

The Parish Council of Dickens Heath

Minutes of the Meeting of the Council held on Tuesday September 23rd 2014 at 7.00pm in the Parish Rooms, Waterside

Present:

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

Borough Councillor Ken Hawkins

8 members of the public

Clerk: Ms Helen Marczak

Minute 43 (2014/15) Apologies for Absence

None.

Minute 44 (2014/15) Public Participation

Footpath in Brockhurst Lane

A resident asked when the low level planting out will be done – the Clerk to find out.

Traffic Calming on Tythe Barn Lane by Akamba

This was again discussed – that the speed humps are ok, but the chicanes are dangerous, motorists cannot see round the blind bend. A previous request to Highways to reconsider the traffic calming was turned down. Another request to be sent to Highways to reconsider the chicane on the blind bend.

Double Yellow Lines

The double yellow lines on Rumbush Lane at the Clock Island were again raised as being insufficient and that the parking there is dangerous. There are also still unfinished double yellow lines around the village. The Parking Review is to be held in January 2015; Cllr Ken Hawkins will be involved and the Parish Council will wish to put residents' views forward.

Garden Squares II

Information has been received from Nick Page, the new Chief Executive of Solihull MBC. A legal agreement is being drawn up between SMBC and the liquidators, which will allow SMBC to finish off the outstanding highway works and the liquidators to transfer the site itself to a developer.

The Chalice

A resident feels that The Chalice's outdoor beer garden generates an unreasonable amount of noise and queried whether the licensee still has a license to use this land as a beer garden.

The Parish Council to follow this up.

Festival on the Green 2015

A resident put forward an idea for a family event on the Village Green with games, music etc. He would like to put a committee together and start off the process, he asked whether the Parish Council would be prepared to support the event financially. The Parish Council agreed to discuss this and get back to him.

Village Memorial

A resident asked whether there has been any progress on a memorial for Dickens Heath. The Parish Council have met with a stone carver this evening who may be commissioned to produce a memorial.

Solihull Neighbourhoods in Bloom

Councillor Ken Hawkins presented an award for 'Highly Commended Village' for Dickens Heath. The Parish Council thanked Councillor Bob Cudmore for all his hard work in improving the appearance of the village.

Minute 45 (2014/15) Gardening Club

The raised bed at the end of Trundalls Lane has been completed.

At a meeting with the SMBC Neighbourhood Co-Ordinator, it was suggested that the Parish Council should request an agreement with SMBC in order to take over the maintenance of the Clock island and the 2 planted up islands either side of the clock island. These islands are not being maintained by SMBC. This would then mean that the Parish Council would be able to enter into a sponsorship agreement for these islands. All agreed that this was a good idea in principle.

Mike, our village handyman, has resigned and taken up a full time post with a local garden centre. The Parish Council are sorry to see him go, but wish him all the best in his new job.

Minute 46 (2014/15) Declarations of Interest/Requests for Dispensations

None.

Minute 47 (2014/15) To Decide Whether to Elect a Vice Chair

It was agreed that a Vice Chair was not necessary and any absence would be dealt with as and when necessary.

Minute 48 (2014/15) To Receive a Report from the Borough Councillors

Councillor Ken Hawkins summarised a report that had been forwarded to the Parish Council. The Parking Restrictions will have been in place for a year in January 2015, and a review will be held. Councillor Hawkins will be seeking residents' views, and the Parish Council agreed to assist in putting resident comments together before the Review.

He also mentioned the planning application for 2 Marshfield and the fact that no response had been registered from the Parish Council. An objection has been sent in, so the Clerk to follow this up.

Minute 49 (2014/15) Minutes of previous meeting held on Tuesday July 15th 2014

Proposed by Councillor Cudmore, seconded by Councillor Glenn, it was **Resolved** that the minutes be approved as a true and accurate record subject to one amendment about the Judicial Review.

Minute 50 (2014/15) Actions from the Minutes of the previous meetingOvergrown Hedges

The SMBC Neighbourhood Co-Ordinator will be arranging site meetings and then the hedgerows will be cut back.

Request to Increase the Number of Parish Councillors from 5 to 7

The request will be going to the SMBC Governance Committee on September 25th 2014 for a decision.

Steps to Canal Side Walk by Clock Island

The steps will be removed by the end of October 2014.

Minute 51 (2014/15) Planning Applications

No comments.

Minute 52 (2014/15) Financial Matters

Proposed by Councillor Glenn, seconded by Councillor Cudmore, **Resolved** that the payments in Appendix I of the September 23rd 2014 Agenda be approved – 5 direct debits and 24 cheques totalling £11,617.12. This included 4 additional cheques of £685.54 for the service charge, £360 for the external audit, £55.99 for plants for the raised bed and £15 for window cleaning.

The Parish Council currently has a surplus of £67,245 and is projecting a surplus of £71,000 at the year end.

The external auditor has signed and returned the Annual Return for 2013/14.

Minute 53 (2014/15) Reports from Councillors who have attended outside groups or events

Councillor Glenn attended Solihull Area Committee (SAC), where the main discussion was the extension of the airport. Councillor Brandum to attend the next SAC meeting. Councillors Brandum and Cudmore met with Matt Gardner, SMBC Neighbourhood Co-Ordinator. Other than the cutting back of hedgerows, and maintenance of traffic islands, already mentioned – Matt gave an update on the stretch of Rumbush Lane with very bad manholes. This has not been adopted, and the drainage needs to be sorted out and adopted by Severn Trent before it can be adopted by SMBC. Trial holes are currently being excavated on the road to investigate the drainage.

Minute 54 (2014/15) Proposals for Further Development/Birmingham Plan

Councillors Brandum and Cudmore met with Keith Williams of Stansgate Planning, along with members of Cheswick Green Parish Council, about responding to the Birmingham Plan. If Birmingham cannot meet its own requirement to provide land for housing, then neighbouring local authorities have a duty to co-operate in providing land. In Keith's opinion, Birmingham will be short of land to provide around 30,000 houses – which could have implications for Solihull. There is a danger that this part of the Borough may be overloaded with new housing. Councillor Brandum and Councillor Holt to follow this up.

Minute 55 (2014/15) Visit of Solihull MBC's New Chief Executive

It was agreed that discussion should be limited to strategic issues – including Garden Squares II, the 2 new developments, youth facilities, highways adoption and on-going maintenance issues. It was agreed that the Clerk should produce a fact sheet about Dickens Heath for information.

Minute 56 (2014/15) Remembrance Sunday

It was agreed that Remembrance Sunday should be planned along the same lines as last year's service.

Minute 57 (2014/15) Village Playground

A meeting about the playground is taking place soon with the Dickens Heath Management Co.

Minute 58 (2014/15) Village Memorial

The Parish Council had met with Malcolm Sier, a stone carver, earlier in the evening. It was agreed that Malcolm be asked to produce a design brief.

Minute 59 (2014/15) Financial Regulations 2014

Following confirmation of a couple of points, the new Financial Regulations were adopted.

Minute 60 (2014/15) The Parish Rooms

Pop Choir has now grown too big for the Parish Rooms and has moved to Dickens Heath School. Anya thanked the Parish Council for the use of the Parish Rooms.

Minute 61 (2014/15) Correspondence

Floral Decorations

There have been several letters and comments about the wonderful display of flowers.

Reduced Dickens Heath Management Co. Security at Night

A resident is very concerned at the proposal to cut security between midnight and 6am. This proposed budget cut is as a result of the sale of the freehold of Parkridge House – which has resulted in the loss of the service charge on that building. The Parish Council understand the reasons for the Management Company's actions, but is also concerned, and agreed to raise it with the Management Co.

Proposed Crossing Point on Dickens Heath Road

The Chair of the Premises Committee at Dickens Heath Primary School has contacted the Parish Council with concerns about the safety of pedestrians crossing Dickens Heath Rd at the southern end of Meadowpleck, and suggested that a safer solution would be a pedestrian footpath across the kidney shaped island. The school would like the support of the Parish Council in this matter. As the kidney shaped island is raised, with a step up, the Parish Council felt that this may be an impractical solution, and asked for further information.

Minute 62 (2014/15) Items for next agenda

Elections 2015.

Meeting ended 9.20 pm

Next Meeting : Tuesday October 21st 2014: 7.00pm The Parish Rooms

Private Section

Minute 63 (2014/15) Youth Facility

This was discussed.

Minute 64 (2014/15) Village Handyman

This was discussed.

Meeting ended 9.20 pm

Next Meeting : Tuesday October 21st 2014: 7.00pm The Parish Rooms