

# The Parish Council of Dickens Heath

## Minutes of the Meeting of the Council held on Tuesday October 10<sup>th</sup> 2017 in the Parish Rooms, Waterside

### **Present:**

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

In Bloom Judge; Trish Willetts

4 members of the public

Clerk: Ms Helen Marczak

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### **Minute 112 (2017/18) Apologies for Absence**

None.

### **Minute 113 (2017/18) Trish Willetts – In Bloom Judge**

The Parish Council are very interested in looking into whether Dickens Heath can participate in In Bloom for 2018, and so have invited Trish Willetts to discuss the procedure. Trish introduced herself as a Regional Judge for Heart of England in Bloom. In Bloom is a national campaign of the RHS, there are 172 areas in the campaign and around 200 neighbourhoods. For example, Solihull, Birmingham city centre, Moseley and Acocks Green are all involved. Individual small roads can also enter and be rewarded. Trish would be very happy to support Dickens Heath through the process, and with the route. In Bloom is all about building community spirit and encouraging people to improve their own area.

In Bloom has 3 main pillars, and a portfolio is required with evidence of each:

- Horticulture
- Community involvement – which could include the school, the PC, sponsorship by businesses
- Environment – for example Dickens Heath has the Nature Reserve

There will be a Spring seminar in March, which representatives of the Parish Council can attend, and Trish can put us in touch with nurseries – eg. Birmingham City Council grow their own plants and sell them at cost. The application needs to be made by April 2018 and judging takes place in July and August.

Jenny Redfern is the current co-ordinator, she is retiring soon and Trish will be taking over this role. Trish has worked with Birmingham City Council and in this time they won Gold at Chelsea.

A route needs to be earmarked, this can be on foot or by car, and can include individual properties. Trish reassured the Parish Council that the hanging baskets provided by Plantscape would definitely count. She advised that photographic evidence should be taken through the year for the portfolio – eg. Planting out, bulbs, autumn trees in the Nature Reserve, carol singing etc. Other ideas include asking the school children to, for example, make flowers for the judges.

### **Minute 114 (2017/18) Public Participation**

#### Litter Picks

The monthly community litter picks have been put on hold due to lack of support. A resident asked why there was such a disappointing turn out, and whether the community knew about the litter picks – where he lived previously, residents produced a monthly newsletter in which community events were advertised very successfully. The litter picks were advertised as widely as possible short of putting information through doors. Trish Willetts added that leaflets are hand delivered in Berkswell, and it does go down well. Councillor David Jones said that he would be willing to give the litter picks another go, Councillor Di Potter suggested maybe every other month? Councillor Doreen Wright added that maybe the Dickens Heath Directory could advertise a New Year resolution of attending the litter picks, or a flyer could

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be sent out with the Dickens Heath Directory. It was agreed that this should go on the agenda for the November meeting.

Garden Squares Carpark

Garden Squares East residents are now sharing a car park entrance. Councillor Trevor Eames said that there will be 2 entrances, they will be linked and a common fob will operate both.

Knocked Lamp Post

A lamp post has been knocked over, Councillor Eames will follow this up.

**Minute 115 (2017/18) Declarations of Interest/Requests for Dispensations**

None.

**Minute 116 (2017/18) Report from the Borough Councillors**

None.

**Minute 117 (2017/18) Minutes of the Meeting of the Council held on Tuesday September 12<sup>th</sup> 2017**

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

**Minute 118 (2017/18) Actions from the Minutes of the previous meeting**

Unstable Gate to Village Green

This gate has been checked, and although uneven, is fairly solid.

Unlocked Utilities Building in Car Park behind Mortons

This wooden cabinet is broken, although the electrics inside it are secure. DHMC handyman to repair it.

Solar Xmas Trees

The price has increased for 2017, but a 25% discount has been agreed (due to failings of the 2016 trees) and so the trees have been ordered.

Request to Move 30mph Sign to before Dykens Way

SMBC Neighbourhood Co-ordinator to raise this with SMBC Highways.

Dangerous Parking alongside Village Green on Bus Route

This has been raised numerous times by residents and the Parish Council. The Police have stated that, according to their records, there have been no reported accidents here. And so both the Police and SMBC agree that the parked cars slow the traffic down, which is important in this environment. Highways have therefore confirmed that there are no plans for further parking restrictions in this location.

Weeds on Islands

The Solihull Rangers no longer do income generation, so SMBC have been asked if they can include weed spraying in their programme, with the Parish Council meeting the additional cost if necessary.

Planters

All of the planters have now been repainted, it was agreed that photos of these should be taken.

Flower Boxes

Flower boxes have been donated by Elegant Homes, and Parish Councillors have now fitted them to the island at Waterside and planted them up with winter bedding plants.

Halloween 2017

PCSO Wendy Shale has requested a Police presence in Dickens Heath if at all possible.

**Minute 119 (2017/18) Planning Applications**

An additional planning application 2017/02693 for tree works at 95 Birchy Leasowes Lane was considered. It was agreed that the Parish Council would object to the removal of poplar tree T1 as it is in a prominent position on the frontage, and would also object to the removal of oak tree T3 unless the SMBC Tree Officer agrees that it is in poor health, and would ask to be advised if any of the other trees are subject to Tree Preservation Orders.

No comments on the other planning applications.

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### **Minute 120 (2017/18) Remembrance Sunday Service and Installation of Memorial Memorial**

Unfortunately, the memorial stone has been broken as it was being prepared for delivery by the supplier and so it will not be possible to have the memorial in place for this year's Remembrance Sunday Service. The process of looking for an alternative suitable stone has begun, and stones in various quarries are being researched. Councillor Alan Scholes has taken delivery of the plaque, and all agreed it was very nice. It was suggested that the planters could be planted up with red plants.

#### Remembrance Sunday Service

SMBC officers have decided that the road closures for this year's service will have to be restricted to the same closures as in previous years. As the memorial will not be in place after all, the service will again be held in front of the library. All other plans are in progress.

### **Minute 121 (2017/18) Pavement Cleansing**

Members of the Parish Council met earlier today with SMBC officers to discuss pavement cleansing. Last year, the Parish Council had contributed towards the jet washing of pavements around the islands, and then had agreed to forego one of the monthly litter picks in Dickens Heath so that these pavements could be cleansed on an on-going basis. But this cleansing does not seem to have actually materialised. The Waterside island has been recently cleansed after a resident fell and made a claim against SMBC. The rest of the islands are now very slippery and look unsightly. The Parish Council had understood that the pavements would be getting a manual brushing, but this is not the case – it would be a mechanical brush, and the SMBC officers explained that they had had problems with the mechanical cleaner, but the pavements should now get a good mechanical clean once a month. However, the block paving is porous, and may gradually get eroded.

### **Minute 122 (2017/18) Community Facility**

Solihull MBC have carried out a feasibility study of the school site versus the Dickens Heath Sports Club site. The Parish Council had asked for a proper consultation with residents, but SMBC are convinced that a facility at the school is right for the village – because of its location. The debate about a youth/community facility has been going on for 10 years now, the funds need to be spent, or they will be lost. The next stage will be the submission of a planning application, and this should bring out any objections that the community have. The Parish Council made it clear that they are neither supporting nor objecting to a facility at the school, but they did want the community to be fully consulted, which they don't believe has been done. Now the decision has been made, and the school will be responsible for the facility when it is complete.

### **Minute 123 (2017/18) Gardening/Landscaping**

Solihull Neighbourhood Co-ordinator Matt Gardner has offered to provide daffodil, snowdrop and crocus bulbs.

### **Minute 124 (2017/18) Welcome to the Village Signs**

Solihull MBC have given the go ahead for the Welcome to the Village signs, and so it was agreed that these should be ordered.

### **Minute 125 (2017/18) Village Playground**

The playground has been closed off, no statement has been made by Dickens Heath Management Co. but this is probably because it is an insurance issue. As the playground is shut, if children access it – it is at their own risk. Karl Taylor at DHMC has advised that the playground really needs to be replaced.

Councillor Alan Scholes said that organisations who manage playgrounds need to prove due diligence, in Bristol for example wardens check playgrounds daily with more thorough checks each month and an annual overhaul.

**Minute 126 (2017/18) Parish Councillor Surgery**

No one attended the September surgery – additional reminders to be publicized before the October surgery.

**Minute 127 (2017/18) Youth Club**

The Youth Club will be continuing, and is changing its name to St Patrick's. The carpets are very stained once again, and the tables and chairs are left very sticky. This to be followed up with the Youth Club leaders.

**Minute 128 (2017/18) Councillors who have attended Outside Groups or Events**  
Youth Club Management Meeting

Councillor Doreen Wright went along to this, but very few attended.

**Minute 129 (2017/18) Financial Matters**

Proposed by Councillor Potter, seconded by Councillor Wright, **Resolved** that the payments in Appendix I of the October 10<sup>th</sup> 2017 Agenda be approved – 20 payments totalling £8,784.84 including an additional payment of £10.30 for the service charge balancing charge for 2016.

As the memorial stone has been broken at Earlswood Nurseries, Councillor David Jones will ask for the £100 deposit to be returned.

It was agreed that a meeting should be held in December to discuss the budget and precept for 2018/19.

**Minute 130 (2017/18) Parish Councillor Vacancy**

Applications have been received from 3 very suitable applicants. All agreed, **Resolved** that Nargis Rashid should be co-opted on to the Parish Council, based on her previous involvement with the community and the Neighbourhood Plan.

**Minute 131 (2017/18) Parish Rooms**

None.

**Minute 132 (2017/18) Parish Council Website**

The domain is up for renewal, it was agreed that this should be done.

**Minute 133 (2017/18) Correspondence**

Noise Level of Moduska Event

Old Yardleians have apologised to those who complained about the noise and inconvenience of this event. They had been given assurances that the event had been held elsewhere without problems, but they will not be hosting the event again.

Floral Decorations

Thank you for the floral decorations from a resident.

Community Christmas Carols 2017

This will be held outside Tesco on December 12<sup>th</sup> 2017

Issues at Dickens Manor

Residents are still concerned about children behaving in an anti-social manner on the Bellway site. The children are noisy, but the behaviour probably doesn't warrant Police intervention. If signs about private property have been put up, then no more can be done other than residents taking it up with the estate management co.

**Minute 134 (2017/18) Items for Next Agenda**

Newsletter for January meeting.

**Minute 135 (2017/18) 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 136 (2017/18) Community Facilities**

This was discussed.

**Minute 137 (2017/18) Library**

This was discussed.

**Meeting ended 9.50pm**

**Next Meeting : Tuesday November 14<sup>th</sup> 2017: 7.00pm The Parish Rooms**