

The Parish Council of Dickens Heath

Minutes of the Meeting of the Council held on Tuesday March 10th 2026

Present:

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

Borough Councillors Keith Green and Richard Holt

3 members of our local Police Team

3 members of the public

Planning Advisor Jean Walters

Clerk: Ms H Raithby

Minute 122 (2025/26) Apologies for Absence

Councillor Andy Cardoza.

Minute 123 (2025/26) Public Participation

Two members of the public joined the meeting to speak about TDF fitness and what the studio means to them and how it would be a massive loss if they were to lose the early morning slots which allow them to work out before work. This is because the Parish Council have been approached regarding a change of hours application and they would like the Parish Council not to object to this. Councillor Halford has been to visit the studio on Main Street and is impressed with the measures that Des and his team have put in place to try and keep the noise as low as possible for the surrounding residents.

Minute 124 (2025/26) Police Update

The police gave a report on recent months' criminal activity there has been very little crime in the area - there was 1 bike stolen in January, a van had some tools stolen while parked on the road and there was a robbery of an electric bike in the park in February. There was also a Land Rover stolen but because they had put an Apple airtag in the vehicle it was recovered very quickly, there have been no burglaries. Councillor Taylor asked the police if there is any chance they will be able to attend on Halloween this year as there was quite a lot of trouble last year the police confirmed that their team will be on duty this Halloween so they will be able to be in Dickens Heath.

Minute 125 (2025/26) Declarations of Interest/Requests for Dispensations

Councillor Weber spoke about his business which is launching a knife crime initiative. He's letting everybody know in order to be transparent, he is intending to work with the police among others.

Minute 126 (2025/26) To Receive a Report from the Borough Councillors

Councillor Keith Green updated, the building work at Dog Kennel Lane has a consultation which will be live on the 11th of March which will give details of the plans for the new school and other amenities. All local residents have received information through the post as it will affect them. With regards to the Akamba site, Solihull Council have visited four times in total, the most recent three times there hadn't been any activity and the site was locked up. When they visited the site originally they took names and addresses for the people working on the site which did tally with a skip hire company so they will be following this up. Councillor Richard Holt updated, at the Stronger Communities scrutiny board they discussed the issue of maintaining land at public expense and maintaining ownership of land. This relates to the canal towpath issue we have had where there has been some removal of trees and hedges. He has flagged the issue of the land not being taken over fully by Solihull Council even though they are maintaining the land. He would like to look into this further. He referred

to the issue with the footpath and bridge at Waterside, there is a deed of easement. There is an agreement between Solihull Council, the Waterboard and Dickens Heath Management Company which basically states that it should always be open. There are a series of questions around how we go forward with the way the villages legacy arrangements should be. He referenced the Village Green and the Parish Council's decision to take that on when a similar issue arose in the past. He also referenced Main Street and the issues there are with that. He is going to write to Dean Ward at Solihull Council and the scrutiny board to try to begin some resolution for these issues. Councillor Holloway suggested having a Planning Advisory Group meeting to discuss these matters.

Minute 127 (2025/26) To Receive an update from the Planning Advisory Group about Site BL1

Councillor Harte updated. They had a meeting on the 3rd of March, the main item was the submission for the local plan consultation. Councillor Harte thanked planning advisor Jean Walters for her help with this. This will be sent to Solihull Council and shared with the local MP and our Borough Councillors. The covering letter invites planning officers to join us for a meeting, and we will attach the strategic green gap document as well. The Advisory Group have been working on the neighbourhood plan and we'll be trying to keep it as simple and high level as possible. They're also trying to produce a map for a plan to show potential planning sites. It is suggested that we have a separate section of the website for this information to be accessible to residents. The Akamba site, Waterside bridge and Main St will all be on their agenda as well.

Minute 128 (2025/26) To Consider Planning Applications

With regards to planning application 2026/00109, adjustment of times for use of premises, The Parish Council have considered this application and have been in contact with the owner of the premises who has spent a considerable amount of money to install acoustic soundproofing and other measures to reduce the noise. He's also willing to work with the residents if there are any further problems. The Parish Council are satisfied with this and are happy to agree with the new hours they have applied for.

Minute 129 (2025/26) Minutes of the Meeting of the Council held on February 10th 2026

Councillor Adam Weber proposed, and Councillor Maureen Holloway seconded, all in favour, the minutes are approved.

Minute 130 (2025/26) Parish Council Decisions

Benches – All agreed to the proposed new metal benches on the Village Green, we need to get some information on the installation process.

Site Activity and Tree/Hedgerow Protection letter – All agree to send the letter

CCTV – All agree to go ahead with the CCTV. The Village Hall have agreed to have the hub in a locked room there and they would like two cameras, one in the kitchen and one in the lobby. They cannot contribute to initial setup but are happy to help with running costs.

Date of APM meeting – all agree to hold this meeting before the April meeting, starting at 6pm

School Grant Application – Councillors would like more information before making this decision.

Local Plan Submission – All agree to send this letter

Replacement Planters at Waterside – All agree to the replacement round planters and the replacement for the damaged planter on the island.

Minute 131 (2025/26) Finance and Risk Working Group

Next meeting is the 14th of April at 1:00 PM. Councillors agree that the water bowser can be sold on eBay for a minimum price of £200.

Minute 132 (2025/26) Communications and Events Working Group

Sponsorship - Councillors agree that it is OK to ask for sponsorship from Blossoms nursery, Tesco, Sainsbury's, Costa and the new cafe in the village.

Easter event is happening on the 5th of April they would like to agree a maximum budget of £600... £200 for Easter eggs, £90 for a face painter, the Village Hall hire is £72, Tea, coffee and extras £60, and a goodwill gesture of £50 to those volunteers that help out on the day. This will be for around 100 guests, all councillors agree to this maximum budget.

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Signature.....

Date.....

VE Day

it was proposed to get a wreath to lay on the memorial stone to celebrate VE Day a maximum budget of £50 for the wreath was agreed

Tea Party It was proposed to have a tea party on the 31st of May with a maximum budget of £610 which will cover sandwiches, village hall hire, tea and coffee and a singer at £120. All agreed to this maximum budget.

Minute 133 (2025/26) Councillors' Action Log and Clerk's Update

Car Park Sign – Councillor Taylor will look into this again.

Christmas Lights – We are mindful of needing to keep on top of this as there's a lot to try to sort out which takes time. We will try to organise a meeting with Richard Holt about it.

Main Street – Councillor Taylor to update Councillor Harte on what has happened with Main Street in the past.

Minute 134 (2025/26) To Consider Village Areas of Interest

Vegetation Removal at rear of Hitherside – We have been advised that the resident will be replanting bushes in the Autumn to replace those taken out. We will ask the resident for written confirmation of this.

Canal – Councillor Weber has sent the hand over information to Councillor Cardoza.

Halloween – The Police have confirmed they can attend, we will notify Streetwatch of this, hopefully they will attend as well.

IT Platform – Councillor Weber and Taylor will help other Councillors with this to get it running properly.

Village Hall – The Village Hall has three new directors who are being quite proactive, the website has been updated. James, the chair, is continuing to do the Administration Duties they have now opened the hall for bookings for parties for Dickens Heath residents and are planning to have an open house event on the 4th Monday of every month so people can go and look at the space. One of the new directors has been great in applying for grants.

Islands – Councillor Halford has been removing some of the soil off the island at Brixfield Way to make it ready for the new stones. He has hurt his back so will need to get a group together to continue this.

Minute 135 (2025/26) Financial Matters

Proposed by Councillor Vicky Taylor, seconded by Councillor Maureen Holloway, **Resolved** that the payments in Appendix I of the March 10th agenda be approved - 13 payments totalling £6435.92 including one extra payment to ASE Computer Services for £821.31

Proposed by Councillor Vicky Taylor, seconded by Councillor Maureen Holloway, **Resolved** that the payments in Appendix I of the November 11th 2025 agenda be approved – 13 payments totalling £5604.62.

Minute 136 (2025/26) Correspondence

Correspondence from residents regarding the gate at Waterside is discussed and potential resolution ideas, all agree to send form to Solihull Council to formally request the removal of the gate.

The correspondence from the purchaser of the Parish Council's property at Waterside back in 2019 is discussed and all Councillors agree not to purchase the stone sculpture.

Minute 137 (2025/26) Items For Next Agenda

Summer Planters, Main Street, Coffees for Volunteers after the litter picks, Severn Trent.

Meeting ended 9.16pm

Next Meeting: April 14th 2026: 6.30pm in the Library