

The Parish Council of Dickens Heath

Minutes of the Meeting of the Council held on Tuesday October 20th 2015 in the Parish Rooms, Waterside

Present:

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

5 members of the public

Clerk: Ms Helen Marczak

Minute 123 (2015/16) Apologies for Absence

None.

Minute 124 (2015/16) Public Participation

Highway Issues/Parking

There are huge holes in Rumbush Lane, going towards Tidbury Green. The tarmac is wearing away at the edge of the road. When they are filled with water, cyclists can't tell how deep they are. Solihull MBC to be requested to patch up those that are unsafe.

Garden Squares II

The purchase of Garden Squares II has completed, and Elegant Homes are due to start at the end of November. The car park by the Chalice will be turned into a compound, and this part of the development will be done first – the planning application is the same as the 2011 one and so should be extant.

Future Developments

Bellway have removed some of the protective 'herres' fencing from the woodland – the Clerk to contact the Enforcement Officer at SMBC.

Minute 125 (2015/16) Declarations of Interest/Requests for Dispensations

None.

Minute 126 (2015/16) Gardening/Landscaping Issues

Planters

Parish Councillors Doreen Wright, Di Potter and Bob Cudmore have replanted all the planters.

Conservation Area

Members of the Parish Council also met with the SMBC Ecologist in the Conservation Area – she has the funding for a new hedge to provide additional habitat for wildlife and can provide 500 tiny shrubs. It was agreed that the Ecologist be contacted for a potential date, and the Scouts be invited to help with the planting.

Minute 127 (2015/16) Minutes of previous meeting held on Tuesday September 15th 2015

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

Minute 128 (2015/16) Actions from the Minutes of the previous meetingWalkway at the back of Copperfield Court

The padlocks on the drop down bollards seem to have disappeared, so vehicles can now drive through. The Clerk to ask Matt Gardner and Barbara at DHMC if they know who has removed the padlocks.

Litter Picking Hours

The Parish Council have increased the funding for this, but our litter picker Stephen has not yet been able to work the additional hours due to a foot injury.

Valuation of Parish Rooms

The valuation was disappointing, it is currently a difficult market in which to sell a property such as the Parish Rooms.

Joint Neighbourhood Plan Proposal

The Parish Council felt that a joint Neighbourhood Plan with Tidbury Green Parish Council would be a beneficial way forward because of the many shared issues – however, TGPC have decided that they do not wish to commit the necessary time and resources to a Neighbourhood Plan at the moment. Councillor Eames has contacted Hampton in Arden PC who are well progressed with their Neighbourhood Plan, and several members of the Parish Council will be attending a future Neighbourhood Planning meeting at SMBC.

Future of the Library

Members of the Parish Council will be attending a further meeting on October 29th 2015.

Conservation Area

A meeting has been held with the SMBC Ecologist about planting some additional trees, they proposed the planting of a hedge to divide the area and provide habitat for wildlife.

SMBC Highway Improvements

Two additional planters are expected soon at the back of Tesco, and the white lines of the 'parking space' by the GP surgery are expected to be removed imminently.

Youth Facility at the School

SMBC are hoping to organise an information event at the end of November.

Christmas Decorations at Clock Island

SMBC have not said no to solar lights along the railings. It was agreed that options for 2 different types of lights be costed up – for all the adopted islands that have railings.

Anti Social Behaviour

The ASB Officer has advised that if residents are concerned about anti social behaviour on the Village Green or dangerous cycling on the public highway, they should call 101 and inform the Police.

Minute 129 (2015/16) Planning Applications

2015/52127 - 11 Fishers Drive is a very small bungalow, and the proposed replacement is a large 2 storey property which is very intensive and close to the fence line at the rear. It was agreed that the Parish Council send in an objection on the grounds that it is over intensive and out of character.

2015/52108 - 1 Hitherside, a comment was sent in to the effect that much of the oak tree still looked healthy and requesting that the SMBC Tree Officer assess the tree on site regarding its residual life and the impact of its removal on the street scene. However, the planning application has now been approved.

Additional planning applications were discussed:

2015/52098 - 251 Dickens Heath Rd - Works to 2 no. TPO trees: Raise crown of Ash (T4) by pruning the lower branch overhanging chicken-run back to the lateral and reduce crown spread of Oak (T3) by reducing the length of branches by 2-3m. The Parish Council agreed to add their support to the SMBC Tree Officer's comments that the Oak be cut back by no more than 2m so as not to overstress the tree.

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2015/52155 - 89 Birchy Close - Raise canopy of oak tree 1 to 3 metres by removing 3 or 4 branches, and raise canopy of oak tree 2 to 3 metres.

2015/52321 - 34 Brockhurst Lane - First floor front extension & ground floor alterations.

2015/51818 - Birchy Farm, 57 Birchy Leasowes Lane - Agricultural shed for storage of feed and equipment.

2015/52133 - Betterridges Farm, Tilehouse Lane - Conversion of ground floor into residential accommodation to form three bedroom dwelling at stables adjacent to Betterridges Barn, including new entrance wall, pillars and gates.

No comments on any of the rest of these additional planning applications.

Minute 130 (2015/16) Financial Matters

Proposed by Councillor Cudmore, seconded by Councillor Wright, **Resolved** that the payments in Appendix I of the October 20th 2015 Agenda be approved – 20 cheques and 1 direct debit totalling £16,537.42. This included an additional cheque for £127.51 to Npower for the closing electricity statement to September 10th 2015.

The Parish Council currently has a surplus of £107,000 and is projecting a surplus of £76,000 at the year end.

In order to set the budget for 2016/17, it was agreed that Councillors would discuss this in a pre meeting to be arranged for late November or early December.

Minute 131 (2015/16) Reports from Councillors who attended any outside events

Councillors Trevor Eames and Doreen Wright attended the SAC meeting – James Carpenter, Head of Development at SMBC, gave a talk, and there was a report from Hampton in Arden PC on the progress of their Neighbourhood Plan.

Minute 132 (2015/16) Further Developments

Elegant Homes

Elegant Homes are starting the work behind Tesco, it was agreed that Barney McElholm be invited to meet with the Parish Council and possibly do a presentation.

Tidbury Green Farm/Lowbrook Farm

The Tidbury Green Farm Appeal has been allowed – for 190 homes. It is likely that the Lowbrook Farm decision will go the same way. Caroline Spelman gave all the support she could, but it is Government policy to support development.

Solihull is very vulnerable at the moment, they do not have a 5 year land supply and no further identified sites. If a developer can show that a site is sustainable, it is likely to be approved unless there are very good grounds against it other than it being Green Belt. James Carpenter has warned that it may be 2 years before SMBC's new Plan is in place.

Minute 133 (2015/16) Remembrance Sunday

Rev Theresa Jones and Andrew Simpkins are putting together the service which will start at 10.50am. They are making it more child friendly given that the beavers and cubs will be in attendance this year, and they are hoping that the choir from the school may also be able to attend to assist with the singing. The service will be held on the Village Green, or in the Village Hall if it is wet, to accommodate the children and larger number in attendance. Therefore there will be no need to close the roads this year. The Scouts Group will march from the school to the Village Green and then afterwards plan to do refreshments for the children and parents. The Parish Council agreed that they would offer refreshments in Coffee Cloud to other participants. The Clerk to liaise with Andrew Simpkins about publicity.

Minute 134 (2015/16) Sponsorship of Traffic Islands

There are 5 islands that can potentially be sponsored, and there are several businesses that are interested. The Parish Council agreed that they would prefer the islands to be sponsored by businesses in Dickens Heath. Any plans for the islands, including the size of the sponsorship signs, will have to be agreed by SMBC – the Clerk to ask Matt Gardner how SMBC deal with islands already sponsored elsewhere in the Borough. The Clerk to also chase up the Welcome to the Village signs.

Minute 135 (2015/16) Tesco Car Park

Councillor Trevor Eames shared information in a letter from Elegant Homes about the work on the car park. Elegant Homes now have full ownership of this car park, they will be using quite a lot of it, and therefore cars will be displaced. Some residents of nearby flats have parking rights, others don't. The construction route will be along Rumbush Lane to Gorcott Lane, this is not ideal but there is no other way in and can't be changed. These issues to be discussed when the Parish Council meet with Barney McElholm.

Minute 137 (2015/16) Village Survey

Councillor Phil Brandum has summarised the findings of the Village Survey. It was a relatively cheap and quick survey which has given a snapshot of residents' views. It has confirmed what the Parish Council already suspected. The issues that residents 'don't like about living in DH' were not a surprise, with parking problems being dominant – parking was mentioned as many times as all of the other issues combined. The top issues of those that residents rated as 'important' are undeveloped sites (now progressing), parking problems, anti social behaviour, dog waste and maintenance of public spaces. The Parish Council can take this information into account when considering future plans and budgets.

Minute 138 (2015/16) Action Plan for next 5 Years

A draft 5 year plan has been produced which can be used to assist in budget setting.

Minute 139 (2015/16) Parish Rooms

The Infant Feeding Co-ordinator at Heart of England NHS Trust has asked whether Health Visitor clinics might be held in the Parish Rooms, as they are no longer able to use Children's Centres. This request has come via the Breastfeeding Café. The Parish Council agreed that in principle they would approve this, but the health visitors would need to be aware that parking is difficult.

Minute 140 (2015/16) Youth Club

The Youth Club holds management meetings every couple of months, and there is no longer a representative of the Parish Council who attends. Councillor Phil Brandum to attend future meetings.

Minute 141 (2015/16) Parking at Whitlocks End

The car park at Whitlocks End is full by 9am every day, this needs to be reiterated with Centro. Solihull Highways are of the view that the park and ride is encouraging people to drive to the station and so there are more cars on the road. When the planning application for the car park extension comes in, support for it will need to be encouraged.

Minute 142 (2015/16) Village Playground

Parkridge is nearly out of receivership now, and may be sold with the DHMC responsibilities to a new company. The Clerk to ask whether the playground passed its inspection.

Minute 143 (2015/16) Staff Issues

Fly tipping was discussed, and whether our handyman could possibly arrange for some of this to be removed. The Parish Council felt that at the moment it was better to publicize the contact details for getting fly tipping removed.

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Minute 144 (2015/16) Correspondence

Neighbourhood Planning Meeting

Representatives of the Parish Council will be attending a SMBC Neighbourhood Planning meeting on November 25th 2015.

SMBC CIL Draft Charging Schedule

This is out for consultation until November 13th 2015.

Highways Query

A resident informed us that reflectors on marker posts on the road to the Crossroads Garage were the wrong way round. Highways have now corrected these very promptly.

Minute 145 (2015/16) Items for next agenda

None.

Minute 146 (2015/16) 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 147 (2015/16) Email Communication

A procedure for dealing with various emails was agreed.

Meeting ended 9.20 pm

Next Meeting : Tuesday November 17th 2015: 7.00pm The Parish Rooms