

The Parish Council of Dickens Heath

Minutes of the Meeting of the Council held on Tuesday June 10th 2025

Present:

Dickens Heath Parish Councillors; Maureen Holloway, Liz Woodus, Mike Small, Stewart Halford, Vicky Taylor and Adam Weber.

2 members of the public, planning advisor Jean Walters

Clerk: Ms H Raithby

Minute 24 (2025/26) Apologies for Absence

None

Minute 25 (2025/26) Election of Chair

Deputy Chair Councillor Mike Small opened the meeting and explained that Councillor Richard Small has resigned from his post as Parish Councillor and Chair of the Parish Council. He will still be involved with volunteering for the Parish Council.

Councillor Mike Small calls for nominations for the new Chair of the Parish Council. Councillors Small, Holloway, Halford, Woodus and Weber all nominated Councillor Taylor. Councillor Taylor is the new Chair of the Parish Council. Councillor Taylor signs the declaration of acceptance.

Minute 26 (2025/26) Public Participation

Bramble Bees Florist

The owner of Bramble Bees Florist who used to have a business in the village and has lived here for a number of years spoke about the possibility of running a Christmas Market on the Village Green and would like permission from the Parish Council to do this. They use a professional service to set up and remove the market so it looks very professional and will look beautiful once it gets dark as it has lights. There was a discussion around the possibility of combining this event with the Parish Council Christmas event and everyone liked the idea, further discussions about suitable dates will happen. All Councillors agreed to the use of the Village Green for the market as long as 1. There is something in place to protect the grass 2. We are provided with pictures of previous events and happy with them 3. There is a full risk assessment provided.

Planning

The junction of Cleobury Lane and Rumbush Lane has had some lines put down, but it really needs to have a visibility splay which means cutting back ancient hedgerow. Jean Walters suggested writing to highways to ask for this to be done on highways safety grounds. All Councillors agreed to do this.

Jean would like the Parish Council to ask Solihull Council's tree officer to look again at two TPO'd trees on Beech Lane as she feels they are still in danger of dying. All Councillors agreed to this.

Minute 27 (2025/26) Declarations of Interest/Requests for Dispensations

None

Minute 28 (2025/26) To Receive a Report from the Borough Councillors

None in attendance.

Minute 29 (2025/26) To Receive an update from the Planning Advisory Group about Site BL1

Jean Walters spoke about the Local Plan and its importance, next month the draft will be coming out. It will be a five year plan.

Councillor Holloway spoke about trying to form a group across the local Parish Councils to try to oppose planning in the area.

Minute 30 (2025/26) Minutes of the AGM Meeting of the Council held on May 13th 2025

Councillor Mike Small proposed, and Stewart Halford seconded, all in favour, the minutes are approved.

Minute 31 (2025/26) Parish Council Decisions

Press Releases

Councillor Taylor and the Clerk are working to produce a new social media Policy. All Councillors understand and agree that no press releases or videos are to be released without the agreement of the Parish Council as a whole or in urgent circumstances with the agreement of the Clerk.

Allotment Association

The Allotment Association have put in an application for funding of £1166.31. They have provided all relevant paperwork and answered questions from the Parish Councillors who are satisfied with the use of the monies. Five Councillors agreed to the funding application. One was against.

Minute 32 (2025/26) Finance and Risk Committee

Councillor Taylor updates. They have lost a member of the committee, so they would like a new member. Councillor Woodus agrees to attend the next meeting and we could possibly run it on a rotation depending on what happens with co-options. The next meeting is on the 14th July for the Finance and Risk Committee. We are currently working towards getting the training policy sorted, part of this is the requirement to have regular training in place for each member of the Parish Council. All Councillors agreed to attend training at least once a year.

Minute 33 (2025/26) Communications and Events Committee

Councillor Small updates, we have already had some successful events this year, from the budget we have spent £1687 so far. The next planned event is the summer fun day on the Village Green on the 30th August.

Councillor Weber declares his interest in having a stall on the Village Green at this event to promote his event. All Councillors agree to this.

There was a discussion about timings as we have booked two different live acts and a DJ so need to work out the timings for everything.

Discussed publicising the event and having a flyer put through each home in the village, possibly linking this into a raffle prize. The Parish Council have already agreed on Dementia UK and Acorn's as the charities that we will be raising money for at the summer fun day.

Councillor Taylor is going to contact Dementia UK about this.

Minute 34 (2025/26) Councillors' Action Log and Clerk's Update

Clerk updates about complaints about weeds in the village. We have sent out information about how to complain directly to Solihull Council and to advise what of the steps the Parish Council are taking to inform Solihull Council as well. We have had an offer of help; Councillor Taylor will contact the resident to organise this. It was agreed that a group of Parish Councillors will compile a file with evidence of the state of the Traffic Islands with a view to sending this to Solihull Council. Discussion about business on Main Street opening and closing outside the hours agreed by Solihull Council planning agreement. All Councillors agree to writing to Solihull Planning to report this. Councillor Small will speak to the business owner first to see if they can reach a resolution.

We have also been working with someone from the Youth Justice team to coordinate some work in the Village. They have cut back foliage by the canal as some elderly residents had asked if it was possible to have this done. Work is going well so far. We plan to work with them to repaint the planters in the village.

Minute 35 (2025/26) To Consider Village Areas of Interest

Christmas Lights

Update on this next time – no progress at the moment.

Main Street

It was agreed to approach The Crown to try to find out what the likely course of action will be.

Library

Councillors Small and Halford have a meeting soon with Kate Bunting about the Library. They are not recruiting any new staff at the moment. We have put the link for residents to

complain about the Library closures to Solihull Council on our website and Facebook/Instagram pages. Amy is working really hard and doing a good job in the circumstances and the Library is doing well when it is open.

CCTV

The Clerk met with the CCTV specialist and he suggested the lamppost in the middle of the Village Green would be the best spot for the cameras. We have now established that the Parish Council arranged for this post to be installed so we can go ahead and get quotes.

Lamp Posts

It was agreed that Councillor Halford will contact Solihull Council to discuss this.

IT Platform

Emails are almost all sorted, hopefully by the next meeting this will be done. We will then focus on the Website.

Village Hall

The fire alarm was triggered and there has been a problem with it since, this should be sorted by Wednesday. There has also been a problem with the toilets.

Minute 36 (2025/26) To Consider Planning Applications

It is agreed to contact planning about a planning application that relates to Brixfield Way.

Minute 37 (2025/26) Financial Matters

Proposed by Councillor Maureen Holloway, seconded by Councillor Liz Woodus, **Resolved** that the payments in Appendix I of the June 10th agenda be approved - 15 payments totalling £8,712.15 including an additional payment of £265.00 to Councillor M Small for the papers for the Library, removal of the payment for the cancelled meeting in the Village Hall, and adjustments to Councillors' allowances and PAYE in relation to Councillor Richard Small's resignation.

Minute 38 (2025/26) Correspondence

Councillor Holloway would like to arrange a meeting with Summix and Arden Green developers, all Councillors agree to this.

Meeting ended 8.48pm

Next Meeting: Tuesday 8th July 2025: 6.30pm in the Library