

## ECCLESHALL PARISH COUNCIL - April 20<sup>th</sup>, 2011

A meeting of Eccleshall Parish Council was held on April 20<sup>th</sup>, 2011 at Broughton Parish Rooms at 7.30pm. This meeting was followed by a meeting of the Planning Committee.

<b>36/11). Present were:</b>	Councillor G. Dale	Councillor D. Pimble (Chair)
	Councillor B. Delanchy	Councillor P. Baskerville
	Councillor J. Allen	Councillor M. Starkey
	Councillor E. Amos	Councillor G. Garner
	Councillor P. Jones	3 residents
	Borough Councillor F. Chapman	Jessica Wilkes-Mellor
	Borough / County Councillor H. Butter	Mrs C. Heelis (Clerk)

Apologies were received and accepted from Councillors J. Jones, von Elbing, Apps, Pert and Allsop.

- 37/11). Public Participation:-** Mr Ranson thanked the Councillors for their work and support during their term of office and extended best wishes to the new Council. Mr Ranson raised the following issues:-
- Disappointment at the decision to raise the precept for 2011/12 when both the County and Borough Councils had maintained a zero increase.
  - Surprise that Standing Orders required the names of how members voted on any question to be recorded only if requested by any Councillor.
  - The fact that the minutes of the meeting on January 19<sup>th</sup>, 2011 did not contain details of the discussion which took place prior to the vote.
  - Mr Ranson queried whether the Council had considered saving finance from other budget headings and particularly if Section 137 payments could have been reduced by spending less on churchyard maintenance or items such as Christmas Trees?

Councillor Dale responded that the decision to increase the precept had not been taken lightly and had been necessary as a result of a reduction in the funding received from the Borough of £1200.00. The property owned by the Parish required continuous maintenance and the increase represented an additional 0.59p per year for a Band D property.

Councillor Allen indicated that this was only the second time the precept had been raised over a period of 5 years and the Policy and Resources Committee made every effort to work within the budget.

- 38/11). Jessica Wilkes-Mellor – Youth Survey Summary:-** Jessica referred to a survey of young people in Eccleshall, which had been copied to all members. 200 young people had responded to the survey representing 33% of the young people in Eccleshall. The top 5 things that young people wanted were:-
- Youth Club
  - More outdoor areas to meet friends, socialise or take part in activities
  - Increased sports facilities, especially football
  - A girls football team
  - Changing the perception of young people locally

51% of young people said that they would like to be more involved in local issues with 31% stating that they did not feel part of their community.

Jessica indicated that the next step was to formulate an action plan and timetable with young people and members of the community. It was hoped to start a school council and organise regular meetings for the young people. During February half term 150 young people had used a climbing wall that had been set up by the Scout hut on Chester Road. Jessica was trying to organise activities over the summer holidays to involve young people and a trial drop in session was to be held upstairs in the library during the May holiday. Other projects included an Eccleshall Youth web site and a video.

Jessica indicated that the young people wanted a kick about area and somewhere to meet up with friends as well as more structured activities. Having looked at the open space on Bishops Court Jessica made some suggestions for shelters/seat and a goal post and referred to other areas where shelters were proving successful.

It was noted that the lack of available land had previously prevented the provision of facilities for young people and this had been a source of frustration for members. Parish Councillors had spent a great deal of time liaising with the County Council with a view to acquiring land to the rear of the Community Centre for recreational use. The Chairman welcomed the opportunity to work in partnership with Jessica and discuss proposals with the young people. However, Councillor Dale indicated that the committee was in the very early stages of formulating a scheme and that dialogue with local residents was required.

Jessica was thanked for her presentation and the work that she was undertaking with the young people with evident enthusiasm.

**38/11). To confirm the minutes of the Meeting held on March 16<sup>th</sup>, 2011:-** The minutes, which had been previously circulated were agreed and signed. Councillor Starkey commented on the report from Councillor Chapman contained in the minutes on the High Speed Two Railway Link. Councillor Chapman indicated that this was not to be confused with the proposed alterations to the Norton Bridge junction.

**39/11). Reports from Borough Councillors:-**

**Councillor F. Chapman** reported that he had pursued the issue of Police Attendance at Parish Council Meetings as this appeared to differ widely and also the matter that the information on the crime mapping area of the web site was several months old. An indication had been given that the Office in Charge would strive to attend a meeting in each Parish on an annual basis.

Councillor Chapman thanked the Parish Councillors for their co-operation over the last 4 years and proffered apologies for the Parish Meeting.

**Councillor H. Butter** indicated that he had given the Clerk an application form for a grant from the Local Community Fund towards the cost of 2 further kissing gates and was pleased to support the scheme as the ease of access afforded was proving very successful. Councillor Butter referred to the fact that the decision concerning the planning application for 85 houses at the rear of the Community Centre had been deferred due to insufficient space about dwellings. It was a priority that the school should be moved to a single site and Councillor Butter had suggested to the architect that the recreational space should all be located at the rear of the Community Centre.

Councillor Allen indicated that it had been a pleasure to work with Councillor Butter in his capacity as Borough Councillor for many years and members were sorry that he was not standing for re-election, although would continue as County Councillor for the area. Thanks were recorded to Councillor Butter for his support over the years.

**40/11). Committee Reports:-**

**Enhancements Committee:-** Councillor Dale reported that the spring had been uncovered and a channel created to drain the water into a dew pond. The work had disturbed the surrounding area, but it would recover over time. Members of the Committee were asked to visit the Common prior to the next meeting on May 5<sup>th</sup> to facilitate discussions as to whether further improvements were needed.

**Traffic Management Committee:-** The Clerk reported that Mr C. Mitchell had cancelled a meeting scheduled for May 27<sup>th</sup> and this would be re-arranged. Committee members had met with Lux Traffic Management, Mr Bains - the organiser of the Bank Holiday Markets and representatives of the relevant organisations. Various actions had been discussed and members would monitor the next event to ascertain whether any improvements had been made.

Mrs Heelis asked members to submit details of suitable works for the next visit of the Neighbourhood Highway Team in May.

**Policy and Resources Committee:-** There had been no meeting.

**Footpaths Committee:-** Applications forms were being completed for funding from the Community Paths Initiative and Local Community Fund towards 2 kissing gates on Footpath 119, a leaflet for a circular walk and a re-print of the Favourite Walks booklet.

**41/11). Liaison Representatives:-**

**Ecclian Society:-** Councillor P. Jones reported that the posts, mangers and brackets were being inspected ready for the erection of the baskets on June 5<sup>th</sup>, 2011. The Bloom Committee was considering replacing the troughs outside John Pershall Court and residents were asked to open their gardens for the annual event on June 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup>.

**Business Focus Group:-** Councillor Jones indicated that the next meeting would be held on May 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2011.

There were no other reports to receive.

**42/11). Watering Contract:-** The Council resolved to accept the quotation received from Stafford Borough Council of £3,828.00 excluding VAT. Mrs Heelis indicated that as far as she was aware there would be no reduction to the grant of £2,500 received annually from the Borough Council towards this expense.

**43/11). Vacancies on the Council:-** The Clerk indicated that the two vacancies would be advertised the following day with anyone interested in being co-opted to represent the Horsley or Croxton Wards being asked to contact the Clerk. If there were more than two candidates the co-options would be made at the June meeting.

**44/11). Clerks report and Correspondence:-**

**D&G Buses:-** Councillor P. Allsop had proposed that a letter was sent to the bus company thanking them for an excellent service. Residents were delighted with the punctual service, clean buses and courteous and pleasant drivers. All were in agreement and Mrs Heelis was asked to send a copy of the letter to the County Council.

**Stafford Western Route A518 & A519 Action Group:-** The Action Group was suggesting the declassification of the A518 between Newport and Stafford with an alternative route to include the A5, M6 between junctions 12 and 14, and the A513 to its junction with the A518 east of Stafford. Also recommended was a weight limit of 7.5 tonnes between the Navigation Inn and the Royal Oak public house in Gnosall. It was not the intention of the group to transfer the Gnosall problems to other unsuitable roads. The Parish Council was invited to advise the Chairman of contact details for a representative who would attend future meetings. This matter was referred to the Traffic Management Committee for consideration.

**Allotments Association:-** The Committee thanked the Parish Council for their support for a shelter on the site and would now commence detailed work to submit a planning application.

**Annual Inspection – Croxton Play Area:-** The Clerk referred to the report received from Wicksteed, which highlighted two minor issues. The report was referred to the Enhancements Committee for consideration.

**Elford Common:-** Mrs Heelis advised that E-on had requested permission to undertaken further work to clear branches from the overhead power lines.

**45/11). Chairman's Report:-** Councillor Dale reported that several members had visited Bishop Lonsdale School on March 28<sup>th</sup>, 2011 and met the Headteacher, Mr C. Middleton. A short report on the meeting had been circulated to members. Mr Middleton had been under the misapprehension that the Parish Council was not supportive of the school. However, members pointed out that the Council was in favour of the transfer of the school to a single site and explained that efforts had been made in the past to foster improved relationships with the school. The Governing body had declined to have a Councillor on the governors and despite the fact that a school council had been formed and young people attended a council meeting, relationships had deteriorated. Poster competitions had been suggested but these had not been taken up by the school. The school children used to be involved in the community taking an active part in the festival and other events, but this had also ceased. Mr Middleton had been assured that the Council wished to develop stronger links with the school and members welcomed the invitation.

**46/11). Accounts:-**

**Accounts 2010/11:-** Mrs Heelis reported that the accounts had been audited by both the internal auditor and the independent auditor. Councillor P. Jones had kindly undertaken the task as

Councillor Joye Jones was recovering from an operation. The Audit Commission required submission of the return on May 16<sup>th</sup> 2011, which was considerably earlier than in previous years.

The Clerk referred to details of the receipts and payments accounts for 2010/11. One cheque had been paid between the last Council meeting and March 31<sup>st</sup> to Wicksteed Leisure for undertaking the Annual Inspection at Croxton Play Area. The Council agreed to this payment of £85.20 retrospectively.

Copies of the Summary Receipts and Payments statement and Audit Return had been circulated, there were no questions and the Accounts for 2010/11 were approved by the Council.

The Annual Governance Statement was considered by the Council and members agreed that all matters had been adequately complied with.

The Clerk presented a spreadsheet showing detailed spending of the Precept and individual headings. The Council resolved to transfer the following unspent amounts to the corresponding headings in 2011/12:-

- £1000.00 from Bloom
- £2145.34 from Projects and Enhancements
- £130.00 from training
- £1300 from the Traffic Management budget

It was resolved to transfer £300 unspent from finance allocated for the Pillar Clock to reserves earmarked for the clock, as it was hoped to arrange for it to be painted in 2011/12.

**Accounts 2011/12:-** The Clerk reported that half the precept and concurrent allowance had been paid together with a sum of money unspent from the Chairman's Allowance and a VAT refund. Authorisation was requested for payment of the following:-

Salaries and associated costs - LGA 1972 s. 112	2196.36
Expenses - Local Government (Financial Provisions) Act 1963	56.66
Annual subscription - CPRE - s.137	50.00
Annual subscription - Community Council - LGA 1972 s. 111	22.00
SPCA Subscription - LGA 1972 s.111	594.50
Eccleshall in Bloom Baskets x 4 Concurrent Allowance	120.00
Boulton Construction Ltd - Open Spaces Act 1906 s.10	420.00

All were in favour and the cheques were signed.

Permission was granted for the Clerk to attend a Practitioners Conference at the Moat House at Festival Park on May 25<sup>th</sup>. This was an all-day event at a cost of £65.00 and was an opportunity for networking and keeping up to date with current legislation.

**47/11). Items / Date and venue for the next meeting** – May 18<sup>th</sup>, 2011 Eccleshall Community Centre 7.30pm.

Members were reminded of the Annual Parish Meeting on April 27<sup>th</sup>, 2011 at Eccleshall Community Centre at 7.30pm

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