

# RADFORD SEMELE PARISH COUNCIL

## MINUTES

A virtual meeting of the Parish Council was held on Monday 27<sup>th</sup> July 2020 at 7.30 pm.

**Participants:** Cllr S Sabin (in the chair), Cllr D Carter, Cllr B Follett, Cllr B Friar, Cllr A T Hitchcox, Cllr A Malin, Cllr Mrs J P Malin, Cllr R Munn, Cllr T Musa and Cllr J Sudbury

**In attendance:** WCC Cllr Redford and Mrs Judy Steele representing FoRGE (Friends of Radford's Green Environment)

### 1. Apologies for Absence and Declarations of Interest

There were apologies for absence from WDC Cllr Mrs Leigh-Hunt and there were no Declarations of Interest save it was confirmed that Cllr Munn has a standing Declaration of Interest from last year in respect of 56 Southam Road. It was AGREED that he could speak to it as appropriate.

### 2. Pond Management Plan

Following receipt by the Council, at an earlier meeting, of a suggested management plan, prepared by FoRGE for the pond owned by the Parish Council, Mrs Steele spoke to it. At a previous meeting Cllr Sudbury's name had been put forward as co-ordinator of a small working party to review and apply the outcome of the plan. The Clerk suggested Cllr Sudbury and another Councillor plus two representatives from FoRGE and this was AGREED. Cllr Hitchcox agreed to be the second Councillor. It was likely that Barbara Wyatt will be the second representative from FoRGE in addition to Mrs Steele.

Mrs Steele said that FoRGE had been in contact with David Cole on issues of biodiversity and he is involved with the Warwickshire Wildlife Trust. Mrs Wyatt had done a lot of research on the issues.

There was also a health and safety aspect in respect of the pond to be noted and actioned if necessary. The Clerk had observed that a life belt which had been on site for many years had disappeared and a warning notice on the fencing was of poor quality. Mrs Steele also pointed out that it would be desirable to have security fencing to stop dogs getting into the pond.

### 3. Approval of the Minutes of the Council meeting on 29<sup>th</sup> June 2020

The Minutes of the virtual Council meeting held on the 29<sup>th</sup> June 2020 were approved, proposed by Cllr Friar, and seconded by Cllr Mrs Malin.

### 4. Matters arising from the Minutes of the Council meeting on 29<sup>th</sup> June 2020

These matters were dealt with under other headings.

### 5. Traffic management issues

The Chairman then dealt with traffic management issues as Mrs Steele expressed an interest in being updated.

1. The Chairman outlined that since the Clerk's definitive letter of 8<sup>th</sup> May 2019, which had been submitted by this Council on a number of issues concerning traffic management, no progress had been made. One issue was protection for pedestrians and speed management on the A425; this Council proposed to put pedestrian refuges at the junction of Lewis Road and the A425 and the junction with Kingshurst but no response had been received up to today's date.
2. Whilst a unit of WCC have been concerned with the project called Safer Routes to School this had only resulted in construction of bollards and installation of tactile paving towards the end of

School Lane and it had not addressed the wider issues of access from residents on the Bovis site to the School. Summarised, this Council's proposals were for a pedestrian facility on the A425 for access from Bovis site No 1 and a similar facility in Offchurch Lane for Bovis site No 2. The unit at WCC have not responded on it.

3. The Infrastructure Manager at WCC, Janet Neale, had a meeting at the beginning of the year with the Chairman, Vice Chairman, Clerk and WDC Cllr Mrs Leigh-Hunt when we were assured that a full investigation into available Section 106 and CIL monies would be made available and a full review of the Council's requests for some of this money to be spent on traffic management. No progress had been made from that, despite an acknowledgement in March from Ms Neale to Mrs Leigh-Hunt that the matter was in hand and she would revert.
4. The Chairman had received a detailed email from Lucy Hammond at the Planning Dept of WDC concerning difficulties they had encountered with the exit project at the Bovis No 2 site on to Offchurch lane. An update was awaited because WDC will be requesting Bovis to amend the conditions/conform to conditions required for the exit.
5. The Chairman had observed that a WCC streetlamp notice had given an indication of work to be carried out in the vicinity of School Lane and ascertained that this relates to a project of imposing yellow lines at the junction. In corresponding with more than one WCC official, the Chairman was advised that the proposed scheme for yellow lines at the junction of School Lane and the A425 might not now go ahead because of the work at the bell mouth junction - clearly a situation where two units of WCC were not in coordination. The Clerk had recently written to the Civil Enforcement Section concerning the yellow lines project and referred them back to the letter of 8<sup>th</sup> May 2019 which requested double yellow lines at the junction of Lewis Road and the A425 (pointing out that was a more focussed project than the one at School Lane).
6. This Council had heard at the last meeting of a traffic incident in Lewis Road when a resident had a passing car collide with his parked car. The Chairman had been advised that the Police may put up speed cameras on the A425 in the summer, and secondly the overall assessment of casualty rates on the A425 in the area of the Parish were considered by WCC to be a low rate (and therefore presumably not worthy of attention). This Council's letter of 8<sup>th</sup> May 2019 and subsequent correspondence by the Chairman had also sought improved speed control signs on the A425 between the Village and Fosse Way but we have been advised that these items are not worthy of budgetary consideration.
7. The Chairman in company with former Cllr Henry Marriott had carried out a preliminary examination of the feasibility of a footpath alongside Offchurch Lane towards the Canal; from a structural point of view Mr Marriott thought it was feasible – the issue is getting consent of relevant landowners. It was AGREED that the Clerk would contact one of the identified landowners and seek his views on the project.

Whilst not an issue of traffic management, it was noted that two footpaths off the A425 require plant growth being trimmed back periodically; it had been thought that FoRGE would deal with these. The matter had come back into view as the Clerk had observed that one of the paths leading to the fields at the back of the Village had been seriously overgrown. Mrs Steele agreed on behalf of FoRGE that they would undertake the monitoring and trimming of these pathways.

## **6. Section 106 and CIL payments**

1. The Chairman outlined that in conjunction with traffic management issues with Janet Neale, he and the Clerk been pressing for clarity on payments of Section 106/CIL monies for the benefit of the Parish. He had identified that David Anderson of WDC was manager of Open Space funding; a few weeks ago the Clerk had written three letters to Mr Anderson on three different issues where Open Space money was due to the Parish but he had not received a response as yet.
2. Some of Section 106 money from the Bovis development had been earmarked for general improvements to traffic conditions on the A425 but some time ago the Chairman had discovered that WCC were contemplating applying that funding to the Leamington end of the A425 and not the rural area. WDC Cllr Mrs Leigh-Hunt had sought to pursue this issue with WCC but had not

had a reply. The project to create a cycle route between the Village and Leamington appeared to be on hold as further funding was required to cover the cost.

## **7. Warwickshire County Council – update report**

1. WCC Cllr Redford reported that the WCC Footpaths Dept had become tired of waiting for a positive response from advisors to the occupant of 9 Lythall Close; WCC's solicitors had been in touch with the advisors and had not had any positive response. Cllr Redford had spoken to a number of residents and was fully aware of their discontent. In the light of the present position, it was likely that WCC will be taking action in respect of the footpath in the near future.
2. He reported that the Public Library and Museum are now open to the public but it was necessary to make an appointment to go in but there is a return book facility at the library; this comprises a box on the outside where a returned book could be placed and the staff will reallocate them to shelves.

## **8. Warwick District Council – update report**

In her absence WDC Cllr Mrs Leigh-Hunt had tabled her report in advance of the meeting. There were no matters arising.

At this point Mrs Steele left the meeting.

## **9. Financial Matters**

1. The Clerk reported that the balance on the investment account is £34,307.84 and the balance on the operating account is £17,240.10.
2. The Council authorised payments as per the tabled list including payment to the Clerk of £1,422.19; this represents arrears of pay due from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2020 to the date of this meeting following the recommendation from the Finance Committee that the Clerk's pay be increased.
3. The Clerk reported that online banking is in hand and he had recently operated the account to obtain the statements put before the Council today.
4. Cllr Friar, on behalf of the Finance Committee gave a brief overview of the proposed increase in the Clerk's salary; he reminded Cllrs that at the previous meeting he had reported on the outcome of discussions between the Clerk, himself, the Chairman and the Vice Chairman and they had reached a conclusion on the figures. It had been accepted by Cllrs at the last meeting that an increase in salary was due; the Chairman said that the Clerk's role had changed out of all recognition since he took up the post over 15 years ago. Cllr Friar asked the Council to agree the figure which had been negotiated of an annual sum of £9,402.00; a RESOLUTION was carried unanimously, proposed by Cllr Sudbury, and seconded by Cllr Hitchcox.

## **10. Review of External Audit**

The Clerk reported that the papers had been lodged with the External Auditor in good time and an acknowledgement of receipt had been received. To date there was no reaction from the Auditor – copies of the audit papers are displayed on the noticeboard and on the website.

## **11. Correspondence**

1. The Council had a report at the last meeting about discomfort caused to neighbours by a bonfire made by a resident on, 7<sup>th</sup> June 2020. He had now responded to the Clerk's letter of admonition at the time. The Clerk had not circulated the letter but outlined its content; it challenged the Council's case that it was a nuisance to neighbours. He had recently telephoned the Clerk challenging the findings when he was told that there was a video showing smoke billowing from his premises. He

requested a copy of the video. The Council concluded that a copy of the video should not be supplied as it was time to close the matter and not exacerbate the situation by the video being passed around. The Clerk is to write to him accordingly.

**Action: Clerk**

2. A letter had been received from Luke Young who was not known to anyone present; this was a request to have a football team in which he was involved playing on Wednesday evenings. Following discussion, it was AGREED that the request should be declined as he had not supplied the Clerk (as requested) with any details of the team or the location of players, residents etc. The view taken was that the accommodation should be reserved to local players and local teams as a community facility and not an open service to non-residents. The Clerk to write to advise him.  
**Action: Clerk**
3. It was noted that SANDS Utd football club will not be carrying out their charity match in August as planned many months ago, due to the difficulties incurred in the pandemic.
4. An email that had been received from a local lady; the Clerk was aware that she lives in Slade Meadow. She had drawn attention to a number of issues; the access stile to footpath W119b at the end of Hamilton Road needs attention; an old oil drum adjacent to a track leading to the Fosse Way was now full of dog waste bags; a request for a dog waste bin to be installed at the junction of Lewis Road and The Valley; vehicle speeds in Lewis Road; condition of the surface of School Lane.

Whilst not technically part of correspondence, the Chairman expressed his concern at the recent power cuts suffered by the Village without warning which had created trouble with residents' IT facilities (in particular Cllr Friar whose total internet had collapsed). The Clerk is to write to Western Power to draw to their attention this Council's concern.

**Action: Clerk**

## 12. Planning Matters

1. W/15/1635 - 56 Southam Road  
The Clerk outlined the high level of activity in the last week; this followed observation by Cllr Hitchcox that a high fence was in the course of erection; this was followed by a complaint from a local resident, with photographs supplied to the Clerk, which were taken on a Sunday afternoon following their return from a weekend away. The Clerk had immediately alerted Gerald Brooks at WCC Highways; the latter had given it his immediate attention. He carried out a site inspection on the Friday before this meeting; the results are awaited. In the meantime, the fence has expanded along the boundary from 2 School Lane to the boundary of 54 Southam Road. The fence is estimated to be about 6 ft high. Together with the removal of trees and shrubs etc, it is on the face of things a breach of the planning permission granted in 2016 and on which this Council has written to the Planning Dept on a number of occasions. In the last week, WDC Cllr Mrs Leigh-Hunt has written to the Planning Dept expressing her view (as a member of WDC Planning Committee) that the original planning permission has been breached. This has been taken up by Gary Fisher of that department and is in the course of being investigated.
2. 9 Lythall Close (ongoing)  
The Chairman reported that he and the Clerk had regularly in the last few months sought to persuade WCC Footpaths Dept to progress matters concerning footpath number 254 / W 123 / 2 being used as a motorised access to his property by the occupant of 9 Lythall Close. WCC Cllr Redford reported that he had been in touch with residents and with the Footpaths Dept; he said the Dept considers that the time has expired for waiting for proper representations from the occupier's advisors. The inference is that they do not have a good case on his behalf. It is likely that WCC Footpaths Dept will take action in the matter in the near future.
3. W/19/1772 – Land at The Valley  
The Chairman confirmed that papers had been filed by the Parish Council and by WDC Cllr Mrs Leigh-Hunt to challenge the appeal relating to land at The Valley. The Enquiry by the Government Inspector is pending.

4. W/20/0552 – 8 Williams Road – this is still awaiting validation.
5. The Parish council had approved the planning application on behalf of the Baptist Church which was thought to greatly enhance the facilities there for the benefit of the whole Village.
6. The Council had consented to the application for the replacement of the sheds at the Fosse Garage.

## **12. Update on the Neighbourhood Plan**

Cllr Friar explained that currently the WDC function is to arrange examination by an assessor of the contents of the Neighbourhood Plan. The consultation period is open until the 18<sup>th</sup> August 2020 and he urged Cllrs to make personal representations and encourage others to do the same. These are to be couched in specific approvals of items in the Plan as opposed to endorsing it generally. He is arranging for 1000 leaflets to be dropped through letter boxes and looked for volunteers to assist.

**Action: Cllr Friar**

## **13. Update on the Playing Field**

1. Cllr Follett reminded the Council that at the previous meeting it had been agreed in outline that the project for adult gym equipment should be progressed; the initial stage is for him to obtain grant funding as the Council had made a policy decision that the project would only proceed if grant funding could be obtained. As a condition of grant funding there has to be match funding from this Council; a commitment was therefore required today to cover the expected sum of £3,225. A RESOLUTION was therefore passed to make this commitment, proposed by Cllr Friar, and seconded by Cllr Mrs Malin.
2. Cllr Follett said he had now opened the play area to the public following the Government's encouragement for open spaces to be taken out of lockdown. In the course of that he had cleared up a quantity of moss which had accrued on the play area.
3. He raised the point previously covered by the Clerk as to RoSPA seeking instructions to carry out one of their regular inspections this year. Usually RoSPA do this in September or October. Cllr Follett thought it better to deal with some of the outstanding matters from the last report before inviting RoSPA to carry out another inspection which could be put off for the time being this was AGREED.
4. Cllr Hitchcox pointed out that the new fixings for the goalposts were in place to hang the nets. He pointed out the existence of a significant pothole in Spring Lane; it was AGREED to leave that in abeyance for the time being until as work on the A C Lloyd site were continuing.
5. Cllr Hitchcox reported that provision for wildflowers on the Playing Field (first promoted by former Cllr Mrs Northey) was in hand.

## **14. Update on Scout Hut**

Cllr Friar said that this Council's subscription to Parish Online through WALC had proved to be most beneficial in his enquiries concerning a site for the Scout Hut. He is looking at a plot of land on the perimeter of the Village which he has now ascertained is owned by three different title-holders. His enquiries are continuing.

## **15. Update report on Sports & Social Club matters**

Cllr Mrs Malin reported that on the 4<sup>th</sup> July 2020, following the Government's guidelines, the Club was opened and a large number of safety measures in respect of the Coronavirus had been taken. Members are encouraged to drink and socialise outside – there are now six tables in situ instead of the original three. The year-end accounts to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2019 showed a trading profit of £4,000 which is good news considering the immediate past history of the Club.

## 16. Update report from Community Hall Committee

Cllr Mrs Malin reported that the bookings clerk had now retired; as an interim measure, former councillor David Chater is dealing with bookings and Cllr Friar is in the process of setting up an online booking process through this Council's website. The previous cleaner has now resigned but a new appointment has been made. They received the £10,000 grant from the Government at an early stage during lockdown, as did many public buildings, and they are now exploring obtaining part of the grant of up to £1,000 which is being offered by WDC. Cllr Friar said there may be difficulty with that as there are many calls upon what is a discretionary grant so the Community Hall, having had the £10,000, may now be considered to be low on the list of applicants. Cllr Friar reminded this Council that in the budget at the beginning of the year, provision for a potential grant from this Council of £5,000 to the Community Hall had been made so this will have to be further considered.

## 17. Update on School matters

There were no matters arising concerning the School.

## 18. Report on the website

1. Cllr Friar outlined that the Media Committee had now settled upon a form of invitation to provide services to this Council in the shape of a creative content manager for the website. Initially, the focus was on an employment contract for personnel reporting to the Media Committee but after some thought and legal advice from the Clerk, the invitation document had now been redrafted by the Clerk and Cllr Musa. The new format is to invite tenders for services from outside the contractors; this will avoid the Council being involved with an employment status being created for the manager. It is contemplated that the initial period will be for 12 months and the likely payment would be £3,250 for that period. The Clerk recommended it would be better to have a larger, capped, figure with a cap to give the Media Committee scope to negotiate with an applicant for the post. A RESOLUTION was passed unanimously that the Media Committee be authorised to commit on a payment up to a capped sum of £5,000, proposed by Cllr Hitchcox and seconded by Cllr Munn.
2. Cllr Friar said that the subscription to Parish Online had proved worthwhile; currently there is a trial period of 90 days provided by WALC with a discounted rate for WALC members. The annual subscription would be £112 which he recommended. The Clerk said that for the benefit of Cllrs who had not seen the demonstration, he took the view it was a worthwhile investment as it would enable this Council to engage in mapping of the Parish area in various shapes and forms. It was AGREED that when the trial period ran out, Cllr Friar should proceed to organise a subscription on a regular basis and in the meantime report back to the Council. This was proposed by Cllr Sudbury and seconded by Cllr Carter.  
**Action: Cllr Friar**

## 19. Update on Covid-19 Support group arrangements

Cllr Friar briefly reported that the Covid-19 emergency support group were still active, but more low key now as the demands had quietened down. It was being maintained in the light of the fact that there might be further outbreaks of the pandemic. In his absence on holiday for a couple of weeks, Mr Oliver Aries would be covering the organisation.

## 20. Review of emergency procedures

Cllr Sudbury said he had finalised the new emergency plan which requires a few minor items added upon receipt by him of some more information. He has adopted a template from WDC.

The Clerk asked for an update on the two defibrillators which Cllr Sudbury had kindly made himself responsible. He said that the defective unit from the shop had now been repaired in America via the main supplier in Stockport and it was on its way back. It was not possible to ascertain the cost payable by the Council yet until the package was returned with an invoice. The defibrillator installed at The White Lion public house was in good order and he was monitoring it.

**21. Any Other Business**

1. The Clerk asked the Council to approve the Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting in April 2019 as these had not been considered this year as the APM was not held this year. They were approved, proposed by Cllr Sudbury, and seconded by Cllr Hitchcox.
2. A complaint had been received from a householder that her internet connection had been interfered with by a tree outside the Village shop. The Chairman and former councillor Henry Marriott had resolved the matter by Mr Marriott trimming a portion of the tree without demolishing a substantial part of it. It was AGREED that the Clerk would write to thank Mr Marriott to thank him for his assistance. **Action: Clerk**
3. With reference to the pear tree in the Playing Field, the Chairman said that a suitable stone to carry the plaque had been located and was currently lodged in Mr Marriott's barn whilst a plaque was prepared.
4. The Chairman expressed the condolences of the Council to Cllr Sudbury on the recent passing of his mother-in-law.

**22. Date of next meeting**

28<sup>th</sup> September 2020 is likely to be a virtual meeting, but the Chairman and Clerk are looking at possible options for a face to face meeting and will report back. This meeting closed at 9.35 pm

Signed.....

Date.....

**Chairman of the Parish Council**

Counter signed.....

Date.....

**Clerk to the Parish Council**