

The Parish Council of Dickens Heath

Minutes of the Meeting of the Council held on Tuesday November 17th 2015 in the Parish Rooms, Waterside

Present:

Dickens Heath Parish Councillors; Robert Cudmore, Trevor Eames, Stephen Gussin (Chairman), Maureen Holloway, Diane Potter, Doreen Wright.

3 members of the public

Clerk: Ms Helen Marczak

Minute 150 (2015/16) Minute's Silence

A one minute silence was held in support of those affected by recent events in Paris.

Minute 151 (2015/16) Apologies for Absence

Apologies were accepted from Councillor Brandum.

Minute 152 (2015/16) Public Participation

Highway Issues

The pot holes in Rumbush Lane are really bad, the Clerk to chase Solihull MBC about this again. There are holes in the tarmac of the kidney island and the island at Meadowpleck, plus at the kidney island – the roots of the trees on the island are lifting the metal grills. The island as you go out to Tidbury Green is still awaiting maintenance. The Clerk to follow these up with SMBC. These maintenance issues are on the SMBC autumn/winter programme, but regular maintenance is really needed. The Clerk to arrange a meeting with Matt Gardner and Kath Hemmings.

Garden Squares II

Elegant Homes are finishing the car park behind Tesco first, which will create around 20 additional spaces overall. Some of the planning applications are in, with a few minor changes to the previous planning applications, and work is expected to start in the New Year.

Future Developments

Services are being put in for the new housing developments and residents have not been pre-warned, which is causing problems. The verges have been damaged. Unfortunately, development will always mean some disruptive works, and the damaged verges will be reinstated. If the developers are obstructing the road, then they should put up traffic lights.

A resident asked about landscaping on the Braggs Farm Lane development – this should be part of the planning process and residents should be able to comment.

Minute 153 (2015/16) Declarations of Interest/Requests for Dispensations

None.

Minute 154 (2015/16) Gardening/Landscaping Issues

Four additional planters have been delivered – there are 3 behind Tesco, and one by the GP Surgery to close off the path to vehicles, and the verge here has also been seeded. Councillor Bob Cudmore to source some additional plants.

Minute 155 (2015/16) Minutes of previous meeting held on Tuesday October 20th 2015

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

Minute 156 (2015/16) Minutes of Extraordinary Meeting held on Tuesday November 10th 2015

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

As an update, the petition regarding HS2 was successfully handed in and will be referred on. The Parish Council thanked Councillor Trevor Eames for his work on this.

Minute 157 (2015/16) Actions from the Minutes of the previous meeting

Key box at Parish Rooms

A key box had been suggested as a way to manage the couple of spare keys we have for ad hoc users of the Parish Rooms. Our insurance company has said that this would have no effect on the insurance, however, if a claim was made and there was no evidence of forced entry – then they may turn down the claim. The Parish Council agreed that a key box should not be installed at the moment.

Fencing at the Bellway Site

Some of the protective fencing had been removed – Planning enforcement have replied to say that this has now been rectified and will remain in place.

Island Sponsorship

Advice is still awaited from SMBC regarding how they arrange sponsorship of their islands.

Fly Tipping

The fly tipping at Birchy Leasowes Lane has now been removed.

Hedge Planting in the Conservation Area

We are waiting to be advised of a date by the SMBC Ecologist.

'Parking Space' by GP Surgery

The white lines are due to be removed by SMBC imminently, Councillor Doreen Wright to check on this.

Community Facility at the School – Consultation

A drop in session is proposed for Thursday December 3rd in the library.

Christmas Lights

2 types of solar lights have been tested by Councillor Bob Cudmore, both work well, with the smaller (and more cost effective) fairy lights looking to be the most suitable. It was agreed that these lights should be trialled on 2 islands including the clock island, subject to final agreement from SMBC Highways.

Anti Social Behaviour by Young People

Further advice has been sought from the ASB officers. Again it was reiterated that instances of ASB need to be logged with the Police, so that they know there is a problem and can plan visits to the area accordingly. If it is known who the young people are, or where they live, then the ASB officers will visit them and speak to their parents. But if this was after 5pm, it would be the Police who would do this. If there were any local youth centres, then they could possibly do some outreach work, but there are none in Dickens Heath. The ASB officers would not recommend the use of CCTV on the Village Green – CCTV is subject to a lot of legislation and should only be used to prove crime and not simply for observation. They did however suggest that the Police have a 'nomad camera' which can be put up for a few weeks. In their experience, this tends to be a temporary solution and only deters crime until the camera has gone. The Parish Council agreed that some enquiries should be made about applying for the nomad camera.

Someone has pulled the plants out of the planter on Main St, there is CCTV on Main St but the images were not clear. Councillor Trevor Eames to follow this up.

Removal of Padlocks

Padlocks have been removed from dropdown bollards at the back of Copperfield Court and behind the Chalice. This has not been done by SMBC, DHMC or Elegant Homes.

Playground Inspection

This has been circulated to Councillors.

Minute 158 (2015/16) Planning ApplicationsPlanning application 2015/52482 - Buildings 17,19 and 20 Rumbush Lane - Elegant Homes

The 2002 planning consent is still valid as work was started. The 2011 planning application has never been implemented, so it has reverted back to the original 2002 planning consent which includes a lot more detail. There will be a further planning application from Elegant Homes, who are saying that there is no obligation for their development to contribute to the Village common areas including Main St. This will really disadvantage current leaseholders, the Parish Council agreed that Planning sub-committee members will look into this and report back. The original s106 agreement should hold unless all parties agree to change it. It was agreed that the Clerk ask Planning for an extension to the deadline in order for the Parish Council to consider a response.

No comments on the other planning applications.

Minute 159 (2015/16) Financial Matters

Proposed by Councillor Holloway, seconded by Councillor Potter, **Resolved** that the payments in Appendix I of the November 17th 2015 Agenda be approved – 19 cheques and 3 direct debits totalling £2,000.09.

The Parish Council currently has a surplus of £105,000 and is projecting a surplus of almost £79,000 at the year end.

A form regarding tax compliance needs to be completed for the bank, Councillor Bob Cudmore agreed to look at this with the Clerk.

Minute 160 (2015/16) Reports from Councillors who attended any outside events

There has been a further meeting about the library – it is still under review, it is expensive to run as the service charge is very high, and it is not highly used.

Minute 161 (2015/16) Richborough Estates and Any Other Developments

Developers are interested in a couple of other plots of land in the vicinity of Dickens Heath – the Parish Council will be keeping an eye on this.

Minute 162 (2015/16) Remembrance Sunday Service

This was a great success in the new location of the Village Green in front of the Village Hall, with approximately 130 people in attendance including the Dickens Heath beavers and cubs. Andrew Simpkins of Dickens Heath Village Church had the posters and flyers printed, and has asked the Parish Council for a £45 contribution towards this. This was put to a vote, and the Parish Council voted against this by 4 votes to 2. Those voting against it would prefer to be consulted in advance.

The location of the proposed memorial was discussed, given the change in location for the Remembrance Service. It was agreed that the original location, opposite the library and Tesco, was still most appropriate as Solihull MBC own the land whereas the Village Green is in private hands. The Clerk to provide Councillor Trevor Eames with information regarding the dimensions of the proposed memorial, and Councillor Eames to follow up the information required for the memorial planning application.

Minute 163 (2015/16) Community Carol Singing & Village Christmas Tree

Community Carol Singing

The community carol singing is taking place on Tuesday December 15th at 6.30pm, which is the same evening as the Parish Council meeting. This was the best night for St John's and St Patrick's Churches, and for Tesco who are providing refreshments. It was agreed that the Parish Council meeting be delayed until 7.30pm to allow residents and Councillors to attend both if they so wished.

Village Christmas Tree

In past years, the Parish Council has paid for the Christmas tree that Dickens Heath Village Church erect on the Village Green. It was agreed that the Parish Council would again fund the tree. The church would also like some new lights for the tree - it was agreed that, if they were suitable, the church could have one of the sets of solar lights that the Parish Council have recently trialled for decorating clock island.

Christmas Cards and Staff Gifts

The Parish Council didn't feel there was any need to start sending out Christmas cards, and they agreed the purchase of a small gift for the Parish Council's admin assistant and litter picker.

Minute 164 (2015/16) Events on Halloween

A lot of Dickens Heath houses were decorated for Halloween, and there were many people out and in the roads during the evening. There were some instances of anti-social behaviour, and concerns have been voiced on Facebook about this, and the health and safety of so many people in the roads. There was a suggestion that maybe some roads should be closed. However, road closures involve a lot of work beforehand, and people being prepared to man the barriers during the closure. The Parish Council agreed that, for next year, a Police presence should be requested in the village for Halloween.

Minute 165 (2015/16) Requests for Financial Assistance, Grants & Donations

Three requests for financial assistance/grants have been received:

Leaffield Under 9's Football Team

The team have raised around £500 towards £1,000 for new water bottles and track tops for around 30 boys, the majority of whom live in Dickens Heath. The Parish Council agreed a grant of £300.

Dickens Heath Library

The library have provided feedback on how they have spent their grant from the Parish Council - this included the Summer Reading Challenge launch party. They are looking to set up further clubs for senior residents and mums and babies, they have asked for a further donation of £200 to purchase items for these. This was agreed.

Festival on the Green

The Parish Council have been asked whether they would support this event again in 2016. Before making a decision, the Parish Council would like to see feedback on how the grant for the 2015 event was spent.

Minute 166 (2015/16) Parish Rooms

Lighting

There are some issues with the lighting - the low level spotlights all need to be changed to LED bulbs, one of the suspended lights needs maintenance and several of the fluorescent tubes need replacing. The quote for £220 was agreed.

Carpets

A quote for cleaning the carpets of £180 was agreed.

Minute 167 (2015/16) Progress of SMBC Works

The drain cover on Old Dickens Heath Rd has now been replaced and the barriers removed. SMBC have never confirmed who actually paid for the additional work that had to be done.

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Signature.....

Date.....

Minute 168 (2015/16) Litter Collection

Our litter picker Stephen's foot is still not completely better, so he is still not able to do the increased hours.

Minute 169 (2015/16) Youth Club

The pool table is broken, the Clerk to follow this up with the youth club.

Minute 170 (2015/16) Correspondence

Changes to Local Policing

Savings have to be made and so under utilized buildings (including Shirley Police Station) will be closed and the numbers of PCSOs will be reduced. The Parish Council wish to express their concern at the reduction in PCSOs.

Minute 171 (2015/16) Items for next agenda

None.

Meeting ended 9.15pm

Next Meeting : Tuesday December 15th 2015: 7.30pm The Parish Rooms