

## The Parish Council of Dickens Heath

### Minutes of the Meeting of the Council held on Tuesday October 14th 2025

**Present:**

**Dickens Heath Parish Councillors;** Maureen Holloway, Liz Woodus, Stewart Halford, Vicky Taylor (chair) and Adam Weber.

5 members of the public.

Clerk: Ms H Raithby

**Minute 72 (2025/26) Apologies for Absence**

None

**Minute 73 (2025/26) Public Participation**

The Church warden from St. Patrick's Church spoke about the Remembrance service we run together and gave confirmation that they will be present on the day to support.

A resident raised issues of maintenance around the village. Councillor Taylor updated that we have been having regular meetings with Dean Ward at Solihull Council and that we share his frustrations about trying to get things done in the Village. The Clerk gave some information about how to contact Solihull Council direct to report the problems as the more people who report issues the more likely they are to take action. There is a discussion about the hedges on Rumbush Lane and the possibility of using some of the budget to clear up the Village. A member of the public asked about the north of the Village and the possibility of more lighting to make it safer to cycle at night. He then spoke about crime in the area and women being targeted, is it possible to do community outreach in the area, it is decided that we will introduce this resident to the local police team.

**Minute 74 (2025/26) Declarations of Interest/Requests for Dispensations**

None

**Minute 75 (2025/26) To Receive a Report from the Borough Councillors**

None present

**Minute 76 (2025/26) To Receive an update from the Planning Advisory Group about Site BL1**

Councillor Holloway updated that the Planning Group has been working to try to get a strategic green gap for Dickens Heath, and to get the village reclassified as a town for planning purposes. This is in line with resident's views from the recent poll. They have been looking at trying to restart work on the neighbourhood plan. Councillor Holloway advised that Summix have submitted their application for Tidbury Green and there is also an application for 110 houses on Rumbush Lane which will fall within our Parish. There are a lot of other planning applications coming in which we are trying to be prepared for.

**Minute 77 (2025/26) Minutes of the Meeting of the Council held on September 9<sup>th</sup> 2025**

Councillor Maureen Holloway proposed, and Councillor Liz Woodus seconded, all in favour, the minutes are approved.

**Extraordinary meeting held on August 12<sup>th</sup> 2025** Councillor Vicky Taylor proposes and Councillor Liz Woodus seconds, the minutes are approved.

**Minute 78 (2025/26) Parish Council Decisions**

Christmas Lights To have floor standing lights will be £4620.00, hanging lights 28 fixtures for £3720 with Solihull Council charging £690 to put them up. The caveat is that if we go along with Solihull Council doing this for this year we have to agree to have their lights on the lampposts going forward from next year. There is a discussion about the pros and cons to this. Councillor Halford would like to ask for more information about the suppliers and the options available. All Councillors agree to the 28 solar Christmas tree fixtures from Plantscape

for this year. Agree we need more information from Dean Ward at Solihull Council before a decision can be made for next year and going forward.

Neighbourhood Plan

All Councillors agree to restart the neighbourhood plan.

Waterside Island Bulbs for Spring

It is agreed that Councillor Holloway will coordinate this for the 20<sup>th</sup> of October to take the plants out of the troughs and organise bulbs and compost.

Central Fast Response

All Councillors agree to retrospective donations for the first aid courses they have run at the usual donation rate. The Clerk will check how many and how much is usually donated.

Budget Review

Councillor Holloway proposed that the Canal and Rivers trust amount that is currently budgeted for £6000 is removed from the budget as there is currently no work planned. All Councillors agreed to this.

**Minute 79 (2025/26) Finance and Risk Committee**

Councillor Taylor updated, we are currently under budget. The next meeting is planned for the 9<sup>th</sup> of December. The idea of having a credit card attached to the bank account was discussed and decided that it was too much of a risk, it was decided that the Clerk, RFO or Finance Committee will pay for things and be reimbursed as this is less risky.

**Minute 80 (2025/26) Communications and Events Committee**

Councillor Woodus updates, Remembrance is the next event, Clerk to contact Borough Councillor Richard Holt or Keith Green to ask if they would be willing to do a reading. Christmas Lights switch on event, Councillor Woodus will liaise with choir to work out which day is best 5<sup>th</sup> or 6<sup>th</sup> of December.

**Minute 81 (2025/26) Councillors' Action Log and Clerk's Update**

Youth Justice Service

The Clerk will coordinate this now that Councillor Small has resigned.

Roundabouts

All agreed to ask the Village litter picker/handyman to take photographs of the islands that have become unkempt and send to the Clerk on his rounds so that it can be reported to Solihull Council.

**Minute 82 (2025/26) To Consider Village Areas of Interest**

Youth Club

The younger youth club will now have two sessions as it was so successful. 5-6.30pm and 6.30-8pm for 7-13 year olds. They are currently working on what to do for the older age group as this wasn't as successful.

Main Street

The Clerk will ask Centrick for an update of what stage this is at.

CCTV

We have had one quote for this, it is agreed to ask on Facebook to see if anyone can recommend another company to give a quote to compare, need three quotes ideally.

IT Platform

Councillor Weber to give training to Councillors on the 11<sup>th</sup> of November on the new IT platform.

Village Hall

The Village Hall have a new administrator, Zoe. They have also been trying to get some new directors. There have been ongoing maintenance issues, the heating is now fixed.

**Minute 83 (2025/26) To Consider Planning Applications**

Birchy Farm application, agreed letter has been sent in to Solihull Council planning department. Tythe Barn Lane – erection of external staircase, no action on this.

**Minute 84 (2025/26) Financial Matters**

Proposed by Councillor Maureen Holloway, seconded by Councillor Liz Woodus, **Resolved** that the payments in Appendix I of the October 14<sup>th</sup> agenda be approved - 15 payments totalling £6506.42.

**Minute 85 (2025/26) Correspondence**

Mobile post office suggestion, all agree for the Clerk to look in to this and would like to know more info about the digital post boxes as well.

**Minute 86 (2025/26) Items For Next Agenda**

Brixfield Way Island is an absolute mess – agree plan of action

Christmas Lights Competition – Councillor Taylor would like agreement to run this

**Minute 87(2025/26) It was Resolved that, in accordance with paras I and II Part I of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public should be asked to withdraw due to the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted**

**Minute 88 (2025/26) Annual Increment Pay Award For Clerk**

The Clerk has had her PDR and Councillors agree she is doing a wonderful job and her pay award is agreed.

**Minute 89 (2025/26) Birchy Leasowes Letter**

Councillor Weber presented the slides to give background information to the recent situation with facts and events. Summary and intentions at the end. The resolution is that all letters that require agreement from Councillors outside a full Council meeting must be sent out from the Clerk, not a Councillor and decisions from individual Councillors are to be sent back to the Clerk only to negate any discussion after their decision is made.

**Minute 90 (2025/26) Co-Option Applications**

Councillor Holloway advises of a declaration of interest in one of the applications and is excluded from the discussion and voting on this application.

There is a discussion about the six Co-Option application, and a vote, Jim Harte and Andy Cardoza are unanimously voted on to the Parish Council.

**Meeting ended 9pm**

**Next Meeting: Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> November 2025: 6.30pm in the Library**