

The Parish Council of Dickens Heath

Minutes of the Meeting of the Council held on Tuesday November 15th 2011 at 7.30pm, in the Parish Rooms, Waterside

Present:

Dickens Heath Parish Councillors; Vaseem Arfan, Philip Brandum, Robert Cudmore, Alyson Glenn, Richard Holt (Chairman).

Jason Ward of Solihull MBC

7 members of the public

Clerk: Ms Helen Marczak

Minute 108 (2011/12) Apologies for Absence

None

Minute 109 (2011/12) Public Participation

Jubilee Committee

Several residents are prepared to form a Jubilee Committee, they propose to meet on the first Tuesday of the month – with the first meeting planned for Tuesday December 6th 2011 at 7.30pm in the Parish Rooms. Councillors Holt, Cudmore and Glenn to be committee members. The Committee will discuss activities to try in the village, to see what works. The aim for the Jubilee is an event which links Waterside, Main St and the Village Green.

Adult Play Centre

The possibility of an ‘adult play centre’ alongside the children’s playground was raised, with out door fitness equipment and an external table tennis table. There is some such equipment in Tudor Grange Park. The Clerk to seek advice of the neighbourhood management team.

Local Development Framework

Jean Wareing, a resident with a background in town planning, stressed the importance of responding with regard to Areas of Development Restraint. Jean offered to assist the Parish Council by liaising with Stansgate Planning.

Minute 110 (2011/12) Action Against Poverty

Jason Ward summarised research that had been carried out into understanding poverty in the local area. 7,000 Solihull children live in deprivation, and this includes some in Dickens Heath. Jason detailed practical action that can be taken – for example money advice centres where there is access to Citizen’s Advice, welfare benefits advice and employment specialists. There is also advice on the Solihull MBC website – ‘money counts’. There is a winter warmth campaign, with a free hotline, for anyone in fuel poverty. Credit Unions (community banks) can assist those who need to borrow small amounts of money at low interest rates.

Deborah Smith will publish some articles on the Dickens Heath community website.

Jason agreed to find out whether an advice clinic could be held in the Parish Rooms, an open day was suggested with an activity such as bingo along with access to advisors.

Minute 111 (2011/12) Gardening Club

The barrier at the traffic island at the entrance to the village was discussed. All feel very strongly that it is an eyesore and health and safety risk, and should be removed and replaced with planters. There would be costs associated with this. The Clerk to speak to Ian Williams at DH Management Co. to see if it is possible.

People on probation could assist with gardening in the village. They do it in order to get a reference, the parish council would need to supervise them, pay expenses and purchase plants. All agreed that this was worth looking into.

All were happy with the proposal to create a wild flower garden on one of the traffic islands. It was agreed that the parish council would again make a donation to Dickens Heath Village Church to cover the cost of the village Christmas tree, up to £100.

Minute 112 (2011/12) Declarations of Interest

As and when required.

Minute 113 (2011/12) To Receive a Report from the Borough Councillors

None were present.

Minute 114 (2011/12) Minutes of previous meeting held on Tuesday October 18th 2011

It was proposed by Councillor Cudmore and seconded by Councillor Brandum, **Resolved** that the minutes be approved as a true and accurate record.

Minute 115 (2011/12) Actions from the Minutes of the previous meeting

Official Opening Plaque

It was agreed that a stainless steel plaque, to the value of approximately £200, should be ordered to commemorate the official opening of the Parish Rooms by Caroline Spelman MP and the Mayor of Solihull.

Folding Tables

It was agreed that 7 small folding tables, in vanilla, plus a trolley should be ordered in order to provide appropriate equipment for those wishing to use the Parish Rooms.

Canal Trust

The possibility of a signpost at Waterside, which indicates where the shops and restaurants are, was discussed. It was agreed that the Clerk should contact Cllr Len Cresswell for advice.

Minute 116 (2011/12) Planning Applications

No comments.

Minute 117 (2011/12) Financial Matters

Proposed by Councillor Brandum, seconded by Councillor Arfan. **Resolved** that the payments in Appendix I of the November 15th 2011 agenda be approved, 8 cheques totalling £5,109.29 and 7 additional cheques totalling £1,020.97.

The draft budget and precept for 2012/13 was discussed. It was agreed that it would be ideal if the Parish Council's element of the council tax could be frozen. The Clerk to contact Solihull MBC to ask if they can tell us what amount this would result in in terms of the total precept.

Minute 118 (2011/12) To receive any reports from Councillors who have attended any outside groups or events

Act of Remembrance in Dickens Heath

This was well attended. It was agreed that the roads should be closed for this in 2012, the Clerk to speak to Solihull MBC in August. The possibility of a war memorial was discussed. Deborah Smith agreed to consult the residents through the Dickens Heath community website, the Clerk to investigate the costs.

Minute 119 (2011/12) 1 Wharf House

Official Opening

It was agreed that the Clerk should purchase a small posy each to be presented to Caroline Spelman MP and the Mayor of Solihull.

Booking Guidelines

These were agreed, the Clerk to send them out to interested parties.

Minute 120 (2011/12) Youth Council

The Parish Council envisage that the youth council would be run in conjunction with Alderbrook School, and facilitated by someone from Solihull MBC, with sessions being quarterly. The youth council would then feed back to the Parish Council. The Clerk to check with Solihull MBC that this is how they envisage it.

Minute 121 (2011/12) Wallace and Gromit Tea Party for Children

This could take place in January. It was agreed that this may be an activity that the Jubilee Committee could look into as an introduction. A budget of £100 was agreed. The problem of the stairs and the safety of small children was discussed. The Clerk to seek the advice of McAndrew Watts regarding an appropriate gate.

Minute 122 (2011/12) Sustain

It was agreed that the Parish Rooms should be advertised via Sustain, the 'third sector and charitable' organisation. It was agreed to advertise via their email bulletins and to those who ring Sustain looking for a local venue.

Minute 123 (2011/12) Dickens Heath School Expansion

Councillor Arfan, following concerns at the number of children arriving at the school by car, has had a meeting with the head teacher. A freedom of information request has revealed that 31% of the school's current pupils live outside Dickens Heath. There is concern that the original travel plan for the village is now not sustainable due to the increased level of external traffic coming into the village. It was agreed that a representative of the Education Authority should be invited to a meeting to discuss these implications of the expansion of the school.

Minute 124 (2011/12) Ongoing ReferencesNoticeboard

The noticeboard is to be delivered before the end of November. The Clerk to liaise with Ian Williams of DH Management Co, and the supplier in order to arrange for its installation as soon as possible.

Minute 125 (2011/12) Correspondence

Cheswick Green Parish Council have asked whether some of the former Hockley Heath Parish Council paperwork can be stored in the Parish Rooms before being sorted through. The Parish Council felt that this paperwork should be sorted through and dealt with rather than being stored.

It was agreed that the Clerk can attend the Update on Financial Matters in January 2012. The Dickens Heath Village Clock now has approval from highways and is going to planning. Cheswick Green have successfully removed 'Shirley' from the village's postal addresses. The Clerk to seek the advice of Cheswick Green Parish Council, this may be something that the residents of Dickens Heath would wish us to pursue.

Minute 126 (2011/12) Items for next agenda

None.

Meeting ended 10.45 pm

Next Meeting : Tuesday December 13th 2011: 7.30pm in the Parish Rooms