

The Parish Council of Dickens Heath

Minutes of the Meeting of the Council held on Tuesday October 9th 2018 in the Parish Rooms, Waterside

Present:

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

30 members of the public

Clerk: Ms Helen Marczak

Minute 75 (2018/19) Apologies for Absence

None.

Minute 76 (2018/19) Public Participation

Consultation on Proposed Changes to Subsidised Bus Services in 2019

A resident asked how the proposed changes to the buses will affect Dickens Heath. Chair Maureen Holloway replied that there are various options – but none offer a direct service from Dickens Heath to Solihull, only a circular route via Shirley.

Councillor Trevor Eames summarised the consultation – it covers all the S services, and the routes that will go out to contract, and the consultation time is short because of the need to go out to tender soon. The only route which includes Dickens Heath will start at Shirley station and go via Whitlocks End station, Wythall station, Tidbury Green, Dickens Heath, Cheswick Green and the Stratford road back to Shirley station. It will run both ways.

Another resident asked why the direct service to Solihull was being removed. The reason given is that subsidised services shouldn't run in direct competition, over the same route, as a commercial service. There are around 11 buses per hour which run from Shirley to Solihull which is why Transport for West Midlands (TfWM) feel that Dickens Heath passengers can still easily get to Solihull, albeit with a change of bus in Shirley. The proposals include a direct service from Cheswick Green to Solihull via Cranmore Boulevard and Widney Lane, which will not directly compete with a commercial service.

Other comments made by residents included:

- Dickens Heath will be very negatively impacted by these proposals – there is a lot of proposed development, everyone is supposed to be reducing CO2 emissions – the proposals are nonsense.
- This will affect young people travelling to and from the schools and sixth form college.
- This will double the cost of journeys for those without passes.

A resident asked how CIL (Community Infrastructure Levy) monies come into this? Councillor Eames explained that CIL is only just starting to come on stream from new developments – the Parish Council has not yet received any CIL income from any of the developments currently under construction.

Chair Maureen Holloway said that the Parish Council would propose to make representations to TfWM. None of the current proposals are acceptable for Dickens Heath – but they could extend the S2 service from Cheswick Green to go via Dickens Heath. She suggested that if TfWM were not prepared to listen, then the Parish Council could request they attend a public meeting. Residents present were in agreement with these suggestions.

Councillor Trevor Eames reminded everyone that there is a consultation on line and it ends on Sunday October 14th. It is important that residents make their views known as well. The Clerk to publicise the consultation details.

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Date.....

New Street Lamps on Dickens Heath Rd

A resident commented that the erection of new street lamps on Dickens Heath Rd by Bellway has been a shambles and very poor workmanship. Lots of them don't work, one is in a tree, the ground around them is unfinished. The Parish Council met with Matt Gardner of SMBC today, and Councillor David Jones reassured the resident that SMBC will fine Bellway and complete the work themselves if necessary. The resident added that on the corner of Fishers Drive, Bellway have put in a second lamp post and neither the old nor the new one is working! The Clerk to inform Matt Gardner.

Minute 77 (2018/19) Offers to Buy the Parish Rooms

Three offers have been received to buy the Parish Rooms at the asking price of £195,000 or above. It was proposed that, given that this is public money, the Parish Council should accept the highest offer which is for £198,500. Six Councillors were in favour, with one abstention, **Resolved** that the offer of £198,500 for 1 Wharf House be accepted.

The Parish Council felt that they should appoint a solicitor who has experience of dealing with the sale of long leases in Dickens Heath, and the Wilkes Partnership in Shirley have been recommended. It was agreed that the Clerk should speak to the Wilkes Partnership, with a view to engaging them to deal with the sale of 1 Wharf House.

Minute 78 (2018/19) Declarations of Interest/Requests for Dispensations

None.

Minute 79 (2018/19) Report from Borough Councillors

Borough Councillor Ken Hawkins sent his apologies and thanked the Parish Council for the successful installation of the memorial.

Minute 80 (2018/19) Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Tuesday September 25th 2018

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

Minute 81 (2018/19) Actions from the Minutes of the previous meeting

Newsletter

A newsletter for November has been put together with the assistance of a resident – this was agreed, with one minor amendment, for circulation with the November DH Directory. The Clerk to liaise with Gail Orton.

Memorial Dedication Service

The memorial dedication service will take place on Saturday November 3rd 2018 at noon. It was agreed that the Borough Councillors and Caroline Spelman MP should be invited, and the parents of Ryan Carter (who wrote the poem on the memorial) to be contacted to ask whether Ryan would like to read his poem as it will be part of the service. The Clerk asked whether a road closure should be requested – but this was not felt to be necessary given the width of the pavement. The Parish Council thanked Councillor Alan Scholes for all of his hard work in ensuring that the memorial was successfully installed.

Halloween 2018

The Clerk has been in touch with the Police and Parking Services to ask that the traffic wardens attend and that there is a Police presence in Dickens Heath for Halloween, following the numbers of people and cars that descended on the village at Halloween last year.

Request for Bin in SMBC Nature Reserve

Matt Gardner of SMBC has agreed to ask about this.

Complaints about the State of Braggs Farm Lane & Cleobury Lane

Cleobury Lane is on SMBC's programme of works. SMBC have confirmed that there will soon be a consultation on whether to make Braggs Farm Lane a no through road.

Bent Lamp Post on Main St

Councillor Trevor Eames has sent a photo of this to Elegant Homes for action.

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Minute 82 (2018/19) Planning Applications

An additional planning application was also considered:

- 2018/02780 - 1 Old Dickens Heath Rd, for a ground floor single storey extension with pitched roof & vaulted ceiling with skylights to replace existing conservatory & take down rear wall in kitchen to make an open plan kitchen & living space.

No comments on either planning application.

Minute 83 (2018/19) SMBC Issues

Braggs Farm Lane – Prohibition of Driving

SMBC have confirmed that they will soon be advertising a consultation on a proposal to introduce a prohibition of driving on Braggs Farm Lane, which will effectively make it a no through road and facilitate its use as a recreational route for the benefit of residents. The consultation is due to run from October 19th for 21 days.

Winter Hand Gritter

SMBC are offering all parish councils a hand salt spreader free of charge. It was agreed that this offer should be taken up – in icy conditions, the hand gritter could either be used by Simon or resident volunteers.

Minute 84 (2018/19) Village Issues

Welcome to the Village Signs

The rest of the signs have been delivered to SMBC's depot, SMBC will liaise with Councillor Alan Scholes regarding the installation.

Youth Group

The Youth Group are still not meeting at the Parish Rooms, the Police will be notifying the Parish Council of the date of their 'World Café' consultation event for the young people of Dickens Heath.

Village Green/Playground/Country Park

The Liquidators who currently control the Village Green and Country Park (small nature reserve) have indicated that they would prefer to dispose of both pieces of land as a package. The Parish Council have indicated for some time that they wish to take on responsibility for the Village Green and playground, but would prefer the Country Park to be owned by SMBC, who already own the large Nature Reserve. The Clerk to get in touch with Adam Noone, SMBC Ecologist. There was some discussion about the bridge over the canal to the Country Park – the ownership of this is unclear – the PC agreed that they do not have the expertise to be responsible for this bridge.

Remembrance Sunday

Councillor David Jones will be in contact with the Tesco manager regarding a power supply for the Service and to confirm that, due to the road closure, no deliveries will be possible late morning. Councillor Jones will also be following up whether the bugler will once again be able to attend.

Minute 85 (2018/19) Reports from Councillors who have attended Outside Groups or Events

Solihull Area Committee

Councillor Trevor Eames had some follow up information about the PC Charter with SMBC from the last SAC meeting. This involved advertising signs on traffic islands. Meriden Parish Council had objected to a planning application for a new advertising sign on a traffic island – and they used the Parish Council Charter to say that no consultation had taken place. Highways then withdrew the planning application. On the basis of the Charter it is therefore possible to get planning applications refused.

Solihull Locality Planning Meeting

A presentation detailed a Solihull MBC initiative to try to integrate community input into decision making – this splits the Borough into 3 areas in order to encourage more community input.

Minute 86 (2018/19) Financial Matters

Proposed by Councillor Potter, seconded by Councillor Holloway, **Resolved** that the payments in Appendix I of the October 9th 2018 Agenda be approved – 1 direct debit and 17 payments totalling £9,418.55 for October 2018.

Direct Debit Form

A direct debit form for the annual ICO Data Protection Fee was signed.

Report on the Finances of the Council

This was received. It was noted that the second instalment of the precept has been received from SMBC, the memorial has been paid for, and there is currently a surplus of £132,000. It was agreed that the PC should once again donate £100 for the Village Christmas tree. Councillor Di Potter verified the bank reconciliation to the bank statement as at the end of September 2018.

Internal Audit Report 2017/18

The recommendations within the 2017/18 Internal Audit Report were reviewed. It was agreed that various procedures should be reviewed within the next year. The suggestion that a financial package could be looked at was considered, and it was agreed that now was not the right time, but should be considered again next year.

Minute 87 (2018/19) Social Media Policy

This was approved.

Minute 88 (2018/19) Grant Applications

A grant application has been received today which relates to railings for Waterside – to be considered at the November meeting.

Minute 89 (2018/19) CorrespondenceCopy of Consortium Agreement

SMBC have forwarded by email a copy of the Consortium Agreement for Dickens Heath dated December 18th 1996, it was agreed that a digital copy should be kept.

WALC Community Fund

WALC has a new grant fund which is open to bids from WALC members. Bids are limited to 20% of project costs and a maximum value of £8,000, and must deliver something of value to the local community.

Defibrillator for St Patrick's Primary School

St Patrick's Primary School PTA are looking to purchase a defibrillator for the school and wondered whether the Parish Council would be willing to make a contribution. Councillor Alan Scholes suggested that they may be able to source a free defibrillator, but if not the PC would be willing to contribute £100 towards it.

Litter Picking Hubs

This SMBC initiative will set up 'Litter Picking Hubs' at various libraries in Solihull, from which those who would like to do some litter picking will be able to pick up kits which contain green bags, Love Solihull vests and litter pickers. Unfortunately Dickens Heath library is not included – probably, as Councillor David Jones noted, because the previous litter picking initiative in Dickens Heath was not a success.

Minute 90 (2018/19) Items for Next Agenda

Waterside railings grant application.

Meeting ended 9.35pm

Next Meeting : Tuesday November 13th 2018: 7.15pm The Parish Rooms

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Date.....