

The Parish Council of Dickens Heath

Minutes of the Meeting of the Council held in the Library on Tuesday March 8th 2022

Present:

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

1 member of the public

Clerk: Ms Helen Marczak

Minute 162 (2021/22) Apologies for Absence

Apologies were accepted from Councillor Richard Small.

Minute 163 (2021/22) Public Participation

Streetwatch

The member of the public present gave an update on Streetwatch in the village. They now have 20 members, which the PCSO has advised should be the maximum size of the group, so they are currently full. They are patrolling 5 days a week and have reported abandoned vehicles, fly tipping by the school (fridges left in the road), and lights that had been vandalised on Kiln Lane.

Minute 164 (2021/22) Declarations of Interest/Requests for Dispensations

None.

Minute 165 (2021/22) Minutes of previous meeting held on Tuesday February 15th 2022

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

Minute 166 (2021/22) Actions from the Minutes of the Previous Meeting

In Bloom Bank Account

As HSBC has started to charge for community accounts, the In Bloom account has been closed and the small balance transferred to the main PC account.

In Bloom - Village Planters and Islands

A resident has replanted the planter next to the memorial as it was looking neglected. He has asked the PC for a contribution towards the soil and plants, this was agreed. This same resident has offered to replant the planter outside the Library, this was agreed, and has suggested that he could tidy up the Brixfield island.

Bramble Bees the florist have offered to adopt and look after up to 3 planters at the back of Tesco, outside ICE, and would like to put sponsorship plaques on them.

Councillor Di Potter looks after the 2 planters at the clock island, and Councillor Doreen Wright looks after the island near Fishers Drive.

There are 2 planters at the School, Councillor Nargis Rashid to contact the School about replanting these.

This leaves 2 planters – one at Waterside and one at the end of Buckridge Lane by the GP Surgery. Another resident has also offered to help with In Bloom.

It was agreed that the residents offering to help should be invited in to discuss this.

Councillor Mike Small asked if the planters should be repainted – this was agreed, Councillor Mike Small to liaise with Simon.

Wildflowers

In previous years, SMBC have sown large patches of wildflowers in 3 locations – on the Village Green, on Dickens Heath Rd by Miller and Carter, and on Dickens Heath Rd by Cleobury Lane. The Parish Council agreed that they would like to see the wildflowers again in these locations, but the Clerk to ask that the flowers on the verge by Cleobury Lane are not mown down as they were last year.

Damaged Bench on the Village Green

Unfortunately the fire damaged new bench on the Village Green has been further damaged and is no longer safe. It was agreed that there is no choice now other than to remove it and Fairways should do this in the next few days.

Access Issues re PC Website and Facebook Page on Phones

A resident had raised problems with seeing the PC website pages on phones – this has been tested by various people on various phones and no problems were identified.

The resident also said that anyone who had Liked the PC Facebook page no longer saw posts in their feed. Facebook has been updated, the Like button has been removed, pages now have to be followed.

Minute 167 (2021/22) Report from Councillors who have attended Outside Groups, Events or Courses

Chair Trevor Eames gave an update on the WALC Chairs' meeting. WALC's training is to continue online for the time being. It was interesting to hear that Warwickshire CC have done some studies on traffic speed and concluded that both speed activated signs and 20mph zones are ineffective.

Minute 168 (2021/22) Planning Applications

- 52 Tythe Barn Lane – this is a prominent tree and the Parish Council agreed that they would like to see the work carried out professionally.
- 2 Brockhurst Lane – the tree works on T1 and T3 are fine. The proposed removal of oak tree T2 is due to decay, but this is difficult to assess at this time of year – the Parish Council agreed that they would like this to be assessed by the SMBC Tree Officer.

There were 2 additional planning applications:

- 2021/02867 - 8 Wrens Nest Close - tree works to 3 oak trees. The Parish Council agreed that this could be left to the SMBC Tree Officer.
- 2022/00448 - 85 Birchy Leasowes Lane - variation of conditions on planning approval for plot 1. Instead of a car port, proposal for a 2 car garage. No comments.

Minute 169 (2021/22) Tender for Replacement Playground

There is a meeting the next day with ESPO to finalise the tender documents.

Minute 170 (2021/22) Tesco Car Park

The contractors for Elegant Homes have now carried out the bulk of the garden tidying work, removing several truckloads of garden waste. They are due to return to spray the weeds. Litter was also removed and estate agents have been asked to remove the redundant For Sale boards.

Minute 171 (2021/22) Request for Reinstatement of the Goal Post on the Village Green

The Parish Council looked at a photo of the waterlogged area that had been in front of the goal post, it was a churned up mud bath. Families and children are now playing football spread around the whole of the Village Green. It was agreed that no action should be taken at the moment, the grass needs to recover, and it will be reviewed later in the year.

Minute 172 (2021/22) Request for a Light at the Back of the Village Hall overlooking the Village Green

The Parish Council agreed that this should be raised with the Village Hall committee.

Minute 173 (2021/22) Hanging Baskets and Flower Boxes

Quotes from Plantscape for the hanging baskets and flower boxes were considered. It was agreed that hanging baskets should be ordered for 80 lamp posts, which is an increase of 6 lamp posts from previous years. Plantscape have also offered the option of a 3 year contract for the hanging baskets with prices frozen for the duration of the contract. Councillor Doreen Wright expressed her concern about the 3 year contract, it was agreed by a majority of Councillors to go with the 3 year contract due to the likelihood of increasing inflation.

Minute 174 (2021/22) Financial Matters

Proposed by Councillor Potter, seconded by Councillor Mike Small, the payments in Appendix I of the March 8th 2022 Agenda were approved – 16 payments totalling £4,668.64 including an additional payment of £58.80 to T Griffiths for soil and plants.

Report on Finances of the Council

There is currently a surplus of £114,000.

Pay Award for Council Staff 2021/22

The 2021/22 pay award for local council employees has finally been settled – at 1.75%. It was agreed that all Parish Council staff should receive this.

Replacement Computer for Office

The desktop computer in the office is now 10 years old, there have been savings in the admin budget due to the Clerk working reduced hours, and it was agreed that a new computer should be purchased.

Minute 175 (2021/22) Update on Away Day

It was agreed that a follow up informal meeting should be arranged.

Minute 176 (2021/22) Annual Parish Meeting

It was agreed that the Annual Parish Meeting should be held on Tuesday April 5th at 7pm. Our local PCSO is hoping to attend, to discuss crime issues and anti-social behaviour in the village, and a representative from Streetwatch also to be invited.

Minute 177 (2021/22) By-Election

Nominations for the by-election close at the end of this week, and will be published next Monday. SMBC have been notified of the Parish Council decision not to send out polling cards.

Meeting ended 9.10pm

Next Meeting : Tuesday May 10th 2022: 7pm in Dickens Heath Library