

The Parish Council of Dickens Heath

Minutes of the Meeting of the Council held on Tuesday November 15th 2016 in the Parish Rooms, Waterside

Present:

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

11 members of the public

Clerk: Ms Helen Marczak

Minute 108 (2016/17) Apologies for Absence

None.

Minute 109 (2016/17) Public Participation

Planning Application for Coppice on Rumbush Lane

The trees in the Coppice are under threat again with a planning application for a dwelling and an appeal against the Tree Preservation Order. Councillor Trevor Eames stated that a draft objection is on the agenda for the Parish Council to discuss. The planning application would necessitate the removal of several trees, but the trees are still protected and the hearing for the appeal should take place after the planning application is decided. If there are a significant number of objections from residents, then this should go to the Planning Committee and the Parish Council would be able to attend and address the Committee.

Proposals for Further New Housing in Dickens Heath

A resident asked what percentage of additional Solihull housing is proposed to be sited on this side of the Borough. Councillor Eames said that of the 6,150 additional dwellings planned, 5,250 are on Green Belt land and 2,550 are proposed for the Dickens Heath and Cheswick Green part of Blythe. This means 41% of the total will be sited in Blythe, the housing is not being distributed fairly across the Borough. The proposals include 1,300 dwellings in Dickens Heath, 850 at Lighthall Farm, Cheswick Green and 400 on the TRW site. The TRW site is not contentious. The Plan has been approved by the Cabinet at SMBC and so it is now going out to public consultation on December 5th 2016.

Effect on Infrastructure of Proposed Further Housing

A resident asked whether the local infrastructure could cope with all the proposed extra houses. Parish Councillors commented that the process had not yet got to that stage, and the Planners only had to demonstrate that sites are deliverable and sustainable in the period to 2033. The extra infrastructure required will be funded through a charge on the developers. The resident commented that existing drainage is already a problem without coping with additional housing. There is a problem with the drains smelling in Hutchings Lane whenever there is a dry spell. This to be reported to Solihull MBC.

Effect on Schools of Proposed Further Housing

A resident asked whether there would be a new school to cope with all the additional families in the area. Councillor Eames said that the Parish Council and SMBC have looked at the number of primary places in Blythe, and there is enough capacity for all the developments that have already been approved. Tidbury Green school could potentially increase back to 2 form entry. Secondary places have not been looked at, nor the demands of the proposed further developments.

The Condition of Dickens Heath Road

Dickens Heath Rd through the village is in an appalling state, with the block paved islands patched up with black tarmac. The Parish Council understand residents' concerns, but SMBC are waiting for the current developments to be completed. The future plan is to remove the block paving and to tarmac it all. Any serious pot holes should be reported to SMBC for patching.

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Signature.....

Date.....

Remembrance Sunday

A resident commented that the Remembrance Service was very good and gets better each year.

Island at Waterside

This has now been adopted by SMBC, the double yellow lines should now be finished off and then they can be enforced.

Councillor Alan Scholes briefly left the meeting.

Minute 110 (2016/17) Declarations of Interest/Requests for Dispensations

None.

Minute 111 (2016/17) Report from the Borough Councillors

None present.

Minute 112 (2016/17) Minutes of previous meeting held on Tuesday October 18th 2016

Proposed by Councillor Wright, seconded by Councillor Potter, it was **Resolved** that the minutes be approved as a true and accurate record, with 2 minor amendments to the wording.

Councillor Alan Scholes returned to the meeting.

Minute 113 (2016/17) Actions from the Minutes of the previous meeting

Youth Group

Hannah has carried out a fire drill with the Youth Group.

Parish Councillor Emails

Emails to be set up for the new Councillors.

Collaboration with Tidbury Green PC

A meeting date to be agreed.

Barber's Pole at Kents

Following another complaint about the noisy barber's pole, Kent's have switched it off and will be getting the motor replaced.

Replanted Traffic Islands

There are still some weeds on the islands, and there was a debate about whether the invoice should be part paid. It was agreed that the invoice should be paid in full, but that further weed treatment be requested.

Youth Facility Consultation

A resident has complained that they have only just found out about this consultation from The Only Way is Dickens, but it is too late for them to participate. This to be mentioned during the consultation feedback meeting with Chris Barr.

Parking on the Bus Route by the Village Green

The possibility of putting polite letters through doors or on cars to remind residents to park considerately to be followed up again with Matt Gardner and the Police.

Anti Social Behaviour in Hirdemons Way

Councillor Maureen Holloway has been in touch with the Police and all information has been forwarded to them.

Dickens Heath Sports Club

The shutters at the new club facilities have been vandalised twice, Police contacts have been forwarded to the Club.

Solar Christmas Trees

Plantscape, who provide the solar trees, have been taken over during 2016. The Parish Council have ordered hanging trees, which Plantscape provided last Christmas. But there has been some confusion over whether the correct brackets are on the lamp posts. It has transpired that the hanging trees require different brackets to the floral baskets and it is now too late to arrange for the different brackets. Plantscape obviously arranged for a temporary fix last Christmas, but this year they are unable to. They have offered to instead install the half trees which use the brackets that are already in place. This will be slightly more expensive than the quote for the hanging trees. This was agreed, to ensure that the trees are up on time.

Halloween 2016

The Police attended, and all seemed to have gone well this year.

Minute 114 (2016/17) Planning Applications

Tree work at 9 Brixfield Way - the tree officer's report is in agreement with this tree work, so no comments.

Land SSW of 146 Rumbush Lane – this is the Coppice, and the Planning Sub-Committee have drafted an objection which points out that the decision taken in August to refuse permission to build should still hold. All of the reasons for refusing planning permission in August still stand, and so it was agreed that this objection should be sent in to Planning.

Minute 115 (2016/17) Planning Sub-Committee

It was agreed that the membership of the Planning Sub-Committee should remain the same for the moment.

Neighbourhood Plan Steering Committee

A very lengthy meeting had been held the previous evening. Two additional members had been appointed to the Steering Committee. A working group has been set up to go through the draft questionnaire, with the aim of sending it out with the DH Directory in the New Year. Four weeks will be allowed for responses, then the results can be analysed. The next meeting will be held on December 12th. Councillor Scholes suggested that as Meriden have a good questionnaire, this could be used as a basis for ours. Once the questionnaire is ready, some expert planning advice will be required to check that everything necessary has been included. Councillor Trevor Eames has been the Committee Chairman initially, but is happy to stand back and take more of an overview role with a technical planning input. Adam Weber has expressed an interest in being the Chairman, and so this will be discussed at the next meeting of the Steering Committee.

Minute 116 (2016/17) Solihull Local Plan Review & Proposed Additional Development

Solihull MBC have recently emailed to inform us that there will be a consultation running from early December until January 30th 2017. The Parish Council will be making a response, Planning Sub-Committee to discuss a draft which will take into account the views of residents, businesses and neighbouring Parish Councils.

Minute 117 (2016/17) Village Issues

Hanging Baskets

Councillor Jill Lovett said that the hanging baskets and the islands looked lovely and were very well looked after. She would like to discuss an expansion of this for 2017 – to be included on a future agenda.

Memorial

Councillor Jill Lovett feels that the Parish Council should make a considered decision on the memorial which is based on a lot of thought. Through Historic England, she has been looking at 66 different signs, with regard to listing, and has had to consider what might make them historic. She feels that the memorial needs to say something about Dickens Heath – it doesn't have a long history, what can it carry into the future? It needs to be a memorial for the long term. It was agreed that Councillor Lovett should draft a plan which will cover the aim of the project, methodology and limitations (eg cost and maintenance). The Clerk to forward to her Ryan Carter's words, which are due to be included. Councillor David Jones suggested that a piece of stone with a plaque would be suitable for the proposed memorial site. There are some pieces of stone with a hole in the middle, which look very modern and would be suitable for Dickens Heath.

Noticeboard at the School

It has been suggested that if the Parish Council had a noticeboard at the school, this could be a good way to engage with the parents in the Village. It was agreed that the Clerk should contact the school with this suggestion.

Minute 118 (2016/17) Reports from Councillors who have attended Outside Groups Youth Group

Councillor Doreen Wright attended the Youth Group meeting – they are going to take part in the Scarecrow Nativity, and would like to place their scarecrow in the planter outside the Parish Rooms. This was agreed.

A fire drill has been carried out with the Youth Group, this will be repeated twice yearly.

Minute 119 (2016/17) Feedback on Remembrance Sunday

This was very successful and many residents have made positive comments that the event is going from strength to strength.

Minute 120 (2016/17) Community Christmas Carol Singing

The proposed date of Monday December 19th 2016 at 6.30pm was agreed, the Clerk to liaise with Tesco about refreshments.

Minute 121 (2016/17) Financial Matters

Proposed by Councillor Potter, seconded by Councillor Lovett, **Resolved** that the payments in Appendix I of the November 15th 2016 Agenda be approved – 18 payments totalling £2,978.21, plus the routine payments for December 2016 (there is no Parish Council meeting in December).

- The Parish Council currently has a surplus of almost £106,000, and is projecting a surplus of £74,000 at the year end.
- It was agreed that the Clerk could purchase a new printer for the office.

Minute 122 (2016/17) CorrespondenceBroadband Consultation

This consultation is running to the end of November 2016, it was agreed that this survey was for individuals to complete.

Street Lighting on the Edge of the Village

A resident has commented that there is little street lighting between Wythall train station and Dickens Heath, and between Tidbury Green and Dickens Heath – which makes it difficult to see on winter nights. The Parish Council agreed that there is a need to press for additional lighting, and that if the extension to the train station car park goes ahead, then this should help.

Minute 123 (2016/17) Items for Next Agenda

Budget and Precept.

Minute 124 (2016/17) It was Resolved that, in accordance with paras I and II Part I of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public should be asked to withdraw due to the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted.

Minute 125 (2016/17) Traders' Temporary Parking in the Village Centre and Parking in the Future

Councillor Trevor Eames gave an update on the temporary parking proposal.

Meeting ended 9.15pm

Next Meeting : Tuesday January 17th 2017: 7.00pm The Parish Rooms