

The Parish Council of Dickens Heath

Minutes of the Meeting of the Council held on Tuesday April 10th 2018 in the Parish Rooms, Waterside

Present:

Dickens Heath Parish Councillors; Trevor Eames, Maureen Holloway (Chair), David Jones, Diane Potter, Nargis Rashid, Alan Scholes.

2 members of the public

Clerk: Ms Helen Marczak

Minute 232 (2017/18) Apologies for Absence

Apologies were accepted from Councillor Doreen Wright.

Minute 233 (2017/18) Public Participation

Start Times of Parish Council Meetings

A resident commented that 7pm is too early a start for many residents to attend a parish council meeting, and asked if it was possible to start at 7.30pm – which was the start time for the previous parish council's meetings. It was agreed that meetings would start at 7.15pm, as a compromise, as of June 2018.

Planning Application at 23 Brockhurst Lane

This planning application is asking for approval to move the boundary fence to take in a small additional patch of land. A resident asked whether this land currently belongs to SMBC Highways? Councillor Trevor Eames said that he believed this was the case, it is a comparatively small piece of land and Highways do not maintain it but leave it to the adjacent homeowner to do so. It is quite unsightly at the moment, and if it were to be fenced off within the adjacent property's garden it would look better, without any problem regarding vision splay on the road. Councillor Eames added that if it were a significant green space, then he personally would wish to object, but it isn't and none of the neighbours have objected.

Minute 234 (2017/18) Declarations of Interest/Requests for Dispensations

None.

Minute 235 (2017/18) Report from the Borough Councillors

None. Apologies were received from Councillor Ken Hawkins and new Borough Councillor James Butler, as they have Full Council this evening. They will attend the next PC meeting if they can.

Minute 236 (2017/18) Minutes of the Meeting of the Council held on Tuesday March 13th 2018

Proposed by Councillor Rashid, seconded by Councillor Holloway, it was **Resolved** that the minutes be approved as a true and accurate record.

Minute 237 (2017/18) Actions from the Minutes of the previous meeting

Dickens Heath Rd by the Bellway Site

This is not litter picked or gritted by SMBC, so an enquiry has been lodged as to whether it is still defined as 'rural'. In the meantime, our litter picker Simon will be covering this stretch – but SMBC need to be asked to litter pick along by Birchy Leasowes Lane which is too dangerous for Simon to do.

Festival on the Green 2018

The Parish Council have agreed to pay for the insurance for this event. It was agreed that the Parish Council would like to have a table at the event, as they did a couple of years ago. The Clerk to follow this up.

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Signature.....

Date.....

Minute 238 (2017/18) Planning Applications

No comments.

Minute 239 (2017/18) Update on Solihull Local Plan (SLP) Review

Solihull MBC have commissioned Mott MacDonald to carry out a technical Highways assessment, and Dickens Heath Parish Council would like to discuss whether they could do some supplementary analysis on the potential future traffic issues for Dickens Heath, along with looking at the problems already on the village roads. Councillor Trevor Eames to set up a meeting for members of the Parish Council with SMBC officers early in June.

Councillor Eames also summarised his report on the local Housing Market Area (which consists of 14 councils) Growth Study. Solihull has included 2,000 extra dwellings in its housing numbers – its contribution to Birmingham’s shortfall. But Solihull is under pressure from all the other councils to take more. The Growth Study has suggested that those sites which are not yet approved could increase their housing density – which could accommodate an additional 13,000 houses across the region. Other possibilities that have been flagged up for Solihull to consider include a new settlement around Balsall Common, a new settlement between Birmingham and Stratford, an urban extension south of the airport/NEC and additional housing around Hollywood/Cheswick Green/Whitlock’s End.

Councillor David Jones asked what sort of dwellings they might be? Councillor Eames said that at this stage, this sort of detail has not been decided – they are just talking about averages and approximate numbers. If settlements include apartments and residential care for the elderly, then there can be a lot of dwellings in a concentrated area.

Minute 240 (2017/18) Islands

The island at Copperfield Court has been tidied up, but further tidying needs to be done, members of the Parish Council to look at this.

Minute 241 (2017/18) Welcome Gates

Councillor Alan Scholes has put together some pictures of how the additional Welcome Gates would look at the 3 further sites. All of these sites are well within the parish boundary. There is only room for a double gateway on Dickens Heath Rd by the Bellway site. The other 2 sites, on Rumbush Lane and Tythe Barn Lane, could have one gateway plus a single post or a gateway return (one side of a gateway) on the other side of the road. All agreed that they preferred the gateway return option for Rumbush Lane and Tythe Barn Lane. No quotes have yet been received, but on the basis that the double gateway is a similar price to that installed by Miller and Carter, and the other gateways will be a lower price, all agreed that this should be progressed.

The Clerk to remind Matt Gardner of SMBC about removing the old sign just before clock island.

Minute 242 (2017/18) Memorial

Councillor Alan Scholes gave an update on progress with the memorial stone – the stonemason has estimated a cost of around £6,000 for the stone plus installation. The stonemason is of the view that they are qualified to do the installation, but they need to liaise with SMBC over the necessary accreditation required to work on the highway. Officers at SMBC can provide us with the names of 3 suitable contractors if necessary.

Minute 243 (2017/18) Dickens Heath Sports Club Calendar

Dickens Heath Sports Club has offered the Parish Council the use of its facilities and grounds for 5 days per year – they have agreed that this can be for 3 years from 2019.

Minute 244 (2017/18) Community Chest

Two applications have been received so far, and a reminder has been publicised.

Minute 245 (2017/18) Councillors who have attended Outside Groups or Events In Bloom Spring Seminar

Councillors Maureen Holloway, Di Potter and Doreen Wright attended the In Bloom Spring Seminar in Upton upon Severn. Trish Willetts, of In Bloom, is very enthusiastic and has some great ideas – but they have groups of volunteers to do the work. In Dickens Heath there has been very little response to our appeal for volunteers. Parish Councillors simply can't do it all on their own. It was agreed that the Parish Council should enter In Bloom, but not do anything additional to our usual hanging baskets, floral boxes and planters. We can start off small and hopefully it will encourage residents to get involved.

There then followed a debate about communicating with our residents and whether a hand delivered newsletter should be trialled. A resident offered to assist as he has experience of producing a community newsletter, and that hand delivery was very successful. It was agreed that this was a good idea, and the newsletter could also be handed out at Festival on the Green.

Minute 246 (2017/18) Financial Matters

Proposed by Councillor Holloway, seconded by Councillor Eames, **Resolved** that the payments in Appendix I of the April 10th 2018 Agenda be approved – three March 2018 End of Year payments totalling £220.91 and 21 payments for April 2018 totalling £9,359.43 including additional payments of £69.82 to Opus for gas, £72.00 to Sapphire Management Services for a bank holiday alarm call out, £132.47 to ADT for the emergency lighting maintenance for 2018/19 and £213.00 for the insurance for Festival on the Green 2018.

2017/18 End of Year Financial Statements

It was **Resolved**, all agreed, that the 2017/18 end of year financial statements be approved, and the bank reconciliation was checked to the bank statements by Councillor Di Potter. A summary for the new style Annual Return (now called the AGAR) was received.

Pension Fund 2017/18 End of Year Return

This has been done.

Minute 247 (2017/18) Parish Rooms

Concern has been raised about the use of the room by Barnardos for their team meetings. They have used the table tennis table and have damaged it by putting hot drinks on it and forcing it when folding it down so that one of the legs has been bent. The Parish Council feel embarrassed that Barnardos have damaged the table which doesn't belong to the Parish Council but to the table tennis club. It was agreed that the table tennis club be asked to provide a quote for a replacement table, and that Barnardos be asked to pay for the replacement. The Clerk to request a new undated cheque from Barnardos in case of any future damage.

Minute 248 (2017/18) Website

The website is currently down – the Assistant Clerk has been in contact with the hosting provider and Councillor Alan Scholes agreed to have a look at it.

Minute 249 (2017/18) Correspondence

Staff Pay Increase

The employers' side has offered an increase of 2% for 2018/19 and a further increase of 2% for 2019/20. There will also be some additional increases for those on the lower pay points. This is now going to the unions.

Knocked Over Bollards on Dickens Heath Rd and Tythe Barn Lane

These have been reported to SMBC and put in their programme for removal and renewal.

Self Assessment Tool for Parish Councils

This has been provided by NALC to allow parish councils to assess how they are doing and whether there are issues to resolve. Dickens Heath Parish Council scores very favourably.

Minute 250 (2017/18) Proposal to Move the Parish Offices from 1 Wharf House to the Library in Dickens Heath

The Parish Council are waiting for Solihull MBC to formally approve their proposed move in to the Library. A further meeting is scheduled for the end of April 2018.

Minute 251 (2017/18) Items for Next Agenda

General Data Protection Regulation and associated policies for approval.

Meeting ended 8.45pm

Next Meeting : Tuesday May 8th 2018: 6.00pm The Parish Rooms