

## The Parish Council of Dickens Heath

### Minutes of the Meeting of the Council held on Tuesday February 21<sup>st</sup> 2017 in the Parish Rooms, Waterside

**Present:**

**Dickens Heath Parish Councillors;** Trevor Eames, Maureen Holloway (Chair), David Jones, Jill Lovett, Alan Scholes, Doreen Wright.

No members of the public

Clerk: Ms Helen Marczak

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**Minute 153 (2016/17) Apologies for Absence**

Apologies were accepted from Councillor Di Potter.

**Minute 154 (2016/17) Public Participation**

None.

**Minute 155 (2016/17) Declarations of Interest/Requests for Dispensations**

The Parish Council's response to the Solihull Local Plan consultation has now been submitted and so Councillor Trevor Eames' request for a dispensation in relation to the Solihull Local Plan can be reconsidered. All agreed that a dispensation should now be made.

Councillor Alan Scholes declared an interest in the Appeal on the Coppice – which is sited opposite his house. This was accepted.

**Minute 156 (2016/17) Report from the Borough Councillors**

None present.

**Minute 157 (2016/17) Minutes of previous Meeting held on Tuesday January 17<sup>th</sup> 2017**

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

**Minute 158 (2016/17) Minutes of Special Meeting held on Friday February 10<sup>th</sup> 2017**

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

**Minute 159 (2016/17) Actions from the Minutes of the previous meeting**

Failure of Solar Xmas Trees

Plantscape have offered a discount of 25% because of the failure of some of the trees.

Details of actual failures have been forwarded to Plantscape which suggests that a discount of 50% is more in order.

PC Website and Emails

Councillor Alan Scholes has sorted out the website which is now working again. He has also looked at the Councillor emails, and all now should be working.

The Paddocks

It has been clarified that all highways and pavements at the Paddocks will remain private, and SMBC will adopt the drainage system and open space.

Loose Tree Stakes on Rumbush Lane

The SMBC Tree Dept are aware of these and will follow up.

Inconsiderate Parking at Junction of Packmores and Rumbush Lane

Mike McDonnell of SMBC has been asked to chase this up.

**Minute 160 (2016/17) Planning Applications**

There is one additional planning application - 2017/00410 - 27 Meadow Pleck Lane which is for tree works to 2 oak trees plus a request to fell one oak tree. It was agreed that the Parish Council would support the SMBC Tree Officer's view on this.

No comments regarding 2017/00012 - 19 Birchy Close.

**Minute 161 (2016/17) Solihull Local Plan Consultation (SLP)**

The Parish Council response has been submitted and published, so the Parish Council will not be analysing it any further.

The Clerk has spoken to Richborough regarding a public information event about Site A, they prefer to wait until there is some response from SMBC about the consultation results.

We have been approached by the Chair of Tidbury Green PC about working with them with regard to the additional development proposed for this area. It was agreed that an informal meeting should be set up with a small number of Councillors from each Parish Council.

**Minute 162 (2016/17) Planning Committee**

It was agreed that Planning Committee should be disbanded and planning matters dealt with by the full PC for the moment.

Appeal on the Coppice

The Appeal is against SMBC's refusal to allow a planning application which includes removing trees - the Tree Preservation Order on the site has been side stepped. Any additional comments need to be submitted by March 10<sup>th</sup> 2017. Councillor Trevor Eames' view is that there is nothing that the Parish Council can add, but would propose that notice is given to speak at the public inquiry in support of Solihull MBC. This was agreed, Councillor Eames to action.

**Minute 163 (2016/17) Neighbourhood Plan Committee**

An informal meeting has been held, it was agreed that now the Committee members should be notified that there will be a break from Committee meetings for a couple of months to allow the assimilation of the SLP Consultation.

**Minute 164 (2016/17) Removal of Safety Fencing at the David Wilson site**

The safety of this area is now for Solihull MBC and David Wilson to sort out, prior to adoption by SMBC.

**Minute 165 (2016/17) Literary Litter Pickers - a Community Litter Pick for DH**

Councillor Dave Jones outlined the proposal - National Litter Week commences on March 4<sup>th</sup> 2017, which is an ideal time to launch a new litter group. The first Litter Pick will take place on Saturday March 11<sup>th</sup> between 10.30 and 11.30am - meeting at the library, and with refreshments available there afterwards. Sarah, of SMBC, has obtained funding for the equipment - which will be kept at the library. The Scouts have volunteered to attend. There were comments that the Waterside Nature Reserve really needs to be cleaned up, as does Birchy Leasowes Lane and the main thoroughfares in and out of the village. It was agreed that this was really positive and should be widely advertised to the community.

**Minute 166 (2016/17) Village Issues**Proposed Youth Facility at the School

A letter has been received from the Scouts, who currently meet at the School. They are in support of the proposed youth facility and have been told by SMBC that it has stalled due to opposition from the Parish Council.

The Parish Council has concerns about the accessibility of this facility, a 9pm finish is too early for most of the community - there needs to be wider accessibility. The Parish Council had asked SMBC to do a full consultation and investigate alternatives such as Dickens Heath Sports Club. The Clerk to follow this up.

Memorial

A deposit has been paid for a stone. The Clerk to obtain advice from the SMBC Parks Dept with regard to the mounting of the stone, and then to contact Planning regarding amending the planning approval.

SMBC Nature Reserve

Councillors Jill Lovett, Alan Scholes and Doreen Wright had a walk round the Nature Reserve with Adam Noon, an Ecologist with SMBC. On April 2<sup>nd</sup> 2017, they will be organising a volunteer group to undertake the removal of plastic tree protection, improve pathways with gravel, and generally tidying up. SMBC will be funding this and providing equipment including protective goggles. It was agreed that this was another very positive initiative which the PC should publicize to try and get the community on board as much as possible.

Waterside Nature Reserve

Councillor Jill Lovett reported that this Nature Reserve has fallen into decline, she has contacted Barbara at Dickens Heath Management Co. about it – who gave reassurance that it won't fall into decline and has a management plan. Advice from the SMBC Ecologist is that digging out needs to be done along with re-seeding, spraying of pathways and using sleepers to re-edge steps. This would all take 3 years, at which point SMBC would be prepared to take it over. Councillor Lovett is looking to get some sponsorship for the work required.

Expansion of Floral Displays and Sponsorship of Traffic Islands

Councillor Jill Lovett would like to propose expanding the floral displays around the village. The possibility of getting sponsorship for traffic islands was discussed – this has already been broached with SMBC, who will not allow the PC to secure sponsorship as they have a commercial contract for this. Any island sponsorship secured would be paid to SMBC and not to the PC. Councillor Trevor Eames to follow this up with other Parish Councils.

Moss is still a problem on the pavements around the islands, they should be brushed on the last Friday of the month by SMBC's contractors. Of the islands that were replanted by the Solihull Rangers (funded by the PC), there are some problems with weeds.

The Scouts would like a piece of land to do some work on – Councillor Lovett to contact Giovanni at the Scouts.

**Minute 167 (2016/17) Financial Matters**

Proposed by Councillor Holloway, seconded by Councillor Wright, **Resolved** that the payments in Appendix I of the February 21<sup>st</sup> 2017 Agenda be approved – 21 payments totalling £7,452.53. The payment to F.A.T. Research for analysis of the survey had been revised to the lower cost of £1200.

Report on Parish Council Finances

The VAT reclaim for 2015/16 has been sent in and HMRC have notified us of a credit due of £3,297. The Parish Council currently has a surplus of almost £89,000 and is projecting a surplus of £87,000 at the year end. The year end projection has been revised to take account of the change to plans for the memorial – with the original design being replaced with a less expensive stone. It was agreed that the Clerk should contact the artist who designed the original memorial to ask him whether there were any outstanding expenses that the Parish Council needed to settle.

Internal Audit

It was agreed that the Clerk should contact Bill Robinson of WALC to do the internal audit for 2016/17.

**Minute 168 (2016/17) Change to the Dates of Parish Council Meetings**

Parish Council meetings currently take place on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of each month. They used to be held on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday, and were changed to accommodate the Borough Councillors. However, Borough Councillors still rarely attend PC meetings. The Clerk proposed that the meetings be moved back to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of the month, to better fit in with school term times. This was agreed, as of the July 2017 meeting.

**Minute 169 (2016/17) Date of Annual Parish Meeting 2017**

It was suggested that the Annual Parish Meeting should be held on Tuesday April 18<sup>th</sup> 2017. The Clerk to invite the Police to speak, given the community's concerns about car crime etc.

**Minute 170 (2016/17) Correspondence**

Bid for CCTV Funding

Defer.

Parking by the Postbox on Rumbush Lane.

Residents pull up to post letters, blocking the road, or park temporarily on the verge – which is damaging the grass. It was agreed that Matt Gardner be asked whether SMBC will install some posts to protect the verge by the postbox.

**Minute 171 (2016/17) Items for Next Agenda**

None.

**Minute 172 (2016/17) 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 173 (2016/17) Traders' Temporary Parking in the Village Centre**

Councillor Trevor Eames gave an update on the temporary parking proposal.

**Meeting ended 9.35pm**

**Next Meeting : Tuesday March 21<sup>st</sup> 2017: 7.00pm The Parish Rooms**