

The Parish Council of Dickens Heath

Minutes of the Meeting of the Council held on Tuesday April 19th 2016 in the Parish Rooms, Waterside

Present:

Dickens Heath Parish Councillors; Philip Brandum, Robert Cudmore, Trevor Eames, Stephen Gussin (Chairman), Maureen Holloway, Diane Potter, Doreen Wright.

7 members of the public

Clerk: Ms Helen Marczak

Minute 261 (2015/16) Apologies for Absence

None.

Minute 262 (2015/16) Public Participation

Volunteering with the Canal & River Trust

A resident asked whether there had been any progress with finding out about volunteer work to maintain the canal towpaths – this is still being looked into.

Minute 263 (2015/16) Declarations of Interest/Requests for Dispensations

None.

Minute 264 (2015/16) Report from the Borough Councillors

None.

Minute 265 (2015/16) Minutes of previous meeting held on Tuesday March 15th 2016

An amendment was agreed to minute 246 (2015/16), and with this amendment included it was proposed by Councillor Wright, seconded by Councillor Potter, **Resolved** that the minutes be approved as a true and accurate record.

Minute 266 (2015/16) Minutes of the Special Meeting held on Thursday March 17th 2016

Proposed by Councillor Holloway, seconded by Councillor Wright, it was **Resolved** that the minutes be approved as a true and accurate record.

Minute 267 (2015/16) Actions from the Minutes of the previous meeting

Neighbourhood Plan

A new page has been set up on the website for the Neighbourhood Plan (NP) that the Parish Council is undertaking, and this includes the slideshow from the presentation. It is proposed that there be a special meeting for the NP in May/June, and that the Parish Council should start to build public awareness about the production of such a Plan. It was agreed that the Clerk approach the Dickens Heath Directory about publishing some information and advertising for volunteers.

Dog Fouling

Solihull MBC are running a poster competition and doing a talk at the school on the problems of dog fouling, Councillor Doreen Wright will be attending.

Welcome to the Village Signs

Matt Gardner and Davinder Chohan of Solihull MBC are meeting with Councillor Phil Brandum later this week to look at the proposed sites for the signs.

Memorial for Sophie

The Chairman has spoken to a family member – they are planning 3 different walks (for those of differing abilities) in remembrance of Sophie, plus they have spoken to the organisers of Festival on the Green.

Hanging Baskets

The hanging baskets have been ordered for the summer.

Minute 268 (2015/16) Planning Applications

Two additional planning applications were considered:

2016/00869 - 70 Tythe Barn Lane - Single storey extension to rear of lounge.

2016/00990 - Dickens Heath Development, Main St - Variation of condition no. 27 on planning approval 2011/952 to allow for the following minor material amendments to building 7A, to include alterations to fenestration, minor alteration to roof detail to include reduction in roof height by 1.5m, increase in footprint of building to the rear.

It was agreed that the Clerk should request an extension to allow the planning application for the DH Development to be discussed at the May meeting, as it had only been received today. The planning application for 70 Tythe Barn Lane looks ok, but Councillor Trevor Eames will double check and let the Clerk know if he recommends making any comments. No comments on the other planning applications.

Minute 269 (2015/16) Planning Sub-CommitteeNeighbourhood Plan

The formal application for the designation of the Neighbourhood Plan area has been submitted and will take approximately 6 weeks to be approved. The next step is to get the community involved and a larger working party set up – for the May agenda.

Minute 270 (2015/16) SMBC Cleansing of Slippery Block Paving

The clock island is currently being cleansed, and the work so far is to a very high standard. They are cleansing 4 islands, but not the one at Brixfield Way, the Clerk to clarify with Chris Barr at SMBC why this one is not being done. They have also been asked to look at the paving near the school. The anti fungal treatment will be applied when there is a dry spell. Thank you to all the Councillors who have worked hard to achieve this.

Minute 271 (2015/16) Gardening/Landscaping

The Parish Council now has 10 planters, and we have always been told they have to be painted 'Solihull Brown', but the planters in the middle of Solihull are grey and they look good. Councillor Bob Cudmore suggested that our planters could also be painted grey, all agreed, Councillor Cudmore to check this with Matt Gardner of SMBC. Sponsorship of the islands and planters was also discussed. Other Parish Councils do seem to have sponsorship of their islands, Councillor Trevor Eames will raise this at the SAC meeting later in the week. Sponsorship of the planters may be an option for smaller local businesses.

Minute 272 (2015/16) Maintenance of Islands

It was agreed that this should be discussed in the private section of the meeting.

Minute 273 (2015/16) Youth Club

Information from the youth club is awaited, their management meeting is tomorrow. Councillor Phil Brandum will be attending to find out whether the numbers of young people going along to the youth club has improved. The Parish Council has a formal agreement with the youth club to provide funding until November 2016.

Minute 274 (2015/16) Financial Matters

Proposed by Councillor Cudmore, seconded by Councillor Holloway, **Resolved** that the payments in Appendix I of the April 19th 2016 Agenda be approved – 2 direct debits and 23 cheques totalling £11,175.09, including an additional direct debit for £96.06 to BT for the quarterly broadband charge.

Proposed by Councillor Potter, seconded by Councillor Cudmore, **Resolved** that the End of Year Financial Statements and summary for the Annual Return be approved.

Minute 275 (2015/16) Parish RoomsFire Risk Assessment (FRA) & Fire Extinguisher Service

It was agreed that Ignis Fire Protection should again service the fire extinguishers. The youth club had requested an annual FRA, which the previous Parish Council had agreed. The Clerk felt that last year's FRA was poor value for money and suggested Unicorn who did the FRA when the Parish Rooms opened, and have provided a significantly lower quote. An external FRA does not have to be done annually if there has been no change in circumstances. It was suggested that this decision should be deferred. The Clerk to check current advice, potentially an external FRA could be arranged for every 2 years with the Parish Council doing a formal internal assessment every other year if there is no change in circumstances.

Barnardos

The Barnardos shop in Dickens Heath has now closed, but Barnardos would still like to continue to book the Parish Rooms occasionally – this was agreed.

Minute 276 (2015/16) Grant Making Policy and Application Form

Councillor Trevor Eames proposed a few amendments to the current documents in order to establish better financial information before awarding a grant, and better accountability afterwards. It is not a significant change, but would enable the Parish Council to better analyse whether an organisation actually needs the money. And the Parish Council has a duty to ensure that any grants made are used appropriately. These amendments will ensure that applications are more rigorous. All agreed that the policy should be amended.

Minute 277 (2015/16) CorrespondenceConstruction Traffic

Complaints are again being received about construction traffic, in particular lorries using the bridge by Earlswood Nurseries even though they are well over its weight limit. This has been forwarded to Solihull MBC and the Police.

Pensions Obligations

The Parish Council's obligations as an employer to be looked into further.

Complaint re Litter in Kiln Lane

Our litter picker, Simon, will check the litter in Kiln Lane.

Minute 278 (2015/16) Items for Next Agenda

Neighbourhood Plan – How to get the community involved.

Minute 279 (2015/16) It was Resolved that, in accordance with paras I and II Part I of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public should be asked to withdraw due to the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted.

Minute 280 (2015/16) Maintenance of Islands

The quotes for the replanting of the 3 islands were discussed.

It was agreed, by 6 votes with 1 abstention, that the Parish Council would give the contract to D & D Grounds Maintenance if Councillor Bob Cudmore was satisfied with the detail of their proposal for planting out. D & D also will dig up the daffodil bulbs on the island and replant them on the grass verge. Councillor Cudmore to progress this with D & D.

Meeting ended 9.25pm

Next Meeting : Tuesday May 17th 2016: 7.00pm in The Parish Rooms