

The Parish Council of Dickens Heath

Minutes of the Meeting of the Council held in the Library on Tuesday February 15th 2022

Present:

Dickens Heath Parish Councillors; Trevor Eames (Chair), Diane Potter, Nargis Rashid, Mike Small, Doreen Wright.

Borough Councillor; Ken Hawkins

2 members of the public

Clerk: Ms Helen Marczak

Minute 151 (2021/22) Apologies for Absence

None.

Minute 152 (2021/22) Public Participation

Uneven Pavement on Rumbush Lane

A resident said that the pavement has sunk outside 145/147 Rumbush Lane, and there is a massive puddle there. Councillor Trevor Eames to take a look.

Island at Brixfield Way

A resident commented that the island at Brixfield Way is still looking neglected – this to be followed up with PC contractor Fairways.

Unadopted Islands

A resident asked if there had been any progress in the adoption by SMBC of the remaining unadopted islands. This has been referred to SMBC, but there has been no response yet.

Website and Facebook Page

A resident commented that they have been having problems easily accessing information on the Parish Council's website by phone, and also that he'd heard that residents couldn't follow the Parish Council's Facebook page on their iphones. These issues to be looked into.

Minute 153 (2021/22) Declarations of Interest/Requests for Dispensations

None.

Minute 154 (2021/22) Report from the Borough Councillors

The Chair welcomed Borough Councillor Ken Hawkins to the meeting, and Ken gave an update.

- SMBC will be looking at 20 mph zones in villages during 2022/23.
- He mentioned the bridle path from Tythe Barn Lane to Bills Lane and that access to Hope Coppice needs to be sound.
- He commended the Parish Council for its sound submission to the Examination in Public of the Solihull Local Plan, given that neighbouring principal authorities are vociferous that SMBC are short on their housing numbers.

Minute 155 (2021/22) Minutes of previous meeting held on Tuesday January 11th 2022

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

Minute 156 (2021/22) Planning Applications

No comments.

Minute 157 (2021/22) Co-Option to Vacancy on the Parish Council

Councillor Alan Scholes resigned from the Parish Council last year, and this vacancy can be filled by co-option. Applications have been received from 2 extremely good candidates, both residents who are known to the Parish Council for their work done in the village, who would both make a great contribution to the Parish Council. One of the candidates has experience of working with the Police and, as anti-social behaviour is such a problem in Dickens Heath currently, there was a majority decision to co-opt Richard Small on to the Parish Council. The Clerk to contact Richard about signing the necessary paperwork.

The second more recent vacancy on the Parish Council is going to election on April 7th 2022. SMBC have a quote of £1,939.77 for postal votes plus polling cards posted out to all residents. As the Parish Council will have to pay for all election expenses, the PC can decide whether or not polling cards should be sent out. The view of Councillors is that the election costs should be kept to the minimum, and it was agreed that polling cards should not be sent out.

Minute 158 (2021/22) Financial Matters

Proposed by Councillor Rashid, seconded by Councillor Potter, the payments in Appendix I of the February 15th 2022 Agenda were approved – 16 payments totalling £3,350.64

Internal Audit

It was agreed that the Clerk should contact Bill Robinson to ask if he can once again do the annual internal audit.

Minute 159 (2021/22) Correspondence

Hanging Baskets on Tythe Barn Lane

A resident has asked if there can be hanging baskets and solar Xmas trees on the lamp posts along Tythe Barn Lane out to Whitlocks End, as residents along there feel a bit forgotten. Councillor Mike Small said that with the Commonwealth Games and the Queen's Platinum Jubilee this year, residents are likely to be in a celebratory mood after 2 years of Covid. The Parish Councillors agreed that there should be more hanging baskets this year, even if it is only for the one year, and the Clerk to liaise with Plantscape over a quote. Suitable lamp posts on the routes out of the village to be looked at. It was agreed that the hanging baskets should be a bright mix of colours, as in 2021.

In Bloom 2022

It was agreed that the Parish Council should enter In Bloom for 2022, and to once again run the Best Front Garden competition and to encourage more entries for this year.

Dickens Heath Scouts – Tree Planting

The Scouts would like to plant 3 trees as part of the Queen's Platinum Jubilee and they would like to know where they might plant them. Suggestions included the 2 nature reserves or Hope Coppice.

Lady Lane

A resident of Lady Lane has reported that there are redundant signs which need removing, speeding is out of control, and there are massive potholes in the road. Councillor Trevor Eames has had a look and doesn't think that the potholes are too bad, SMBC have provided some speeding data which showed that speeding generally is not that bad, and the redundant signs have been reported to SMBC Highways with a request for their removal.

Buckridge Lane

A resident has raised concerns about overgrown trees and bushes along Buckridge Lane. The pruning back of 4 protected oak trees is being arranged by Dickens Heath Phase 2 Area Management Co. Solihull MBC are responsible for maintenance of the footway, but there is no information on who is responsible for the hedge on the car park side of the footway. If overgrowth encroaches on the public highway, SMBC can serve a notice on the landowner telling them to cut the overgrowth back or SMBC will do it and charge them. Councillor Eames added that it is very dark at the far end of Buckridge Lane, and that SMBC could be asked to provide one additional light. If Buckridge Lane is a public footway, then a public lamp post would make quite a difference.

Traffic Regulation Order on Dickens Heath Road by the Village Green

The Parish Council has regularly requested double yellow lines in this location due to ongoing concern from residents over the years, and they are finally in SMBC's 2022/23 programme. A resident has expressed concern that this will result in increased traffic speed, and that the parked vehicles will move to Boundary Lane. There will be a consultation before the double yellow lines are installed, and the resident will have an opportunity to respond at this point.

Library Review Working Group

A resident has asked whether the Library Review Working Group, which was active before the pandemic, has been cancelled. The Parish Council agreed that things have changed, and the Review will not now happen.

Antisocial Parking on Willowherb Way

A resident has suggested that double yellow lines should be extended further along Willowherb Way to prevent the antisocial parking. Or that it should be residents only parking. Councillor Eames commented that this has been drawn to Borough Councillor Ken Hawkins' attention, but it is very difficult at the moment to get a Traffic Regulation Order unless there is a real safety concern. SMBC's priority list for 2022/23 is already committed. It was suggested that the resident should take it up with SMBC Highways.

Minute 160 (2021/22) Date for the Annual Parish Meeting

The Parish Council would like to invite a member of the Police to come along to speak at the Annual Parish Meeting. It was agreed that 3 dates in April should be suggested.

Minute 161 (2021/22) Interim Office Working Arrangements

It was agreed that the current temporary working arrangements should be extended for 6 months.

Meeting ended 12.05pm

Next Meeting : Tuesday March 8th 2022: 7pm in Dickens Heath Library