

The Parish Council of Dickens Heath

Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Council held on Tuesday May 16th 2017 in the Parish Rooms, Waterside

Present:

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

3 members of the public

Clerk: Ms Helen Marczak

Minute 1 (2017/18) Election of Chair

Councillor Di Potter proposed that Councillor Maureen Holloway be elected again as Chair, seconded by Councillor Trevor Eames. All agreed that Councillor Holloway be elected Chair.

Minute 2 (2017/18) To Receive the Chair’s Declaration of Acceptance of Office

This was signed.

Minute 3 (2017/18) Apologies for Absence

Councillor Jill Lovett has resigned from the Parish Council.

Minute 4 (2017/18) Public Participation

Garden Squares – Section of Main St Closed

Main St is currently shut alongside the Garden Squares site. However, although the top is shut and it is a one way street, cars are driving from the bottom in the wrong direction, and then having to turn round. It needs to be shut at both ends – Councillor Trevor Eames will follow this up with Barney of Elegant Homes.

Minute 5 (2017/18) Declarations of Interest/Requests for Dispensations

None.

Minute 6 (2017/18) Report from the Borough Councillors

None present.

Minute 7 (2017/18) To Decide Whether to Elect a Vice Chair

It was decided that it was not necessary to elect a Vice Chair.

Minute 8 (2017/18) To Agree Dates of Council Meetings for the Year

The proposed schedule was agreed. Meetings will now be held on the second Tuesday of each month as of July. The June meeting will be held on the third Tuesday, and there will be no set meetings in August or December, though there will be a budget setting meeting in December at some point in order to set the precept for 2018/19.

Minute 9 (2017/18) To Resolve Whether to Establish any Committees

It was agreed that there would be no formal committees. Councillor Trevor Eames will circulate information about significant planning applications to all Councillors, and Councillors Di Potter and Doreen Wright will continue to deal with gardening issues.

Minute 10 (2017/18) To Appoint Representatives to Sit on Outside Bodies

Councillors Trevor Eames, Doreen Wright and Dave Jones will attend SAC (Solihull Area Committee); Councillors Trevor Eames and Doreen Wright will attend the Solihull Partnership; and Councillors Doreen Wright, Di Potter and Dave Jones will attend the Youth Group Management Meetings.

Minutes of Dickens Heath Parish Council Meeting held Tuesday 16th May 2017

Signature.....

Date.....

Minute 11 (2017/18) To Agree Cheque Signatories

All Councillors to be cheque signatories for the bank account, plus the Clerk for administration purposes only.

Minute 12 (2017/18) To Agree to Review Standing Orders and Financial Regulations

It was agreed that these will be reviewed at a meeting in the near future.

Minute 13 (2017/18) Minutes of previous meeting held on Tuesday April 18th 2017

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

Minute 14 (2017/18) Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on Tuesday May 2nd 2017

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

Minute 15 (2017/18) Actions from the Minutes of the previous meetingGrand Opening of Dickens Heath Sports Club

The Club have considered the Parish Council's offer to fund some trophies, and have asked whether the Parish Council could fund one trophy plus the plaque to commemorate the Grand Opening – at a total cost of £164. As this was within the £200 previously agreed, the Parish Council approved the £164.

Community Litter Pick

Although this had been advertised, the Community Litter Pick the previous weekend had not been well supported. Councillor Dave Jones suggested additional advertising for future litter picks.

Festival on the Green 2017

The insurance for the event has cost £209. As this was within the previously agreed limit of £250, the Parish Council approved the reimbursement of £209.

Manual Brushing of Pavements

Councillor Di Potter commented that she almost fell at kidney island, so it definitely hasn't been brushed. The Clerk to follow this up with the Streetcare officers at SMBC.

Parking alongside the Village Green

Cars continually park on the bus route alongside the Village Green. The Police say that it is not an offence and acts as traffic calming. However the Parish Council feel that it is hazardous - for bus drivers, for cars trying to pull out of the side road and pedestrians trying to cross to the Green. The Clerk to follow this up with Highway Safety at SMBC.

Memorial

The Clerk to chase up the quote from SMBC for the installation of the memorial.

Pension Obligations

The Parish Council's registration with the Pensions Regulator has been part completed, and can only be finalised after the staging date of July 1st 2017.

Minute 16 (2017/18) Planning Applications

No comments on the planning application for 4 Elvaston Way.

The planning application for 'The Café' at 8 Gorcott Lane has been approved.

Minute 17 (2017/18) Solihull MBC IssuesGated Entrance Signs to the Village

It was agreed that a couple of Parish Councillors should meet up with Matt Gardner and Davinder Chohan of SMBC to discuss the location and appearance of the signs. It was agreed that the Parish Council would like the signs to read 'Welcome to Dickens Heath – Please Drive Safely', with a reminder of the speed limit.

Minute 18 (2017/18) Dickens Heath in Bloom

A report was given on progress with Dickens Heath in Bloom. Dickens Heath Management Co. have confirmed that the trees outside Mortons will be pruned and shaped in early June, and the same hanging baskets as last year have been ordered by the Parish Council. In the week beginning June 5th bedding plants will be planted in all the village Planters – any help from residents with this will be very welcome. Elegant Homes are funding a floral display to highlight Garden Squares from mid June, and most of the hoardings will be down by then. Barney of Elegant Homes has also ordered some barrier baskets for the island at Waterside and 2 troughs for the proposed memorial site. Councillor Eames to check that watering of these is included.

A separate bank account has been set up for Dickens Heath in Bloom, which will need a few Parish Councillors plus the Clerk as signatories.

Minute 19 (2017/18) Youth Group

The Parish Council had understood that the Youth Group were interested in relocating to Dickens Heath Sports Club, but this may not actually be the case. The Youth Group needs to have a look at the Club and make a decision. The Parish Council reiterated that such a move would not necessitate the use of any of the funds held by SMBC for youth provision. Borough Councillor Richard Holt has offered to get involved in trying to improve the access to the Sports Club. The Youth Group at the Parish Rooms is for young people up to the age of 14, and the Parish Council is happy for them to continue to meet here. The Sports Club would be able to offer additional facilities for older youth – say from age 13 to 17. It was suggested that the Parish Council could start a petition for a second Youth Group, and ask people to sign it at the Sports Club's Grand Opening. It was agreed that Councillor Dave Jones would enquire about the availability of the Sports Club's youth worker. It would be essential to get an extension of the footpath to the Club, and Councillor Holt will need signatures from residents who want to use the facilities at the Club.

It was agreed that the Parish Councillors would look to collect signatures outside Tesco on Saturday June 24th, and tell residents about the Sunday Grand Opening of the Club at the same time.

Minute 20 (2017/18) Financial Matters

Proposed by Councillor Potter, seconded by Councillor Eames, **Resolved** that the payments in Appendix I of the May 16th 2017 Agenda be approved – 2 direct debits and 18 payments totalling £3,369.21. This included additional payments of £209.00 for the Festival on the Green 2017 insurance and £141.60 for replacement foam fire extinguishers. Additional payments were also authorised - £164 for a plaque and trophy for Dickens Heath Sports Club and £25.79 for compost for the planters.

Report on Finances

The first instalment of the year's precept has been received (£40,987) along with the small Council Tax Support Grant of £341. The Parish Council therefore currently has a surplus of £118,000.

Report from the Internal Auditor

The Audit Report for 2016/17 was received and various points discussed. Several recommendations made last year have been addressed. Electronic payments have been introduced in the last year, and the Auditor recommended that security systems are regularly scrutinised to ensure that the payments system is secure. It was agreed that this should be placed on next month's agenda.

Risk Assessment and Management 2017/18

This was approved. The safeguarding of Parish Council documents was discussed, in particular the paper documentation that goes back to the former Hockley Heath PC time. It was agreed that this should also be placed on next month's agenda.

Minute 21 (2017/18) Annual Return 2016/17

1. The Annual Governance Statement 2016/17 was approved, and signed by the Chair and Clerk/RFO.
2. The Accounting Statements 2016/17 were approved, and signed by the Chair and Clerk/RFO.

Minute 22 (2017/18) Annual Parish Meeting

It was agreed that this had gone very well, and the Chair thanked the Clerk for organising the APM and Councillor Di Potter for baking the very popular cakes.

Minute 23 (2017/18) Vacancy on the Parish Council

Councillor Jill Lovett's resignation has been reported to Deborah Merry at Solihull MBC. The next step is to advertise the vacancy and the electorate's right to call for an election. This will be done as soon as possible.

Minute 24 (2017/18) Parish Rooms

Yoga Classes

The yoga classes will soon be moving to the premises on Main St vacated by Barnardos.

Fishers Drive Residents Association

Members of the Fishers Drive Residents Association would like to use the meeting room for their annual meeting. This was agreed.

Minute 25 (2017/18) Grant Applications

A grant application has been received from Dickens Heath Football Club – they have requested £800 to support the cost of pitch hire. This was approved.

Minute 26 (2017/18) Correspondence

WALC Induction Days

WALC are running 2 induction days in June – no one is interested in attending at the moment.

Anti-Social Behaviour on Bellway Site

Young people have been seen throwing stones at ducks – throwing stones at wildlife is an offence and should be reported to the Police.

Garden Squares Site – Debris left in Road

There have been comments from residents that they have suffered punctures in the vicinity of the Garden Squares development site, and they suspect that screws have been left in the road as the hoardings have been taken down. The Parish Council have also heard similar concerns and agreed that the Clerk should ask SMBC if they could sweep the roads around Garden Squares, and also to check whether SMBC expect the developer to do the same.

Parish Council Away Day

Councillor Dave Jones asked whether it might be of value for the Parish Council to have an away day to discuss issues other than usual council business. This to be placed on next month's agenda.

Braemar Estates

The owner of an apartment in Ascote Lane informed the Parish Council that they have had problems with the landlord Braemar Estates. Councillor Trevor Eames gave a brief update – there is a lot of money made out of leasehold properties, and Braemar have apparently been quite aggressive about chasing payments that had already been paid.

Minute 27 (2017/18) Items for next agenda

Security of online banking, Safeguarding of Parish Council documents, and PC Away Day.

Minute 28 (2017/18) This was Agreed - 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 29 (2017/18) Community Facilities

Community facilities in the village were discussed.

Minute 30 (2017/18) Traders' Parking

Councillor Trevor Eames gave an update – usage of the spaces is low, with several not being used at all. It was agreed that monitoring should continue, and if fobs are not being used – then they should be withdrawn.

Meeting ended 10pm

Next Meeting : Tuesday June 20th 2017: 7.00pm The Parish Rooms