration.

123/15), Chairman's Report:- There was no report to receive.

124/15). Accounts:- Mrs Heelis reported that a vat reimbursement payment of £987.01 had been received. The following accounts had been paid since the last Council Meeting and were authorised retrospectively.

D. Smith – Footpaths maintenance - <i>HA 1980 s.143</i>	13.00
Rod Sheard seat Kerry Lane - Parish Council Act 1957 s.2	55.00
D. Smith – Footpaths maintenance - <i>HA 1980 s.143</i>	71.50
B.T. Telephone Bill - <i>LGA 1972 s.111</i>	134.54
Parton Agriplant Ltd – hedgecutting - <i>Open Spaces Act 1906 s.10</i>	306.00
Grant Thornton - <i>Accounts and Audit Regs. 1996</i>	360.00
Trent Grounds Maintenance - grasscutting – <i>Open Spaces Act 1906 s.10</i>	333.60
Trent Grounds Maintenance - grasscutting – <i>Open Spaces Act 1906 s.10</i>	321.60

Authorisation was requested for payment of the following:-

Salaries & associated costs - <i>LGA 1972 s. 112</i>	2336.94
Expenses - <i>Local Government (Financial Provisions) Act 1963</i>	59.06
Peter Eaton. Redecoration of seat at crossroads - <i>LGA 1972 ss.2&3</i>	40.00
Creative Copy 'n' Colour Newsletters - <i>LGA 1972 s.142</i>	258.00
Eccleshall Guide <i>LGA 1972 s.142</i>	130.00
Creative Copy 'n' Colour Carol Sheets - <i>LGA 1972 s.142</i>	95.00
E-On Street lighting & maintenance - Parish Councils Act 1957 s.3	153.17

All were in favour and the cheques were signed.

125/15). Items/date and venue for next meeting:- October 21st, 2015, Offley Hay Village Hall 7.30pm.

There being no further business, the Chairman declared the meeting closed at 9.10pm.