

The Parish Council of Dickens Heath

Minutes of the Meeting of the Council held On Tuesday 8th December 2009 at 730pm, Dickens Heath School

Present:

Dickens Heath Parish Councillors; Richard Holt (Chairman), Philip Kendall, Charles Robinson and Alyson Thompson.

Police Inspector Nigel Sarling
1 member of the public
Acting Clerk: Mrs. Marie Zizzi

108. Apologies for Absence.

108.1 Cllr. Vaseem Arfan.

109. To approve, if thought fit, the reasons if any given for absence from the meeting.

109.1 Approved no objections.

110. Declarations of Interest.

110.1 At Minute 116; Planning applications, Cllr. Robinson declared an interest in planning application 2009/1718; as a neighbour to this property.

110.2 Cllr. Thompson declared an interest in relation to application 2009/1905; for being a neighbour to this property.

111. Public Participation (15 minutes).

111.1 Kevin Evans from Woodbourne Sports Club, in Earlswood was present. He explained that the club was looking for investment, to develop a Youth Club. He said there had been a lengthy and costly legal battle, with the land owner which had cost the club £60,000, resulting in the club being £15,000 in dept. He gave details about the history of the club, the location and the activities that took place.

111.2 The Chair said that members of DHPC had been involved in supporting Youth Clubs in the past and that they were very complex and challenging.

111.3 Kevin said that all the people involved were very experienced and qualified, he said one was an ex Police Superintendent.

111.4 The Chair asked about the number of people from Dickens Heath that used the facility. Kevin could not give a figure. He spoke about there being cricket, bowling and various football teams currently in operation.

111.5 The Chair said the Parish Council needed to discuss the local benefits, they were keen to support activities for youths, it would depend on the level of commitment etc.

111.6 Kevin explained that it was Woodbourne's policy that people had to become members, he explained about the various contributions; social, junior and senior. He said the people involved in running the club, were passionate about what they did and he had a deep respect for them. He said the grounds were immaculate.

111.7 The Chair asked about the legal battle. Kevin explained this was in relation to renewing the lease for the land and the land owner wanting rent for the club house that had been built. He said this had gone to high court and the club had won. He said the funds that had been used for legal costs, could have renovated and extended the facilities, but these were gone now, it was time to move on.

111.8 It was stated that it sounded very interesting from a youth point of view. However, it was also pointed out that DHPC needed to be mindful about how much they would be able to assist financially.

111.9 Kevin spoke about engaging youngsters into sports and that they would like to open in the holidays. He said they were holding 3 fun days over Christmas with swimming, bowling and a trip to the cinema, as well as training. He said the younger team were due to play in a tournament at Bristol Rovers.

111.10 The Chair thanked Kevin for attending, he said the councillors had something to talk about now and they would be in touch.

112. To receive a report from Police Inspector Sarling.

112.1 Inspector Sarling explained about being based in Shirley, with his team led by Ann Strachan and that they were responsible for all the villages in the area.

112.2 Inspector Sarling informed the councillors that in relation to the PCSO, the existing agreement was due to end in June 2010 and that this was acknowledged that this was not to be renewed. He said that the police had decided to terminate this arrangement at the end of March 2010 instead.

112.3 Inspector Sarling said this did not mean that the PCSO would disappear, as the PCSO would move into another centrally funded post and still patrol in this area and other areas.

112.4 There were some comments about the existing arrangement and the new arrangement and what the difference would be.

112.5 Inspector Sarling spoke about changes to the police service due to a new Chief Constable. He said they were at the planning phase of a major force reorganisation, due from 1st April.

112.6 The Chair commented that he was glad to hear the existing PCSO was to be retained in the geographical area, he asked Inspector Sarling to pass on thanks to her.

112.7 Inspector Sarling provided the councillors with a handout and advised them to use the website as a source for information.

113. To receive a report from the Borough Councillors – if present.

113. It was noted that Cllr. Burgess had sent his apologies, stating that it was Solihull MBCs meeting the same night.

114. To resolve to accept the Minutes of the previous meeting held on Tuesday 10th November 2009.

114.1 Cllr. Robinson proposed and Cllr. Kendall seconded, that these Minutes be signed as a true and accurate record.

115. To approve any payments to be made and authorise Acting Clerks November payment/timesheet. To receive a report on the finances of the council from Diane Malley and consider appropriate distribution of remaining HHPC funds.

115.1 The Book keepers invoice, the payment from the former HHPC account in relation to VAT to DHPC and the Acting Clerks timesheet were all approved.

115.2 The figures for DHPC and the former HHPC were noted, the only additional payment made was £85 for a Christmas tree in Dickens Heath, which the members had agreed.

116. To consider planning applications.

116.1 Cllr. Robinson declared an interest in planning application 2009/1718; as a neighbour to this property.

116.2 The Clerk informed that Cllrs about application 2009/1905 for 11 Brixfield Way, that had been on SMBC list w/e 4th November 2009. There were some concerns expressed about this application. It was agreed that the plans should be looked at, if appropriate and agreed by the majority, an objection should be sent to SMBC.

116.3 There were no comments or observations regarding any other recent planning applications.

117. To receive any report(s) from Councillors that have attended any outside groups (i.e. SAC/Police Forum etc). Report from Cllr. Kendall further to his meeting with Ian Williams/Matt Gardner

117.1 Cllr. Robinson spoke about a Sustainable Urban Network and the Joseph Roundtree Foundation. He referred to a Housing & Social research report that had been commissioned, a 2 year study on Sustainable Neighbourhoods. He said a meeting had been held in November, in York he was the only person from DH that had attended. He said it had been very interesting, he said there would be 3 meetings per year, then a big meeting in London and then the report would be produced. He said they were looking at urban extensions and what was good/bad practise, he said they were interested in DH and he had commented about the lack of open space and youth facilities etc. compared to an area in York that was a very similar size to DH. He said the 2 areas had similar issues like the Village Hall, the school and ASB. He said they were interested in coming to DH and asked if DH could host a meeting with the Parish Council and Parkridge. He said he thought this was something the parish council may like to support and possibly put funding into.

It was stated that this would be community led, rather than by a parish council, Cllr Robinson said he would like to go back and inform them that the parish council was prepared to facilitate, he said that he would like to be involved as the parish council rep. This was agreed.

Action Item: Clerk to contact the Joseph Roundtree Foundation and check details for distribution list in relation to this.

117.2 The Chair informed the members that he had attended the Borough Councils Remembrance service and gave some details about this.

117.3 Cllr. Kendall spoke about Parkridge having requested several quotes for a Notice board and only receiving a few back. He said the total cost would be about £3000. He said that Matt Gardner from SMBC was checking to see if there was any funding for this.

There were some comments about the type, style and location of the notice board and having a PC logo included.

117.4 Cllr. Kendall updated members about a recent walk round the village that he had undertaken with Matt Gardener to look at various issues. He commented about the problem at the roundabout, plans to redirect traffic, more cycle facilities and planting out the islands; plans to approach Parkridge to switch sponsorship of one island to another; plans to remove a barrier; renew road; decorate bollard; pavement moss; road surfaces – looking nice and decorative but not being hard wearing, road surfacing being looked at next year.

There were comments about the parish council paying for the islands to be planted out in the summer.

Action Item: Clerk to formally contact SMBC in relation to the traffic islands being planted out, it was stated that it was not the right time of year for this. It was also stated that it was unacceptable, that the traffic islands still remained unplanted, they were an eyesore and this had now been picked up by the media with an article in the Evening Mail.

117.5 There were some comments about parking on grass verges and problems with parking on bends. Cllr. Kendall said that SMBC would be looking at yellow lines when all the roads were adopted.

117.6 The Chair commented about a blind spot in the main square and concerns about stains on the buildings, which needed to be looked into.

118. To discuss representation at/on DH Working Party for meeting 22 Dec 2009.

118.1 Noted Cllr. Robinson would be attending. Cllr. Thompson said she may also be able to attend.

119. Discuss and resolve issues in relation to the appointment of a permanent Clerk.

119.1 There were some comments about this and the reasons for the delay. It was felt that it would be better to advertise in the New Year now.

120. To discuss requirements for 2010/11 Budget for DHPC in preparation for 2010/11 precept setting.

120.1 It was agreed that the Working Party should meet to discuss this on 7th January 2010, at 730pm before the next Full Council meeting.

Action Item: Cllr. Kendall to confirm that the members can use Parkridge office.

121. To discuss and if deemed appropriate, resolve any issues regarding premises and Village Hall for DHPC

121.1 The Chair said the Parish Council needed premises, a home. He had spoken to Ian Williams and there was no availability in the village, it was full. There were a couple of units due to resales but these were pretty small and cramped.

121.2 Cllr. Robinson referred to plans that had already been drawn up to utilise space in the Village Hall, for 2 big void areas, he gave some details and said there was an issue with heating.

121.3 The Chair said the Parish Council could obtain a mortgage if necessary.

121.4 There were comments about the Village Hall Management Committee and the Parish Council linking together.

121.5 It was felt that a meeting room facility could be used for other community events; bingo/bridge. It was stated that if there was an office, there would be items needed for the clerk such as a telephone, the office would need to be kitted out appropriately, wiring etc...

121.6 There were comments about building costs into the budget, the lease for the Village Hall and this being surrendered to the Parish Council; it was pointed out that it would be the necessary to obtain permission from the LA for this.

121.7 It was felt there was already a facility available and maybe the Parish Council could sublet it.

121.8 It was felt the works needed, could take about 2 months and that a Quantity Surveyor was needed.

121.8 It was resolved to obtain the plans from Cllr. Robinson and the name of the architect that had produced them and ask the architect to attend the Working Party meeting to discuss the budget.

121.9 The Chair asked about the other idea that had previously been mentioned, regarding a Youth Club facility within a unit. Cllr. Robinson said this was a different issue, this was something for the community, there could possibly be some benefit for the Parish Council, however he thought the Village Hall would be better for the Parish Council.

122. To formally accept and sign the agreement from Parkridge for a litter collection on a 3 months trial as previously resolved.

122.1 This was accepted.

123. To discuss and resolve any action(s) in relation items of correspondence.

123.1 The Clerk asked the Cllrs to provide details of any training they had attended; course name, date/time/location to produce a record.

123.2 Solihull in Bloom, the quote from Enterprise was looked at for hanging baskets, it was agreed that DHPC should go forward with this for the match funding scheme.

123.3 The letter from SMBC regarding Proposed Speed limit changes on A and B Classified road was noted.

124. Review issues with on going Activity Plan updated 30/11/09.

124.1 The issue about the Rural Bus visiting DH and the staff from SMBC arriving at the library, just before it closed to inform the library about this was mentioned. It was noted that the clerk was waiting for a reply from SMBC in relation to the concerns about this.

124.2 It was stated that SMBC Youth Services should be invited to the February meeting.

124.3 It was stated that the matter in relation to incidents at the Fusion football sessions was now dealt with.

125. Items for next agenda.

125.1 2010/11 Budget/precept.

126. To resolve that due to the special nature of the business about to be transacted, it is advisable in the public interest that the press and public be temporarily excluded and they are instructed to withdraw.

126.1 There were no members of the public present.

Meeting ended 955pm

Next Meeting: Tuesday 12th January 2010: 730pm Dickens Heath School