

# The Parish Council of Dickens Heath Minutes of the Extraordinary Meeting of the Council held on Tuesday August 12th 2025

**Present:**

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

Planning Adviser Jean Walters

Borough Councillors; Keith Green, Richard Holt, Andy Mackiewicz

One member of the public

Clerk: Ms H Raithby

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**Minute 54 (2025/26) Apologies for Absence**

None

**Minute 55 (2025/26) To Discuss the Solihull Settlement Hierarchy and decide what comments the Parish Council would like to make regarding the idea of classifying Dickens Heath as a town for planning purposes only.**

Councillor Taylor introduced the meeting and discussed the options:

1. Not complete the questionnaire
2. Complete the questionnaire not in favour of becoming a town for planning purposes
3. Complete the questionnaire in favour of becoming a town for planning purposes

All Councillors have made themselves aware of the proposal and what it entails.

Andy Mackiewicz speaks about the background, the Government issued a new NPPF back in December last year. The end of Greenbelt as we know it, they have been approving a lot more planning applications. The incentive is to build more houses. He references paragraph 143b 'one of the purposes of Greenbelt is to prevent the merging of towns and villages' There is no protection for merging of villages. His objective is to retain this unique village and its green spaces. Most importantly we don't want Dickens Heath to become a suburb of Shirley. This is the reason the hierarchy of settlements has been produced. The information is all included in the hierarchy of settlements pack. It won't stop development completely but trying to stop the areas blending in to one another. Classifying Dickens Heath as a town for planning purposes will not change the legal status, it will still be Dickens Heath Village. It just ensures that Dickens Heath will have a little more Greenbelt protection. It is for planning purposes only.

Dickens Heath does not fit the criteria for a town in other ways anyway.

There was a discussion about the possibility of having a neighbourhood plan which can then be part of Solihull's plan. Jean advised that we decided to do a Parish Plan due to time restrictions. They have already made a start on this. We have been working with the action group in Tidbury Green. The village will get more money if we have a local plan from Community Infrastructure Levy.

If there is a legal challenge from developers Andy Mackiewicz confirms this will be dealt with at Solihull Council, not the Parish Council.

There was a vote, and all Parish Council members agreed to fill in the questionnaire in favour of classifying Dickens Heath as a town for planning purposes only. Councillor Taylor went through each question, and all Councillors agreed on how to answer the questions.

**Minute 56 (2025/26)**

Proposed by Councillor Maureen Holloway, seconded by Councillor Liz Woodus, **Resolved** that the payments in the Appendix: 14 payments totalling £5845.66 of Agenda August 12th 2025 be approved.

Meeting Ends at 7.07pm

Minutes of Dickens Heath Parish Council Extraordinary Meeting held Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> August 2025

Signature.....

Date.....