**The Parish Council of Dickens Heath**

**Minutes of the Meeting of the Council held**

**on Thursday April 20th 2023**

**Present:**

**Dickens Heath Parish Councillors;** Richard Small (Chair), Mark Connolly-Dowson, Nargis Rashid, Doreen Wright, Mike Small, Trevor Eames.

4 members of the public

Borough Councillor Ken Hawkins

Clerk: Ms H Raithby

**Minute 183 (2022/23) Apologies for Absence**

Councillor Diane Potter.

**Minute 184 (2022/23) Public Participation**

Planning

A resident raised Solihull local plan and changes to NPPF means it won’t be until late summer. Local plan will be put back.

She has had a meeting with Andy Street trying to encourage him to do more green belt work and discussed Solihull and he is concerned that some of the sites are unsustainable.

Figures on the Birmingham plan – looks like this is incorrect – this number of 2000 houses may come down – could be good news hopefully.

With changes proposed groups like Parish Councils will have more say. There will be more consultations. The resident has offered to help in these matters if we would like it.

**Minute 185 (2022/23) Declarations of Interest/Requests for Dispensations**

None

**Minute 186 (2022/23) Update from Borough Councillor Ken Hawkins**

Wharf Farm - no update

Griffin Lane - big extension, comments submitted

Village wide speed limit - this is likely to be in the summer

Damaged Traffic island by Copperfield Court repairs – by June

Boundary changes(ward changes) - Blythe will be going into Solihull. We will be asked to comment.

Councillor Ken Hawkins thanked the Parish Council for a successful year and thanked the councillors that are leaving for their time and dedication to the Parish Council.

Councillor Richard Small asked about the traffic lights from M42 on the Stratford Road and Ken advised he will check.

**Minute 187 (2022/23) Minutes of the meeting held on 14th March 2023**

Proposed by Councillor Mark Connolly-Dowson, seconded by Councillor Nargis Rashid, it was **Resolved** that the minutes be approved as a true and accurate record.

**Minute 188 (2022/23) Parish Council Decisions**

Code Of Conduct

Councillor Nargis Rashid – the lengthy version isn't appropriate as it's for borough councils - bring the old one into the new one and have a new one. Agree to update and review – All agreed. Nargis will help to update and pass to Helen and Hannah.

Standing Orders and Delegation to the Clerk

not many changes - all up to date. All agreed.

Co-Options

Four of the current Councillors have decided not to stand - a massive thank you to those standing down. Councillors Trevor Eames, Nargis Rashid, Doreen Wright and Di Potter. Thank you for everything you have done for The Parish Council.

There are three vacancies at the moment. Is everyone happy with the Co option form? All agreed to keep it as it is.

Village Green

Discussion around two requests from commercial businesses to use the Village Green for Fitness classes/cricket coaching. Councillor Connolly-Dowson expressed that it would be nice if the businesses could attend a meeting to explain what they would like to do and so we can meet them. It was agreed that we need more information to decide but also that we need to refer to the policy which is on the website which stipulates that the green may not be used for any commercial purposes. There was this suggestion that we should not continue this policy if it is not appropriate. The Clerk will circulate the policy so that Councillors can review it. Solihull MBC gave advice about the policy when it was drawn up and had concerns around giving permission to one group then being unable to say no to others and have no power to actually stop people using it.

**Minute 189 (2022/23) Tesco Car Park**

Councillor Richard Small gave an update, he has had a response from David Baxendale of the Receivers who has given us the details of the company who do the maintenance of the pumping station, he confirmed that Dickens Heath Management Company oversee that the maintenance is carried out but in terms of ownership of the land that the pumping station is on, he has contacted his solicitor to try to find out the answer. Councillor Small has a call scheduled for the 21st of April with Kirstie Forrester who is the solicitor involved with the original acquisition of the car park.

**Minute 190 (2022/23) Councillors’ Action Log**

Defibrillator and Bleed Kit

Cost breakdown initially £1250 + £250 fitting. Waiting for a reply on the permission from The Village Hall. To install it on the library, need to contact Solihull MBC for permission too. Maintenance is minimal. Power must be supplied to the Defibrillator. Councillors Mark Connolly-Dowson, Nargis Rashid, Richard Small and Mike Small voted in favour of the defibrillator and bleed kit.

Coronation Event

Our local MP has been invited and is planning to come to the event.

Playground Sign

Councillor Trevor Eames is going to get in contact with the previous supplier to get the large sign replaced.

**Minute 191 (2022/23) To Consider Village Areas of Interest**

Car Parking Scheme

Still waiting for the company to sort out the fine details with vendors and residents, will continue to chase this.

Trees and Planters

Group of five volunteers who have set up a committee and divided the planters between them and will be planting them up twice a year.

Hanging Baskets

Alan at Plantscape has spoken to Dean at Solihull MBC who has agreed to come and look at the lamp posts to see if we’re able to have them just for this year and plan something else for next year.

Need to get a plan together for what we will do going forward and how to communicate the problems we’ve been having with the community.

**Minute 192 (2022/23) Communications and Events**

Stage

We were looking to hire a stage for the band/choir for the Coronation event but expensive £1000+ we have had an offer from a resident for them to build a stage for any future events/and asset for us to keep long term. Storage is a consideration but it’s a good thing to invest in for the community. Councillors Mike Small, Richard Small and Mark Connolly-Dowson in favour so agreed. Doreen Wright against. Trevor Eames abstained.

Newsletter

Updates from local school, library and businesses. Update on Coronation event and Councillors that are leaving and joining.

Coronation

General update on progress of organisation for the event. All going well, good amount of sponsorship and support. Countdown each day leading up to the event including our sponsors.

**Minute 193 (2022/23) Parish Council Committee Updates**

Staffing - Update on contract for Simon Higgins

Hannah Raithby and Councillor Nargis Rashid met with Simon to make sure all was going well and see if anything needs to be changed. Simon is happy with his work and conditions. We have updated his contract and job description. Possibly some training in hazardous materials so that he could take care of some of the graffiti in the village.

Finance and risk

Terms of reference draft, just need to add councillors’ names and Helen Marczak as non voting member. All approved. Nargis Rashid will review the policy priorities once she is no longer a councillor and report back through Hannah Raithby to the Parish Council.

**Minute 194 (2022/23) To Consider Planning Applications**

No comments on planning applications.

**Minute 195 (2022/23) Financial Matters**

Proposed by Councillor Mike Small, seconded by Councillor Trevor Eames, **Resolved** that the payments in Appendix I of the March 14th 2023 agenda be approved – 22 payments totalling £5692.18. Including one additional payment of £48.79 to H. Raithby for printer cartridges.

Library rent Go back to Solihull MBC to ask about just having the office rather than the Meeting space outside the office as well. All Agreed.

End Of Year Accounts

Agreed by full council – Proposed by Councillor Mike Small and Seconded by Councillor Trevor Eames.

**Minute 196 (2022/23) Police Change Over**

Councillors Mike Small, Trevor Eames and Clerk Hannah Raithby attended meeting with new Police team in the area, Hannah Raithby to share details of new team to Councillor Richard Small so that he can establish a link with them.

**Meeting ended 8.05pm**

**Next Meeting : Tuesday May 16th 2023: 6.30pm in the Library**