

## **Parish Council News – December 2018**

### **Parish Council Meetings**

Another year is coming to a close, and as the Parish Council don't have a formal meeting in December, the next meetings will be in the New Year - on Tuesday January 8<sup>th</sup> 2019, and then February 12<sup>th</sup> 2019 – both meetings will start at 7.15pm. Please come and join us, with an opportunity to ask questions at the start of the meeting.

### **Update on the Bus Service from Dickens Heath to Solihull**

Since the last news page in October, there has been a great deal of local concern regarding the local S3 bus service. As the current 5 year contract for subsidised bus services nears its end, Transport for West Midlands (TfWM) published a review and consultation (with a very short timescale). This consultation included the routes that would be put out to tender, with the new contract to be in place for February 2019. To the dismay of the Parish Council and many residents the direct bus route from Dickens Heath to Solihull was not included, with passengers expected to change buses in Shirley. A large number of residents attended October's parish council meeting to voice their frustrations that the growing village was losing an essential service to Solihull. Councillor Trevor Eames, along with other members of the Parish Council, has worked tirelessly on trying to persuade TfWM to retain the direct service to Solihull. Councillors have spent many hours meeting with representatives of TfWM, speaking to MP Caroline Spelman and contacting West Midlands Combined Authority Mayor Andy Street. All of this hard work, along with the many objections from our residents, has paid off and the new contract will include both the S3 and S3W following much the same routes as they do now, and both will terminate in Solihull. The Parish Council are very relieved that TfWM have listened to the community.



### **Update on Village Green, Playground and Small Nature Reserve at Waterside**

With the ownership of the Village Green now with Liquidators PwC, the Parish Council are very hopeful that they can take forward their aim of owning or leasing the Village Green and being able to refurbish the playground. Members of the Parish Council have met with representatives of PwC and Savills to discuss this, and PwC's view is that they wish to dispose of the Village Green and small Waterside Nature Reserve as a package, and would see the PC or SMBC as the natural custodians. Before attending this meeting, we had sought the advice of Solihull MBC (as a party to the restrictive covenants on these pieces of land – which prevent their use for anything other than for the benefit of the community) and SMBC have indicated a willingness to be a part of the negotiations. SMBC have suggested that they could potentially take back the freehold of the land and lease it to the Parish Council to maintain. PwC have indicated that they wish to progress this, and that they are looking at a timescale of around 6 months. All of this is very positive. In the meantime, the representative of PwC had stated their intention to reopen the playground was a priority, and the Parish Council are

very pleased to see that the playground flooring has been repaired and the playground is now open again.

### **Memorial Dedication Service and Remembrance Sunday Service**



The Parish Council were delighted that the memorial was finally installed this autumn, and in particular so that it could be the focal point for the Remembrance Sunday Service on the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the end of WW1. The memorial was dedicated a week before Remembrance Sunday, with Rev Julie Humphries, Rev Theresa Jones and Andrew Simpkins leading the service. The Parish Council were pleased to welcome Ryan Carter (pictured with Chair Maureen Holloway) and his family. Ryan (as a year 7 pupil) wrote the poem chosen by the PC to be included on the memorial plaque. After 4 years of setbacks, it is wonderful that everything has fallen into place in this anniversary year. The Remembrance Sunday Service was a very special occasion – taking place opposite the memorial. It saw the largest attendance yet, with around 250 residents, including a large number of Dickens Heath Scouts. The Parish Council would like to thank all involved in the organisation of these 2 services.

### **Christmas Carol Singing**

Rev Theresa Jones and Andrew Simpkins will be leading the village Christmas carol singing – which will take place outside Tesco on Tuesday December 18<sup>th</sup> at 6.30pm. Everyone welcome. The Parish Council wish everyone a very happy Christmas and a peaceful New Year.

### **Maureen Holloway**

Chair, Dickens Heath Parish Council.

### **Contact Us:**

Dickens Heath Parish Council Tel: 07772 469271, Email: dickensheathpc@hotmail.com  
www.dickensheathpc.org.uk 1 Wharf House, Waterside, Dickens Heath, Solihull B90 1UE