

The Parish Council of Dickens Heath

Minutes of the Meeting of the Council held on Tuesday June 11th 2024

Present:

Dickens Heath Parish Councillors; Richard Small (Chair), Adam Weber, Liz Woodus, Mike Small, Stewart Halford and Maureen Holloway

5 members of the public and Jean Walters (Planning Advisor)

Clerk: Ms H Raithby

Minute 24 (2024/25) Apologies for Absence

Councillor Dave Easterby

Minute 25 (2024/25) Public Participation

Main Street Resident

Resident lives down by the far end by the medical centre, the residents where she lives own the pavement – they have had to pay for the repairs and within a week it was broken again. The damage is happening where people park on the pavement and break the slabs. The residents are being sued by a resident who fell on the street. Councillor Richard Small explained that there a quite a few roads in Dickens Heath that are private and that we have been speaking to other residents that are having issues with service charges. We have been advised that discussions are happening to try to get Main Street adopted and that The Crown have been involved with this. Borough Councillor Ken Hawkins has been trying to get this sorted. Councillor Richard Small asked the resident to email the clerk explaining what has happened with the member of the public being injured and we can relay this to Solihull Council to try to encourage them to adopt the road. The resident advised that her management company are Randall and Rittner. A resident queried that if you enter a private road, don't you do so at your own risk? Councillors are not sure about this. Councillor Mike Small suggested that the company that park on this area are working in conjunction with the medical centre. There was a discussion around whether the pavements would be adopted at the same time if the roads are.

Jean Walters – Update on site BL1

Jean spoke about the relocation of the sports pitches that is required for site BL1 and advised that they are looking at building a large sports hub in Cheswick Green on Green Belt land. To replace the pitches which will be a multifunctional sports hub with large car parks and astroturf etc. You can have informal sports facilities but not multifunctional sports hubs. She has drafted a letter that she has sent out to Councillors so that we can send it if we would like to.

Technical planning letter for BL1 – this letter is very technical for Dickens Heath Parish Council, it is around the drainage, there is an issue with drainage on the site. They have said there is not a problem with flooding but there is. A sequential test has not been carried out. They have to look at other sites to see which don't flood to much. This hasn't been done. Councillor Holloway attended a meeting with Jean Walter where Solihull Council admitted they haven't done the testing that needs to be done.

Jean would like permission to have a meeting with the Planning Officer in charge of site BL1 on behalf of the Parish Council, to ensure that they fully understand all of the documents we have sent through. All Councillors agree to this.

Acorns Hospice Fundraiser

Some residents would like to run a charity fundraising event in aid of Acorns Children's charity on the Village Green and came to ask permission to use the green for this purpose. The event would involve local children racing around the village green and receiving medals etc. All Councillors agree to this. Councillor Woodus advised that Boogaloo Babes are singing on the green on the 31st August which was a possible date that Acorns would like to have. The Parish Council are also looking to run an event. It was discussed whether it would be a good idea to

have the event on the same day with a view to the proceeds being donated to Acorns Childrens Charity. All Councillors agreed to this idea.

Minute 26 (2024/25) Declarations of Interest/Requests for Dispensations

None

Minute 27 (2024/25) Update from Borough Councillors

Borough Councillors not in attendance.

Councillor Weber would like it noted that at the previous meeting Councillor Hawkins stated that the housing requirement was to be filled by 2025 which is incorrect, it is actually 2028.

Minute 28 (2024/25) Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Council held on May 14th 2024

Councillors Liz Woodus proposed and Mike Small seconded, all in favour, the minutes are approved.

Minute 29 (2024/25) Parish Council Decisions

School Funding Request – Information has not been received from the school so could not be discussed.

Increment pay rise for the Clerk

Councillor Richard Small assumed that this would happen automatically, but it has to be actioned by the Parish Council. This is discussed, Councillor Mike Small asked if it's possible to give the clerk more than one increment, the amount that would increase the salary was discussed. All Councillors agree to a two increment pay rise for the Clerk.

Inflation Increase to Councillors' allowances

This is discussed and a vote is taken to increase by the maximum £100 (8.7%). Councillors Mike Small, Maureen Holloway, Adam Weber and Richard Small agree to this. Councillors Liz Woodus and Stewart Halford abstain.

Car Club Pilot

Councillors would like to know if the people who represent this initiative would be able to come and give us a presentation/more information. All agree. Clerk to request this.

Request to use the village green for charity event – Little Avengers Assemble – in aid of Acorns Childrens Hospice

All agree to this

Agree.Gov.Uk email addresses

All agree to this

Change process of approval of letters to Solihull Council

We would like to change the way this is done. Instead of waiting for a reply from all Councillors to say yes we could change it to unless you reply it will be assumed that you are abstaining. There will need to be a time limit which is suggested at 5 days. There would also need to be a whatsapp sent out to Councillors to advise that the email has been sent that needs a reply. All agree to this.

Wreath for D-Day

All agree to this

Minute 30 (2024/25) Finance and Risk Committee

Councillor Dave Easterby has decided to step down from his position of Parish Councillor for personal reasons. Councillor Richard Small will be in touch with him to organise a hand over. We need to organise a meeting for the next month.

Minute 31 (2024/25) Communications and Events Committee

Event on the Village Green

All agreed to the idea of having the event on the 31st August, it is decided to contact Mark Connolly-Dowson to ask for contacts for helpers with the event and the PTA.

They have been looking at Indian restaurants. Councillor R Small has the details of a DJ. They also have a face painter, bouncy castle, ice cream van and bar. They will contact the usual resident that helps with the removal of litter after the event.

The Communication and Events committee will be having a meeting on the 25th June.

Minute 32 (2024/25) Councillors' Action Log and Clerk's Update

Clerk is going to go through the action log to update it. Councillors then need to give their updates. Some Councillors have been out and chosen which lamp posts we'd like to have the

Christmas decorations on this year. We need to check the costs associated with this, so we know if we need to choose more.

Minute 33 (2024/25) To Consider Village Areas of Interest

Speed Reduction Proposals

Councillor Halford gave

an update on alternative speed visor he has been researching. He and Councillor M Small had a meeting with Mr Wyatt at Solihull Council. The warranty is better with the alternative unit. It is also lighter and has a much longer battery life which would mean we wouldn't have to change it as often, saving money. Councillor Halford will contact other Parish Councils who already use the alternative company for information.

Youth Club at Community Hub

We are awaiting the results of the bids for this; it is being discussed and evaluated at the moment.

Library

Councillor Mike Small updated about the library to say that we are trying to get more hours and organise more events in collaboration with the Library staff.

Service Charges in the Village

We hope that Dean Ward from Solihull Council will join us at one of the meetings in the near future. The Councillors would like to clarify that the pavements are included in the adoption of roads. Councillor Holloway is concerned about this.

Table Tennis Table

Councillor Halford is looking into funding for this, Table Tennis England may be able to help us.

Lamp Posts/Christmas Lights

We are trying to get a meeting with Dean Ward from Solihull Council to discuss this.

Parish Council Strategy

Councillor Weber updates on the Canal and Rivers Trust, they came out to look at the towpath I and walked between the bridges they took pictures and discussed a multi pronged approach they decided it was not just the towpath that the bridge was quagmire they will take care of the bridge, clear and sort the drainage. They felt that the vegetation was causing a lot of the problem they can deal with the canopy but the residents can get involved in cutting back the vegetation. Can we sort out a volunteer group? They're going to get an engineer to look at the towpath and make a spec with the cost so we can decide if we want to go ahead. It must be a couple of months for this to happen. They are happy to come and present if we would like them to.

Minute 34 (2024/25) To Consider Planning Applications

All happy with planning applications received. All agree to send Jean Walters letter regarding the sports hub to Solihull council.

Minute 35 (2024/25) Financial Matters

Proposed by Councillor Richard Small, seconded by Councillor Maureen Holloway, **Resolved** that the payments in Appendix I of the June 11th 2024 agenda be approved – 17 payments totalling £5690.52.

Minute 36 (2024/25) Correspondence

Residents have reported an issue with the bins on the Village Green overflowing. We pay for extra bin emptying during the summer months, Councillors are going to keep an eye on the bins and let the Clerk know if there are further issues. We have had a request for a sign to be put up in the Car Park to say that there is CCTV/no fly tipping. Councillors all agree that they are happy for the Clerk to arrange this.

Meeting ended 9pm

Next Meeting : Wednesday 10th July 2024: 6.30pm in the Library