

The Parish Council of Dickens Heath

Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Council held on Tuesday May 16th 2023

Present:

Dickens Heath Parish Councillors; Mark Connolly-Dowson, Mike Small, Richard Small (Chair), Maureen Holloway.

5 members of the public

Clerk: Ms Hannah Raithby

Minute 1 (2023/24) Election of Chair

Councillor Mark Connolly-Dowson nominated Councillor Richard Small, seconded by Councillor Maureen Holloway. All agreed, Councillor Small was voted chair.

Minute 2 (2023/24) To Receive the Chair's Declaration of Acceptance of Office

This was signed.

Minute 3 (2023/24) Apologies for Absence

None.

Minute 4 (2023/24) Public Participation

Use of Lamp posts in the Village

A resident asked for clarification of the previous minutes regarding the use of lamp posts for the decorations at Christmas and flowers in summer. Councillor Richard Small gave an explanation of the situation with Solihull Council and the decision to revoke permission for us to use the lamp posts. He also explained that we have been given one more year to use them as we are in contract with the supplier. The resident asked if there is a plan to replace the lamp posts if they are coming to the end of their life and Councillor Richard Small said it is likely to be in the next few years. The resident then asked if we would be able to use them again when they are replaced which we did not know the answer to.

Resident stated that if it meant paying a little bit more precept in order to have the decorations, he personally, would like to do this. It was then discussed that we may have an alternative if we can't use the lamp posts in the form of towers and possible use of bollards to accommodate the flowers.

Defibrillator

A resident raised a concern regarding the proposed location for the defibrillator and bleed kit, he believes that the village hall is not central enough and would like us to think about using the doctor's surgery, Tesco, or somewhere on Main St. Councillor Mike Small will look at locations. There was a discussion around the possibility of us getting free or discounted defibrillator. Hannah Raithby will circulate the information once it's received from a central fast response.

Coronation Event

A resident wanted to thank the Parish Council for the coronation event It was a great event despite the weather.

Minute 5 (2023/24) To Receive all Councillors' Declaration of Acceptance of Office, and to decide when any Declarations of Acceptance of Office which have not been received shall be received

All received.

Minute 6 (2023/24) To Receive all Councillors' Declaration of Pecuniary Interest form and Code of Conduct Agreement

All Received

Minute 7 (2023/24) To Consider Co-Option to the Parish Council Vacancies

Three applications received, three vacancies to fill. All councillors agree that they are happy with the applications and wish to welcome the co-opted members to the Parish Council.

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Signature.....

Date.....

Councillor Dave Easterby is not present but Councillor Liz Woodus and Councillor Sarah Barrett fill in their declaration of acceptance.

Minute 8 (2023/24) Declarations of Interest/Requests for Dispensations

None Declared.

Minute 9 (2023/24) Report from the Borough Councillors

None present.

Minute 10 (2023/24) To Decide Whether to Elect a Vice Chair

It was agreed that there was no need to elect a Vice Chair.

Minute 11 (2023/24) To Consider whether to accept councillor's allowances and to consider latest increase. All agree to the latest increase.

Minute 12 (2023/24) To consider whether to attend training for new councillors

All agreed on some training, clerk to look at what is available.

Minute 13 (2023/24) To Agree Dates of Council Meetings for the Year

The proposed schedule of Parish Council meetings and working groups was agreed. Meetings will be held at 6.30pm in Dickens Heath Library, and there will be no set meetings in August or December.

Minute 14 (2023/24) To Resolve Whether to Establish any Committees

It was agreed to continue with the current committees. Communications and Events, and Finance and Risk. New councillors needed for the Finance and Risk committee, Councillor Richard Small agrees to move across to this committee.

Minute 15 (2023/24) To Appoint Representatives to Sit on Outside Bodies

Clerk to try to get a copy of Terms of Reference for the SAM committee. To inform this decision.

Minute 16 (2023/24) To Agree Bank Account Signatories

All agree to have four signatories – finance and risk committee members, plus the Clerk and RFO for administration purposes only. The Clerk to update the bank mandate.

Minute 17 (2023/24) Civility and Respect Pledge

All agree to sign up to this, clerk to find out how we sign up.

Minute 18 (2023/24) Minutes of previous meeting held on Thursday 20th April 2023

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

Minute 19 (2023/24) Actions from the Minutes of the previous meeting – Clerk's update

ID cards - it was decided to have a card that can go on a lanyard. Clerk to investigate this.

Orton Media – Communication and events committee to consider no longer using Orton Media with a possible period of transition suggested by Councillor Sarah Barrett.

Minute 20 (2023/24) Planning Applications

No Planning applications were received

Minute 21(2023/24) Double Yellow Lines

No update at the moment, clerk to chase this.

Minute 22 (2023/24) To Consider Village Issues

Management Companies Across Dickens Heath - Councillor Richard Small suggested that we try to get a point of contact for each management company in Dickens Heath. Clerk to contact Centrick to ask if they know who the management companies are.

Councillor Maureen Holloway suggested that it would be advantageous to find out who the housing associations are in Dickens Heath as well.

Planters in Dickens Heath - We now have a dedicated small voluntary group to take care of the planters around the village. All agree to ask our village handyman, Simon, to do the watering for extra hours over the summer.

In Bloom - All agree to skip this year of 'In Bloom'

Signage for Village Green - All agree, after reviewing the policy, that signage is needed on the Village Green to prevent it being used for Commercial purposes. Councillor Holloway will circulate the original wording for other councillors to review.

Library - Councillor Mike Small is trying to encourage SMBC to allow the library to be open three extra hours a week. He is also, with the help of the diversity team and the library, trying to be supportive of the new residents by getting access to books and other resources in their home language.

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Signature.....

Date.....

Coffee Morning at the Library

We need to advertise this as numbers are dwindling.

Minute 23 (2023/24) Communications Committee Update

Coronation event update – great contributions from local businesses, all agree to give stall holders their money back if they didn't come due to the weather. All agreed to defer the budget of £500 set aside for the stage until the next event. The Parish Council wanted to thank everyone who helped to make the Coronation event the huge success that it was, a special mention to Martin, Paul and Liz for the amazing bunting around the village.

Minute 24 (2023/24) Financial Matters**Extra payments received, needing approval:**

1. Proposed by Councillor Richard Small, seconded by Councillor Mike Small, **Resolved** that the payments in Appendix I of the May 16th 2023 Agenda be approved – 26 payments totalling £5668.74 for May (this included additional payments of £117.39 to V Chadaway for Coronation expenses, £45.00 for the Mascot hire for the Coronation and £55.98 for M. Gisborne for bunting for the Coronation.
2. Report on the Finances of the Council
The first instalment of the precept has been received from SMBC, and there is currently a surplus of £70,000.
3. Risk Assessment and Management Document 2023/24
This was received and approved.
4. Internal Audit for 2022/23
This went well, the internal auditor signed the Internal Audit Report on the AGAR, the Finance and Risk Committee to look at the full audit report in more detail.

Minute 25 (2023/24) Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2022/23

1. The Annual Governance Statement 2022/23 was approved, and signed by the Chair and Clerk/RFO.
2. The Annual Accounting Statements 2022/23 were approved, and signed by the Chair and Clerk/RFO.

Minute 26 (2023/24) CorrespondenceBirmingham Mail, Newspapers for the Library

All agreed to continue this as it seems to be popular with the residents.

Minute 27 (2023/24) Items for next agenda

Parking Scheme, Youth Club at Community Hub, Dividing responsibilities, Website.

Meeting ended 8.25pm

Next Meeting : Tuesday June 13th 2023: 6.30pm in Dickens Heath Library