

# The Parish Council of Dickens Heath

## Minutes of the Meeting of the Council held on Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> November 2010 at 7.30pm, Dickens Heath School

### **Present:**

**Dickens Heath Parish Councillors;** Vaseem Arfan, Richard Holt, Philip Kendall, Alyson Glenn (formerly Thompson).

Councillor Len Cresswell of Solihull MBC  
Peter Horridge of Stansgate Planning  
4 members of the public  
Clerk: Ms Helen Marczak

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### **Minute 103 (2010/11) Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were accepted from Councillor Robinson.

### **Minute 104 (2010/11) Public Participation (15 minutes)**

#### Public Art Project

At the Dickens Heath Working Party meeting, there had been hostility towards the proposed artworks, but they liked the idea of a village clock. Therefore it has been recommended that neither of the artworks are accepted but that a village clock be installed, which is cheaper and so will allow some of the traffic islands to also be planted out.

#### Youth Facility

Councillor Cresswell gave an update on this. There is to be no play equipment on Aldershaws, instead there will be benches suitable for all ages. The café building at the end of Main St. is also being looked at, as a café in the daytime and then it could be run by the youth service in the evening. This could be leased for 2 years, and would require funding from the youth service plus someone to run it as a café during the day. It was agreed that Councillor Arfan join the discussion group to progress this.

### **Minute 105 (2010/11) Solihull Core Strategy**

Peter Horridge of Stansgate Planning outlined Solihull's strategy for future housing. There are implications for Dickens Heath in the early 2020s. Tidbury Green and Cheswick Green are less suitable so there may be more pressure on Dickens Heath in the long run. The emphasis is on 'sustainability' – allocating houses to areas with schools/shops/employment etc. The infrastructure will need developing along with the houses.

The Parish Council need to take a view, can it 'hold back the tide', or is it going to happen anyway, and the Parish Council's role will be to try to put conditions on it – eg. provision for young people.

Realistically, Dickens Heath is likely to get 2 sites at Braggs Farm/Brickiln Farm (100 houses) and Griffin Lane (50 houses). However these 2 sites are either side of the village pond, which impacts on the rural environment.

Peter Horridge recommended that if this is to be forced on Dickens Heath, then the Parish Council should say what else is required. And that all the identified sites should be looked at and the Parish Council should remind Solihull MBC why they should not be developed. Although other sites are currently in the green belt. In Dickens Heath currently, there is little provision for the elderly, or for social housing as opposed to 'affordable' housing. Any additional housing should underpin the community, and transport requirements will need to be addressed.

The Parish Council **resolved** to hold a committee meeting to discuss this, to which the public would be invited.

**Minute 106 (2010/11) Gardening Club**

Gardening Club have been looking at planters, which will cost around £70 each to buy and plant up - they would like to buy 4. Matt Gardner is happy in principle with where they will be placed. Proposed by Councillor Kendall, seconded by Councillor Glenn that £300 be donated for this.

Councillor Cresswell offered to look at the Blythe budget to see if further funds could be made available for planters.

**Minute 107 (2010/11) Declarations of Interest**

None.

**Minute 108 (2010/11) To Receive a Report from the Borough Councillors**

There was no report, but Councillor Cresswell provided updates during the meeting.

**Minute 109 (2010/11) Minutes of previous meeting held on Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> October 2010**

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

**Minute 110 (2010/11) Actions from the Minutes of the previous meeting**

The insurance for the property at Waterside was discussed, in particular for the fixtures and fittings partly installed. Clerk to follow up.

**Minute 111 (2010/11) Planning Applications**

No comments.

**Minute 112 (2010/11) Financial Matters**

Proposed by Councillor Arfan, seconded by Councillor Kendall. **Resolved** that the payments in Appendix I of the November 9<sup>th</sup> 2010 agenda be approved – 4 cheques totalling £6,287.55 plus an additional donation of £85.00 to Dickens Heath Village Church to purchase a Christmas Tree for the village.

The finance statements currently show a surplus of £70,240 with a projected end of year surplus of approximately £34,000.

**Minute 113 (2010/11) To receive any reports from Councillors who have attended any outside groups or events**

Dickens Heath Working Party – the Parish Council were pleased that the public art proposals have been rejected, and that a village clock is to be recommended. It was agreed that this should be confirmed in a letter to the Working Party, also asking to be kept informed.

**Minute 114 (2010/11) Parish Council Website**

The draft home page was discussed. Councillor Arfan would like to meet with the web designer to propose further ideas. Clerk to arrange meeting.

**Minute 115 (2010/11) Budget/Precept for 2011/12**

A draft budget of £80,000 has been produced for 2011/12, but much of it is based on estimates due to the costs of the new premises which are yet to be confirmed.

It was **resolved** that the total budget of £80,000 for 2011/12 should be approved, all in favour. This means that there will be no increase in the precept for the next financial year.

**Minute 116 (2010/11) Ongoing References**

Litter Collection – litter is not too bad at the moment.

Noticeboard – still waiting for the coat of arms.

Hanging Baskets – Plantscape can provide hanging baskets, planted up, on loan. They can also fix brackets to lamp posts. Clerk to progress.

Planting of Roundabouts – Paul Cooper's tender document for planting of 2 roundabouts was approved.

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Signature.....

Date.....

**Minute 117 (2010/11) Meeting with Caroline Spelman MP**

The lack of youth facilities will be discussed – Parish Council to ask what she can do to help.

**Minute 118 (2010/11) Remembrance Day**

Councillor Arfan to attend Remembrance Sunday in centre of Solihull. Reverend Robertson to lead short act of remembrance in centre of Dickens Heath on Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> November at 11am. Barbara at DHMC has notified local businesses and residents. Clerk to notify British Legion.

**Minute 119 (2010/11) Dickens Heath School – Sponsorship of Netball Team**

The local school netball team have sent in a request for sponsorship to enable them to buy team kit and a trophy – a total of £266. Proposed by Councillor Glenn, seconded by Councillor Kendall, **resolved** that the donation be approved.

**Minute 120 (2010/11) London Midland Improvements to Whitlocks End train station**

The Parish Council were surprised that there had been no consultation about this. There are now 3 trains per hour, and an additional car park has been set up. However this is on a bend and it is very dangerous for pedestrians to cross the road. The traffic issues need to be addressed and a proper crossing is required before there is a fatality. Clerk to write to Centro Midlands.

**Minute 121 (2010/11) Flood Risk Management**

Solihull MBC are seeking local knowledge of areas at risk of flooding. There has been flooding in Dickens Heath, but the causes may now be resolved. Clerk to send to Councillor Robinson for any comments.

**Minute 122 (2010/11) Correspondence**

Caremark, a company offering domiciliary care locally, offered to be involved in some community event. The Parish Council decided not to get involved with this commercial company at the moment.

**Minute 123 (2010/11) Christmas Arrangements**

A Parish Council meal was suggested - Clerk to confirm if all available.

**Minute 124 (2010/11) Items for next agenda**

Dickens Heath calendar of events for January meeting.

**Minute 125 (2010/11) 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.**

**Minute 126 (2010/11) Property Purchase at Waterside**

This was discussed.

**Meeting ended 10.30 pm**

**Next Meeting : Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> December 2010: 7.30pm Dickens Heath School**