

The Parish Council of Dickens Heath

Minutes of the Meeting of the Council held on Tuesday October 21st 2014 at 7.00pm in the Parish Rooms, Waterside

Present:

Dickens Heath Parish Councillors; Philip Brandum (Chairman), Alyson Glenn, Richard Holt, Josh O’Nyons.

11 members of the public

Clerk: Ms Helen Marczak

Minute 65 (2014/15) Apologies for Absence

Apologies were accepted from Councillor Cudmore.

Minute 66 (2014/15) Public Participation

Highway Issues/Parking

- The block paving footpaths around the squareabouts are getting slimy and slippery. The Clerk to follow this up with Solihull MBC.
- Parking on Broom Lane is now so bad that a bin lorry recently go stuck. Residents are taking photos and collecting signatures to forward to the Highways Dept. An extension to the double yellow lines is required.

Other Issues

- There is a planning application in for the beer garden attached to The Chalice. Residents expressed concerns about the tables/chairs and drinking on the pavement and the fact that there is so much noise from this area. They suggested that drinkers should be restricted to the decked area because glasses on the pavement are a health and safety risk. They also suggested that the decked area should be covered over which would act as sound proofing to a degree. The Parish Council sympathised with the views expressed, this item to be discussed further in the Planning Applications section of the meeting.
- The planting out that was agreed as part of the move of the Brockhurst Lane footpath has not been done – Solihull MBC will now plant out low level shrubbery in the Spring.

Minute 67 (2014/15) Gardening/Landscaping

The hanging baskets and floral decorations have been magnificent this year, the Parish Council would like to see them receive a bit more publicity. Advice to be sought from Hockley Heath who have great success in this respect.

Minute 68 (2014/15) Declarations of Interest/Requests for Dispensations

None.

Minute 69 (2014/15) To Receive a Report from the Borough Councillors

Councillor Holt gave a brief update on the latest Council meeting which mainly discussed the expansion of the airport and flight paths.

Minute 70 (2014/15) Minutes of previous meeting held on Tuesday September 23rd 2014

Proposed by Councillor O’Nyons, seconded by Councillor Glenn, it was **Resolved** that the minutes be approved as a true and accurate record.

Minute 71 (2014/15) Actions from the Minutes of the previous meetingReassessment of Chicanes near Akamba

The SMBC road safety officer has made a site visit and his assessment is that the signs are clear enough and the road is safe.

Reduced Security in Village Centre

The Dickens Heath Management Co. has reduced security hours during the night. Faced with a reduction in their service charge, this was considered to be the least detrimental option.

Haulage Route for the New Developments

The Parish Council would prefer it if the haulage route was not through the village, but agreed to ask SMBC for notification of the haulage route as soon as possible so that residents can be made aware.

Minute 72 (2014/15) Planning Applications2014/1688 - Land adjacent to 168 – 170 Main St (The Chalice)

It was agreed that comments should be forwarded to the effect that the Parish Council has serious reservations about this planning application, and to make suggestions about improving the management of the site in line with resident comments about the noise and drinking on the pavement.

No comments on the other planning applications.

Minute 73 (2014/15) Financial Matters

Proposed by Councillor Glenn, seconded by Councillor O’Nyons, **Resolved** that the payments in Appendix I of the October 21st 2014 Agenda be approved – 2 direct debits and 12 cheques totalling £11,570.12. This included an additional direct debit of £85.20 for BT internet services and an additional cheque for a £100 donation to the Royal British Legion for the poppy appeal.

The Parish Council currently has a surplus of £94,421 and is projecting a surplus of almost £70,000 at the year end.

Documents were signed to apply for internet banking. It was agreed that the Dickens Heath Community Association account should be closed. This was last used for the Diamond Jubilee celebration and remaining funds are not significant. It was agreed that any remaining funds should be transferred into the Parish Council bank account.

Minute 74 (2014/15) Reports from Councillors who have attended outside groups or events

Councillor Brandum attended the Rural Partnership Forum. Although some senior SMBC Councillors were there, it was generally not well attended. There was a discussion about how to keep it going.

Minute 75 (2014/15) Proposals for Further Development/Birmingham Plan

The public examination has started, the Parish Council’s previously submitted comments will be taken into account, and it was agreed that it was too costly for a representative of Stansgate Planning to attend on the Parish Council’s behalf.

Minute 76 (2014/15) Remembrance Sunday

Arrangements are progressing well, refreshments afterwards to be provided by Coffee Cloud.

Minute 77 (2014/15) Village Playground

A meeting has taken place with representatives of Dickens Heath Management Co. who felt that the receivers would be interested in selling the freehold of the playground, but not of the village green. The Parish Council agreed that this was worth pursuing. If the Parish Council was to purchase the playground, it would need access to it – which is currently across village green land. The Parish Council would like to also secure ownership of the village green – in order to secure it for future generations. It was agreed that the Parish Council should formally write to the receivers.

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Signature.....

Date.....

Minute 78 (2014/15) Village Memorial

As a starting point, the designer has asked for an idea of the inscription that will be on the memorial. The Parish Council agreed that they would give this some thought, ask for residents' views, and approach the Heads of English at local secondary schools in order to seek the views of the village's young people.

Minute 79 (2014/15) Festival on the Green 2015

A resident has suggested this proposal, offered to facilitate it and asked whether the Parish Council would be prepared to make a financial contribution. The Parish Council agreed that they would support this in principle, but would also want some involvement.

Minute 80 (2014/15) Feedback from the WALC Financial Briefing

DCLG are still considering whether there will be precept capping for 2015/16, but it would be unlikely to affect local councils with a band D precept of less than £140 (Dickens Heath's is less than £50).

The Council Tax Support Grant is not likely to be available after 2015/16, therefore local councils need to make a decision about any shortfall. Dickens Heath's council tax support grant was £881 for 2014/15.

There was an update on arrangements for external audit, and that costs are likely to rise. There was also an update on the new transparency arrangements for local councils.

Minute 81 (2014/15) The Parish Rooms

The Parish Council discussed a proposal to use the Parish Rooms for cup cake decorating, and decided that they couldn't approve the proposal as it stands because of the cost of the session which would be a contribution to the community.

Yoga in the Parish Rooms has been a great success, and Alicia is now hoping to expand and take on her own premises in Dickens Heath.

Minute 82 (2014/15) Ongoing ReferencesLitter

Dog mess is a problem at the moment. The Parish Council agreed to ask SMBC for some more bins, and to put an appeal to dog owners in the next Parish Council News.

Action Plan for the Next 5 Years

Tidbury Green and Hampton in Arden Parish Councils have recently done surveys of their local population, to assist with prioritising spending of the precept. It was agreed that Councillor Brandum should look into this further.

Minute 83 (2014/15) CorrespondenceSMBC Draft 'Hot Food Takeaways' Supplementary Planning Document

It was agreed that this was not particularly relevant to Dickens Heath.

Gates on Village Playground

A resident has requested that the gates be put back on the village playground. However the Dickens Heath Management Co. had removed them because of the cost of insurance claims relating to the gates.

Minute 84 (2014/15) Items for next agenda

None.

Meeting ended 9.20 pm

Next Meeting : Tuesday November 18th 2014: 7.00pm The Parish Rooms

Private Section

Minute 85 (2014/15) Staff Issues

Councillor Brandum and Councillor Cudmore met with Steven Morris, who is retired, for an informal interview in relation to the Handyman vacancy. They recommended that he would be suitable for the position and all agreed this.

Minute 86 (2014/15) Village Issues

These were discussed.

Meeting ended 9.20 pm

Next Meeting : Tuesday November 18th 2014: 7.00pm The Parish Rooms