

# RADFORD SEMELE PARISH COUNCIL

## MINUTES

A meeting of the Parish Council was held in the Community Hall, Lewis Road, Radford Semele, on Monday 25<sup>th</sup> February 2019 at 7.30 pm.

**Present:** Cllr S Sabin (in the chair), Cllr D E Chater, Cllr B Friar, Cllr A T Hitchcox, Cllr Mrs J P Malin, Cllr H E J Marriott, Cllr Mrs N Northey and Cllr J Sudbury

**In attendance:** WDC Cllr M Doody and WCC Cllr W Redford and two members of the public

Prior to the commencement of formal proceedings, the Chairman invited Mr Tunde Musa, a representative of the Table Tennis Club, to make a brief statement concerning proposals that the Club were hoping to bring forward. As the item was not on the agenda that evening the Chairman proposed that representatives of the Table Tennis Club be allowed to address the Council at the meeting in March. A brief, prepared by the Leamington District Table Tennis Association and the Table Tennis Club, would be circulated to all Councillors prior to that meeting.

**Action: Chairman**

1. **Apologies for absence:** Cllr B Follett (holidays) and Cllr A E Malin (illness)

2. **Declaration of interests:** None

### 3. **Approval of the Minutes of the Council meeting on 28th January 2019**

1. Under paragraph 9, Cllr Mrs Malin pointed out that action on her part related to 9.4 and not 9.3 – the Minutes to be amended.
2. Cllr Sudbury raised the fact there were items which had been omitted in the account given by Dave Barber which should be included in the Minutes; it was AGREED that Cllr Sudbury would submit a draft of the amendments to the Clerk and the Chairman and the Clerk be authorised to approve them and complete the signed Minutes.

The Chairman signed the Minutes in escrow. Subject to this the Minutes were approved, proposed by Cllr Friar and seconded by Cllr Marriott.

### 4. **Matters arising from the Minutes of the Council meeting on 28<sup>th</sup> January 2019**

1. The Clerk confirmed that he had booked places for Cllr Sabin and Cllr Sudbury at the WDC seminar on 6<sup>th</sup> March relating to CIL. Other Cllrs are invited to join them. The Clerk had attended one of these seminars on 20<sup>th</sup> February and reported that the subject matter was complex.
2. The Clerk said he had not had any further representations from Cllrs on the draft sketch plans prepared for Lewis Road by Cllr Chater and School Lane by Cllr Hitchcox. The draft letter to WCC Traffic management section was ready to go (on the basis of a draft being submitted to David Elliston of WCC first). The Clerk could not transmit the letter until the sketch plans were agreed and consolidated. It was AGREED that the Clerk would circulate copies of these sketch plans again. A brief discussion would take place at the next Council meeting to confirm the format of the sketch plan.

There was a short debate on the traffic movement in the Village from the point of view of speed etc; it was noted that a Police Community Support Officer had toured the Village putting leaflets through letterboxes and some notices had been attached to lamp posts. The Clerk reported that the Officer had come to his house to discuss the position. The Clerk had sent a letter to the Chief Constable drawing attention to the potential hazard on the junction of Lewis Road and Southam Road.

**Action: All Cllrs and Clerk**

The Chairman referred to paperwork from the Safe Neighbourhood Team. It was noted that there will be a further meeting of the Neighbourhood Forum in May 2019. Cllr Redford

suggested that an agreed submission should be prepared by the Council and submitted through the Forum for that date.

**Action: Chairman & Clerk**

3. Cllr Marriott reported that the working group had agreed on the site for the pump outside the Village Shop. Cllr Chater is to investigate the acquisition of a water trough to go with the pump. It was AGREED that the Clerk would contact A C Lloyd to have the items installed and obtain permission from WCC for the installation of the pump on the site which is part of the highway.  
**Action: Clerk**
4. Cllr Marriott has the matter of the rubbish bin is in hand – the objective is to replace the existing rubbish bin with a large size bin.  
**Action: Cllr Marriott**
5. Following observations from WDC Cllr Doody, it was AGREED to leave the matter of the caravan in the lay by in abeyance.

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

1. WCC Cllr Redford said that the WCC Precept had increased by 5%; 3% was for direct services and 2% would be allocated for adult social care.
2. WCC are to put an extra £6,000,000 into adult care and £7,000,000 into social services for children's care.
3. Following the withdrawal of bus routes by Stagecoach, WCC has allocated in their budget, £500,000 to cover the cost of a review into support services with particular reference to rural areas.
4. He drew attention to a special planning forum meeting on 19<sup>th</sup> March 2019.
5. There was a short debate concerning the lack of bus service in general (both as to supply of a service and the service running on time). Cllr Redford said that this Parish Council is not the only council with issues over this. He advised that if there was a complaint about the service, he should be contacted immediately; it was easier to pursue these issues if they were fresh as opposed to leaving them for several weeks until a Council meeting took place.

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

1. WDC Cllr Doody highlighted the fact that the planning application for The Valley had been withdrawn at the last moment (the Chairman and the Clerk had actually been in attendance when it was withdrawn about 5 minutes before the meeting of the Planning Committee). He outlined the contents of an email received by him from the Planning Enforcement Officer concerning the land adjoining 9 Lythall Close; this contains a proposition on the legal position which the Chairman and the Clerk are looking into. The Clerk observed that he does not accept the legal contentions put forward in the email. It was AGREED that the Clerk would ask the Enforcement Officer to provide legal authority for his proposition.  
**Action: Clerk**
2. Cllr Doody said he would not be able to attend the next two meetings of this Council in March and April and then at the May elections, he will be standing down from public service. He said he had enjoyed his time as a member of this Parish Council (of which he was Chairman at one time) and as District Councillor and County Councillor for the parish. The Chairman thanked him for his extensive service to the Parish over a period of about 30 years.
3. Cllr Doody pointed out that, in the run up to the Elections, there is a period of 'purdah' in which local councils are not able to take executive decisions in advance of the forthcoming Elections. This period starts on 16<sup>th</sup> March 2019 and runs until the Elections.

The Clerk asked Cllr Doody whether there was anything constructive which this Council could or should do to assist neighbouring areas blighted by HS2 activity. Cllr Doody said there was little that could be done but his information was currently the developers were having trouble with having to reduce the speed of the trains because of noise and were facing a dearth of funds to finance the extension of the railway line to the North of England.

The Chairman stated it may be possible to obtain a cutting from the 200 year old pear tree at Cubbington which is to be cut down to make way for HS2. He was aware that a number of successful propagations had already been distributed.

## 7. Financial Matters

1. The Clerk reported that the balance on the investment account at 25<sup>th</sup> February 2019 is £24,283.80 and the balance on the operating account is £21,024.35.
2. There was one payment only to be authorised as per the payment schedule filed with the Minutes.
3. The cheque was duly signed.
4. The Clerk and Cllr Friar had started on a reformat of the electronic accounts for the Council.

## 8. Correspondence

1. A notice had been received from the Electoral Registration Officer confirming that the date for picking up nomination packs from her will be 11<sup>th</sup> March 2019. They need to be completed and filed by 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2019. The Clerk advised each potential candidate is responsible for his/her own papers, both as to collection and completion.
2. The Clerk referred to a previous notice of 5 courses being organised by consultants to WALC and he read out the details and dates; Cllr Friar expressed a mild interest in 2 of them.
3. The Clerk said he had lost track of the issues around the salt bins, but it appears that there is one outstanding request for a location in The Greswoldes. Cllr Marriott said they were still looking into the arrangement of all this. The Clerk reported his email advice, previously given to Cllr Marriott and the Chairman, that the wise course would be to obtain written consent from the land owner/householder upon whose property it is proposed to put the grit bin. This will protect the Council from potential difficulties in the future.
4. The Clerk referred to a circular received from Persimmon Building Group offering financial incentives for community projects. He had noted in the press that this company appeared to have some financial difficulties. It was decided not to pursue this offer/proposal.
5. The Clerk had received a circular style letter from Kenilworth Dogs Trust; they were angling to speak to the Council (and presumably raise funds). It was decided not to pursue this.
6. The Clerk had received a circular style email referring to the Rendez-Vous Cafe at Radford Semele; this had originated from the Rural East Community Forum which the Chairman had attended. On the Clerk's enquiry, the Chairman said it was of no consequence and should be ignored.

## 9. Current Planning Matters

1. W/15/1635 – 56 Southam Road  
There has been no movement on this; several points were raised:-
  - i. Cllr Hitchcox pointed out that the adjoining property No 54 had reinstated a boundary fence which clearly acknowledged that the boundary was set back from that adopted by the occupier of No 56 – the Clerk to investigate. **Action: Clerk**
  - ii. Cllr Northey pointed out that the hedgerow at No 56 on the corner of School Lane and Southam Road is seriously overgrown and needs to be cut back. **Action: Clerk**
  - iii. It was AGREED that the Clerk would pursue with WCC as to what action they were taking over the boundary at No 56 (the Clerk reported that the last he had heard was they were looking for title deeds). **Action: Clerk**
2. W/18/1952 – Bovis Site  
The Chairman said the latest developments in the Bovis site consents/permissions is to be heard by the Planning Committee on 26<sup>th</sup> February and it is likely that the Committee will accept Bovis' representations.

3. W/18/1984 – White Lion, Southam Road  
The Chairman confirmed that application for The White Lion had been granted.
4. W/18/1996 – Land at The Valley  
It was noted that the application for land at The Valley had been withdrawn at the last moment (referred to above).
5. W/18/2124 – 8A School Lane  
The Chairman reported that the application had now been granted.
6. W/18/2297 – 40 The Gardens  
The Chairman confirmed that the application for this address had now been granted.
7. W/19/0161 – 38 The Gardens  
The Chairman advised that this application had still to be decided.
8. There was a short debate initiated by Cllr Sudbury as to the disposal of Section 106 monies from the Bovis site on effecting improvement works to the A425. It was AGREED the Clerk would raise this with Dave Barber, Head of Planning Services. **Action: Clerk**

## 10. Update on Neighbourhood Plan

Cllr Friar reported that the papers had been returned from Kirkwells and he is in the process of drawing together their recommendations by convening a meeting of the Planning group shortly to finalise the paperwork.

## 11. Review of Playing Field

1. Cllr Marriott said in general terms the play equipment was being well used by the public and the equipment was in good order.
2. He referred to his earlier suggestion that seating be constructed inside the shelter which is in the middle of the Playing Field; he said on investigation he found that all that is necessary is to insert planking with appropriate screws and bolts and this was not a complicated job. It was resolved that he should proceed with this with an estimated cost of £150. **Action: Cllr Marriott**
3. The longstanding issue of the skateboard was debated shortly; it was noted that the original installers had shown no interest in assisting in repairs or refurbishment. The Clerk had not met with success in approaching WALC for assistance. It was AGREED that the Clerk should approach WDC to see if they could offer any assistance or leads to people who could assist. **Action: Clerk**
4. Cllr Northey spoke to a proposal by the leader of the Friday pop-in cafe at the Baptist Chapel about the possibility of installing a pathway/paved track around the perimeter of the Playing Field. This was to assist walkers and dogs but also to assist people with disabled chairs or infant buggies. She tabled a plan; it was AGREED that she would obtain two quotations for the cost of carrying out the work and it is hoped that Cllr Marriott will obtain a third (in accordance with statutory provision). The Clerk will circulate the plan and the matter is to be put on the Agenda for the next meeting. **Action: Cllrs Northey & Marriott & Clerk**
5. Cllr Northey had obtained a straw poll from people who might be interested in an outdoor adult gym facility adjoining the existing play equipment; it appeared that of 120 people 67% were in favour of the facility with 33% against. The Clerk said that he had not proposed to raise this in the absence of Cllr Follett who had a special portfolio for this so it was AGREED to put it on the Agenda for the next meeting when Cllr Follett will be present. The Clerk advised that he had supplied Cllr Follett with a number of brochures concerning play equipment and these were being considered. **Action: Cllr Follett**

## 12. Update on Scout Hut project

Cllr Friar reported that there had been negotiations with the Diocese as it appears that the land in which the Scout Group are interested belongs to the Diocese. He said the process was slow and he will report back.

**Action: Cllr Friar**

## 13. Update report on Sports and Social Club Matters

In the absence of Cllr A Malin, there was no report.

## 14. Update report from Community Hall Committee

Cllr Chater reported on that the first film show had been held in January and as he had not been at the January meeting of the Council (the Clerk had previously reported on that). Cllr Chater was hopeful that the next film would see a big take up – the date is 12<sup>th</sup> March 2019 and the film selected is 'The Greatest Showman'.

## 15. Update on School Matters

There was nothing to report.

## 16. Any Other Business

1. Graham Fulford Trust – The Clerk and Cllr Hitchcox had agreed together in principle for the latter to manage the next session of the walk-in PSA testing session to take place on 11<sup>th</sup> May 2019. This is a Saturday and it is anticipated that the Community Hall booking programme will allow for this; the session starts at 10.30am. Cllr Mrs Malin expressed an interest in officiating at the event; the Clerk said he would be on hand also. It was AGREED that Cllr Hitchcox should proceed and make arrangements with Graham Fulford for the event. **Action: Cllr Hitchcox**

2 & 3. Cllr Friar said that the media committee comprising himself as chairman, Cllr Northey and Cllr Sudbury, had considered aspects of the website and also the transparency code which public authorities were supposed to comply with. He tabled copies of a paper which he had prepared on the transparency code for local councils. He had uplifted this from guidance notes prepared by government which in turn is related to the model Financial Regulations put about by NALC.

He acknowledged that a number of things expected by the government paperwork are in fact effected by this Council but there are a number of other matters which in his view need attention. In particular:-

- i. Overt publication of the Council's accounts, i.e. the year end accounts when audited.
- ii. Publication of the Council's budget/Precept application
- iii. Expenditure authorised by the Council (the document he tabled suggested disclosure of expenditure of more than £100/£250.
- iv. Contracts over £25,000 to be open to competitive tender.
- v. The Council to have a clear operational reserves policy. Cllr Chater and the Clerk responded to this that for many years they had monitored this, and Cllr Chater been particularly concerned in his capacity of Chairman of the Council to ensure there was always viable reserves.

Cllr Friar submitted that more should be done to observe transparency by use of the website; he has been in recent contact with Mr Kip Warr on reformatting the layout of the website. This is ongoing research. The Council will have to take a view on what is to be published on the website. In particular he raised the issue of:-

- i. Publication of the audited accounts at the end of the year (by the External Auditor)
- ii. Publication of the report from the Internal Auditor confirming aspects of due governance.

The Clerk responded that, after many years of being in post, the Council had received a report from the Internal Auditor (Mrs Best) every year which was considered by the Clerk and Chairman, but few Councillors examined them. It is usually 2 pages in length, the Clerk saw no problem in that being published on the website. He pointed out that the External Auditor's certificate was bland in the extreme and probably of little value to the public save to state that the audit had been completed. He pointed out the Notice of Completed Audit had been published every year (in accordance with statute) during his term in office and he had never received any enquiry from the public.

Cllr Friar acknowledged that there were differing levels of opinion on the matters he had outlined and they would have to be considered in detail by the Council; the Committee were concerned that the public were misinformed about activity by the Council (that the Council did nothing, the Council were in cahoots with certain lobbies, the Council were out of touch with what was needed in the Village etc). The Committee thought there should be steps taken to develop social media to make the public image of the Council more consumer friendly.

It was AGREED that the media committee would prepare a paper/draft policy for circulation prior to the next meeting of this Council so it could be considered by all Cllrs at leisure and in the event debated. **Action: Cllr Friar & Media Committee**

4. It was AGREED in principle that the proposal to extend the car park onto land at the perimeter of the car park as the Playing Field land belongs to the Council and is not within the remit of the Community Hall. It was acknowledged that the existing car park area belongs to the Community Hall. This was subject to agreement with the Community Hall that the existing car park would be used in conjunction with the proposed extension. The Clerk pointed out that it could be that planning consent was required and he will investigate this. Cllr Marriott raised the question of ownership of the land and asked the Clerk to investigate this too. **Action: Clerk**

It was AGREED that Cllr Chater will obtain quotations for refurbishment of 150 yards of the footpath adjacent to Godfrey Close. **Action: Cllr Chater**

5. The Chairman requested that the two members of the public withdraw as a confidential matter concerning Joe Ingall was discussed.

**17. Date of next meeting: 25th March 2019**

The Chairman closed the meeting at 9.49pm

Signed.....

Date.....

**Chairman of the Parish Council**

Counter signed.....

Date.....

**Clerk to the Parish Council**