

The Parish Council of Dickens Heath

Minutes of the Meeting of the Council held on Tuesday June 13th 2023

Present:

Dickens Heath Parish Councillors; Richard Small (Chair), Mike Small, Sarah Barrett, Maureen Holloway.

5 members of the public

Clerk: Ms H Raithby

Minute 28 (2023/24) Apologies for Absence

Councillors Mark Connolly-Dowson, Dave Easterby and Liz Woodus.

Minute 29 (2023/24) Public Participation

Copperfield Court/Pavements around this area

Residents advised to contact Solihull Council regarding overhanging trees and obstruction to the pavements. Agreed that they will supply photographs to the Clerk who will contact Solihull Council as well.

New 20 MPH Speed Limit

Resident was wondering if there will be any enforcement for the 20MPH speed limit which is coming into effect soon. We don't believe there will be but the Clerk will contact Borough Councillor Ken Hawkins about the possibility of getting a mobile speed van or something similar.

Solihull Local Plan

Advice from a resident that the local plan has been delayed further. It is likely to be the end of 2024, as a consequence we have a lot of planning applications happening. It is quite likely that an application for site BL1 may come in which is the playing fields west of Dickens Heath near Whitlocks End station. This is Greenbelt land.

Minute 30 (2023/24) Declarations of Interest/Requests for Dispensations

None

Minute 31 (2023/24) Minutes of the meeting held 16th May 2023

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

Minute 32 (2023/24) Parish Council Decisions

Grant Application

It is a requirement that accounts are provided for a grant application so H. Raithby will go back to the Allotment Association and ask for this. The Councillors would also really like to meet a representative from the Allotment Association if possible.

Choose Voting Representative for WALC AGM

Clerk to check dates and send out information to Councillors.

Consider who will attend SAM meetings

Clerk to check dates and send out information to Councillors.

Individual Email Addresses

Councillor Barrett suggested the use of Gmail and will send the information to all Councillors and guidance on how to set up. All agreed to this.

Planning Responsibility

Councillor Richard Small suggested that with her previous experience Councillor Holloway would be ideal for this. All agreed to this. Jean Walters, a retired planning expert, agreed to assist the Parish Council with planning on an ad-hoc basis. A big thank you to Jean for this. Only applications that are of concern to residents need to be looked at. Councillor Holloway

suggests that we adopt this going forward. All agreed to this. We will still be available to offer advice to residents that need it.

Internal Communication relating to the new team

Councillor M Small raised a concern that there aren't any chances for Councillors to discuss matters, other than the Parish Council meetings. Councillor Barrett suggests setting up Whatsapp groups for different areas of the Parish Council. Councillor Richard Small suggests a catch-up/team meeting which would be unofficial. Councillor Mike Small suggests talking to one another rather than online. It is decided that the Parish Council will try the Whatsapp idea and reassess at a later date. Councillor Holloway suggests having a 20-minute chat before the meetings, just for the Parish Council. Councillor Richard Small suggested a separate time and will try to organise something.

New Website

As we are unable to use the CIL money to fund the new website, the Communications Committee are going to look at a phased development of the website, over two years. Councillor Barrett is happy to undertake an audit/review of what is needed, will probably need to change current platform in the long term but this way we can keep the money down.

Committees

Finance and Risk – Councillor Holloway, Councillor Richard Small, Councillor Dave Easterby and RFO Helen Marczak – All Agreed

Communications and Events – Councillor Connolly-Dowson, Councillor Barrett, Councillor Liz Woodus and Councillor Mike Small.

All agreed to these groups. Chair to be agreed at first meeting.

Fairways Point of Contact

Councillor Richard Small offered to do this – all agreed.

Village Green signs

Councillor Holloway to organise for a quote for the new, permanent signs.

Minute 33 (2023/24) Tesco Car Park

Councillor Richard Small gave an update, after around two years we now have the Land Registry documents and according to previous Councillor T Eames it confirms that the Pumping Station is not our responsibility. We will need to get this verified which hopefully should be fairly straight forward. We need to make a decision about what to do long term regarding the car park.

Minute 34 (2023/24) Councillors' Action Log

Procedures surrounding committee meetings

It was discussed that each committee meeting must be advertised with at least three days' notice, there must be an agenda and minutes must be produced and signed by the chair. This will be communicated to all councillors by the clerk as some were not in attendance.

Code of Conduct

We need to make sure we acknowledge LGA who are the ones who wrote the code of conduct that we are adopting. This will be circulated and then all councillors must reply stating they have read it and are happy with it.

Defibrillator

We have been donated a defibrillator from Central Fast Response. We have now ordered the cabinet and blood kit. An electrician has been today to give a quote. Defibrillator should hopefully be fitted and up and running by the end of the month. We will be asking central fast response to deliver some training; Mike is liaising with the school to get some first aid training for the children as well. The public have requested training is offered to all which is what the Parish Council is planning to do. Thank you to Councillor Mike Small for co-ordinating this project.

Minute 35 (2023/24) 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.

Damaged Island

Solihull Council have advised it will be sorted by the end of June, Clerk to put this on the agenda for July to review.

Youth Club

Councillor Richard Small has a meeting on the 15th June at the hub to discuss this. The Parish Council has already budgeted approximately four thousand pounds (correction – three thousand pounds) towards the youth worker for the youth club. We will have a further update after the 15th.

Library

Councillor Mike Small is meeting with the Library management and is actively trying to promote the membership at the Library. He is trying to get more hours for the Library each week. He has approached the school to see if he can organise a scheme where the children join as they start school. Cathy is doing a fantastic job with clubs and trying to increase library use.

Minute 36 (2023/24) Finance and Risk Committee

Councillor Richard Small will liaise with H Marczak to organise a first meeting.

Minute 37 (2023/24) Communications and Events

Meeting

The next meeting of the committee will be on the 27th June at 7pm.

Infographic

This is now fixed in the Noticeboard

Dickens Heath Directory

Do we want to continue to use this? No firm decision was made on this.

Minute 38 (2023/24) To Consider Planning Applications

2023/00909 - Priorsgate, 100 Birchy Close. Fell 16 trees.

Jean Walters has given advice to the Parish Council....the previous owner applied for a lot of trees to be taken down – it is part of an ancient woodland and ecologically important. Some of the trees have been damaged by equipment. This plan will affect the way the road looks, the motivation is to allow room for a house to be built on the plot. All vote in favour of supporting Jean's objections.

2023/01091 – Land to rear of 39 to 43 Birchy Close. Erect 6 bungalows and three garages.

Jean Walters is working on the objection for this application and will let us have a condensed version when it is available. There are many things that go against planning policy which will be detailed in the objection. Jean Walters reads her report so far to the Parish Council. All vote in favour of supporting Jean's objections.

Minute 195 (2022/23) Financial Matters

Proposed by Councillor Maureen Holloway, seconded by Councillor Sarah Barrett, **Resolved** that the payments in Appendix I of the June 13th 2023 agenda be approved – 20 payments totalling £5,794.42, including additional payments of £267.33 to T. Griffiths for plants, £822.00 to M. Small for a defibrillator cabinet and bleed kit, £78.03 to V. Rawlinson for Coronation event expenses and £48.79 to H. Raithby for printer cartridges.

Meeting ended 8.06pm

Next Meeting : Tuesday July 11th 2023: 6.30pm in the Library