

The Parish Council of Dickens Heath

Minutes of the Meeting of the Council held on Tuesday January 15th 2013 at 7.30pm in the Parish Rooms, Waterside

Present:

Dickens Heath Parish Councillors; Philip Brandum, Robert Cudmore, Richard Holt (Chairman), Alyson Glenn, Josh O'Nyons

12 members of the public

Clerk: Ms Helen Marczak

Minute 118 (2012/13) Apologies for Absence

None.

Minute 119 (2012/13) Public Participation

Area at the back of Tesco

Residents are still concerned that the area at the back of Tesco looks like a wasteland. This land is tied in with the Garden Squares site that is up for sale. The Clerk to contact Mike Swallow at SMBC to see if any progress has been made with the sale.

Parking

Parking is a real problem for residents, certain roads around Garden Squares should be one way. Solihull MBC proposes to bring in a parking scheme from April 2013, which will probably include further yellow lines and fines. The public will be consulted before the scheme is introduced.

Reduction of Speed Limit

It was suggested that the speed limit in the village should be reduced to 20mph. Solihull MBC have monitored vehicle speed in the village, and are not concerned. In Wythall, there has been a scheme whereby the police train volunteers to use speed guns, and anyone caught speeding receives a letter from the police (but not a fine) – PACT, Police and Community Together. The Clerk to make enquiries as to whether this is a possibility for Dickens Heath.

Flooding at Waterside

A resident has received a detailed email from SMBC Planning Dept about the flooding and concerns for the Griffin Lane development. It was agreed that details from this should be published on the website.

Clock and Solar Christmas Trees

Residents commented that it is good to see the clock complete and working, and the solar Christmas trees really cheered the village up.

Minute 120 (2012/13) Declarations of Interest/Written Requests for Dispensations

None. The Clerk to confirm to Deborah Merry at SMBC that there are no updates to the register of interests.

Minute 121 (2012/13) Minutes of previous meeting held on December 11th 2012

It was proposed by Councillor Glenn and seconded by Councillor Cudmore, **Resolved** that the minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday December 11th 2012 be approved as a true and accurate record.

Minute 122 (2012/13) Actions from the Minutes of the previous meeting

Proposal for Educational Support Sessions in the Parish Rooms

The proposal requests the use of the Parish Rooms on 4 days of the week, which would be without charge. It was agreed that, in its current format, the proposal cannot be supported. There would need to be a significant contribution to the community, but this is a commercial proposal for 11+ tuition.

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Signature.....

Date.....

Proposal for an Opera Gala

A further proposal with costings is expected, the Clerk to get in touch.

Flooding at Waterside

Solihull MBC information states that the balancing pond is the responsibility of the Consortium led by Redrow Homes, but do Redrow see it this way? Has lack of maintenance caused the flooding? The Parish Council would like to know who is responsible for the village pond, the balancing pond and the country park, and also what the long term plan for the balancing pond is. These questions to be referred to the SMBC officers who will be attending the next meeting to give feedback on the flooding.

Carol Singing

The carol singing outside Mortons was very good, and everyone appreciated the refreshments provided by Tesco. The Clerk to formally thank the manager and staff at Tesco for their hospitality.

Minute 123 (2012/13) Planning Applications

None.

Minute 124 (2012/13) Financial Matters

Proposed by Councillor Glenn, seconded by Councillor Cudmore, **Resolved** that the payments in Appendix I of the January 15th 2013 agenda be approved.

It was **Resolved** that the precept, plus grant to cover those receiving council tax support, be set at £80,560 for 2013/14. This will mean no increase in the parish council element of the council tax for residents. The grant from SMBC for 2013/14 is £997, and therefore a precept of £79,563 to be requested.

The annual insurance was approved, with Zurich for the second of a three year deal, at a cost of £883.28.

The year end financial position is projected to be a £51,000 surplus. It was agreed that, if possible, a £20,000 capital repayment should be made against one of the loans. This would still leave a significant reserve of around £30,000.

An updated bank mandate was agreed and signed - to add Councillor O'Nyons as a signatory.

Minute 125 (2012/13) Solihull Local Plan

Councillor Brandum attended the first session of the Hearings for the Independent Examination of the Solihull Local Plan, and reiterated the lack of consultation on the Cleobury Lane site. Solihull MBC stated that they had done as much consultation as they were legally required to. Councillor Brandum will be attending the two further sessions in January.

Minute 126 (2012/13) Flooding – Emergency Response Group

A resident has put forward a proposal for an emergency response group which would consist of volunteer residents who would be prepared to help out in non urgent situations such as flooding or snow. This included a request for funding in order to buy some equipment which the Dickens Heath Management Co. were prepared to store. The Parish Councillors agreed that a list of such volunteers would be valuable. However, they felt that the flooding was a result of a system failure, and shouldn't happen again. Therefore, they were not convinced that such a store of equipment would be necessary; that volunteers may well have their own snow shovels – but that an enhanced supply of sand and salt for the worst winter weather would be useful. It was agreed that advice should be taken from WALC with regard to planning for emergencies.

Minute 127 (2012/13) Official Opening of the Clock

Solihull MBC have suggested that the clock be officially opened by the Mayor. The Parish Council are happy to support this, preferably in the Spring with the better weather.

Minute 128 (2012/13) Ongoing References

Litter

Along Hutchings Lane, where the trees have been cut back, between the edge of the road and the canal, there is a lot of litter. The Clerk to ask Solihull MBC whether they will be litter picking this, and if not – whether the DH Management Co. would be prepared to do one-off litter picks.

Roundabouts

The Clerk to ask SMBC what the plans are for the unadopted roundabouts – are they due to be adopted/maintained/planted out?

Some planters around the clock would enhance this roundabout. The Clerk to ask SMBC whether they have any available.

Hanging Baskets/Christmas Trees

The Christmas trees were a great success. It was agreed that Plantscape’s offer of a repeat order at the same price for next Christmas should be taken up.

Parking

Solihull MBC officers are due to meet with representatives of the Parish Council in advance of the introduction of the new parking scheme in April 2013.

Minute 129 (2012/13) Correspondence

The Parish Council has been approached by a member of SPLAT (Solihull People Local Action Team) with regard to possibly working together on the issue of flooding and whether the situation will be worsened by further development. It was agreed that the Parish Council prefers to keep their concerns local to Dickens Heath.

Minute 130 (2012/13) Items for next Agenda

None

Meeting ended 9.35 pm

Next Meeting : Tuesday February 19th 2013: 7.30pm