

The Parish Council of Dickens Heath

Minutes of the Meeting of the Council held on Tuesday December 9th 2014 at 7.00pm in the Parish Rooms, Waterside

Present:

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

5 members of the public

Clerk: Ms Helen Marczak

Minute 110 (2014/15) Apologies for Absence

Apologies were accepted from Councillor O'Nyons.

Minute 111 (2014/15) Public Participation

Highway Issues/Parking

- A resident suggested that Dickens Heath should have a 20mph speed limit. Solihull MBC have been carrying out pilots in 3 areas and may consider Dickens Heath in the future.
- There have been incidents of road rage at the chicane by the school, exacerbated by cars parked in the vicinity at peak times. It was agreed that the Parish Council should ask for a review of the chicane's effectiveness.
- The loss of parking spaces behind Mortons, as a result of the conversion of Parkridge House to apartments, is going to be a real problem. Solihull MBC could not have anticipated the failure of Parkridge, and the liquidator taking some of the privately owned car park. More land for car parking is desperately needed or the businesses will suffer. It was agreed that the Parish Council should write to SMBC to express their concern and urge them to consider some imaginative solutions –for example the purchase of a portion of the Garden Squares II site for public parking.

Village Maintenance/Litter

- The hedges towards Whitlocks End Station are again very overgrown, and it is difficult to walk on the footpath. SMBC will be carrying out a winter cut of overgrowth in January 2015, this needs to be flagged up as a priority because pedestrians that need to step into the road will make the highway unsafe.
- At the junction of Meadow Pleck Lane and Dickens Heath Rd, the view of pedestrians is blocked by overgrowth. The cut through by the bungalow near Tesco is also full of leaves – the Clerk to contact Matt Gardner at SMBC.

Garden Squares II

- Additional hoardings are being put up inside the site, and rubbish cleared out.

Minute 112 (2014/15) Gardening/Landscaping

The bulbs have been planted out on grass verges with the help of the Shirley Sea Cadets and some residents. The Parish Council thanked everyone involved and agreed a donation to the Sea Cadets of £50.

Minute 113 (2014/15) Declarations of Interest/Requests for Dispensations

None.

Minute 114 (2014/15) To Receive a Report from the Borough Councillors

Councillor Holt stated that Solihull MBC's Gypsy and Traveller Site Allocations Plan had now been adopted.

Minute 115 (2014/15) Minutes of previous meeting held on Tuesday November 18th 2014

Proposed by Councillor Holt, seconded by Councillor Cudmore, it was **Resolved** that the minutes be approved as a true and accurate record, with a slight addition to Minute 105 (2014/15).

Minute 116 (2014/15) Actions from the Minutes of the previous meeting

Parking Review

A summary of comments brought to Parish Council meetings has been sent in. The papers for the parking review meeting will be available in the New Year.

Hedge Cutting by the Miller and Carter

The farmer has cut the hedge, the SMBC Neighbourhood Co-ordinator is liaising with him about the removal of the cuttings from the ditch.

Bellway Homes – New Development at Cleobury Lane

SMBC have replied that it is not possible to install 2 mini roundabouts at the site in place of speed bumps.

Slippy Pavements

SMBC should be treating the green moss imminently.

DHPC page on Facebook

This has now been set up. The Parish Council would like this to be monitored at least once a week, with information from agendas and meetings being posted.

Minute 117 (2014/15) Planning Applications

1 planning application was considered:

- 2014/2066 - Tesco Store, Main Street, Dickens Heath, B90 1UA - Variation of condition no. 1 on planning application 2004/2440 to allow for longer opening hours 06:00 – 23.00 seven days a week.

No comments.

Minute 118 (2014/15) Financial Matters

Proposed by Councillor Glenn, seconded by Councillor Cudmore, **Resolved** that the payments in Appendix I of the December 9th 2014 Agenda be approved – 11 cheques totalling £6,021.20. This included an additional cheque of £90 to Dickens Heath Village Church as a donation for the village Christmas tree.

The Parish Council currently has a surplus of £83,212 and is projecting a surplus of £67,000 at the year end.

The Parish Council discussed the recently published National Salary Award for 2014-16 for Local Government Services, and agreed the 2.2% pay rise and small non-consolidated (one off) payment for the Parish Clerk and Admin Assistant.

The Admin Assistant is on the parish council payroll run by Diane Malley. The Parish Clerk is still on the payroll of SMBC, with costs recharged to the Parish Council. The Parish Council agreed that both staff should be on the parish council payroll, but this change may have cost implications in terms of the transfer of the Parish Clerk's pension. It was agreed that the potential cost implications needed to be clarified before any decision could be made.

The indicative tax base figure has been received from SMBC, and the Parish Council will need to approve the precept for 2015/16 at the January 2015 meeting – with the plan being to keep the Band D precept charge unchanged at the 2014/15 level.

Minute 119 (2014/15) Reports from Councillors who have attended outside groups or events

Councillors Brandum and Cudmore met with 2 representatives of Library Services, along with Borough Councillors Linda Brown and Ken Hawkins. They discussed the use of the Dickens Heath library building and the enhancement of the library service – that there is scope for other organisations to use some of the space.

Councillor Brandum will also be attending a meeting to discuss the methods of allocation of the social housing within the new developments. His view is that the social housing should be allocated to those with a local connection.

Minute 120 (2014/15) Christmas Carol Singing

This is taking place on Tuesday December 16th at 6.30pm outside Tesco.

Minute 121 (2014/15) Village Memorial

Alderbrook School Year 7 students have written some words that could be used as the inscription on the village memorial. The Parish Council were delighted to receive a selection of these chosen by their teacher, and were very impressed with the remarkable standard. They agreed that the words of Ryan Carter stood out, and they would look to use these as the inscription on the memorial. The Clerk to thank the Alderbrook students and their teacher, and to forward the words to Malcolm Sier for the memorial design.

Minute 122 (2014/15) Draft Protocol on Recording & Filming of Meetings

This was approved.

Minute 123 (2014/15) The Parish Rooms

No bookings or issues.

Minute 124 (2014/15) Ongoing References

Parish Council News

The Clerk to draft January's page.

Minute 125 (2014/15) Correspondence

Ward Action Plan 2015/16

SMBC are asking for projects to include in next year's Ward Action Plan. The Parish Council would like to see the clock island tidied up, as well as the barrier by the clock, and for the agreement for the Parish Council to take on the maintenance of 2 of the traffic islands to be drawn up.

Draft Solihull Schools Organisation Plan

This analyses pupil numbers over the next 5 years, and forecasts the impact of the new housing developments and where additional school places may be required. The Clerk to forward it to Councillors.

Proposal to Increase Number of Parish Councillors from 5 to 7

There have been 3 responses in support, and no objections. Therefore the SMBC Governance Committee will publish the draft proposal – any comments to be received by Thursday January 8th 2015.

Tanworth and Camp Hill Cricket Club

A club update has been forwarded to the Parish Council, with plans for new changing facilities, refurbishment of the clubhouse and ground, and a proposal to rename the club as Dickens Heath Sports Club. They would like someone from the Parish Council to sit on their committee, so that we can work together regarding sports opportunities and social occasions for Dickens Heath. The Clerk to thank the club for this information and to send the Parish Council's congratulations on the impressive progress being made. Councillor Brandum agreed to represent the Parish Council on the Club's committee.

Minute 126 (2014/15) Items for next agenda
Precept 2015/16.

Meeting ended 8.35 pm

Next Meeting : Tuesday January 20th 2015: 7.00pm The Parish Rooms