

RADFORD SEMELE PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES

A meeting of the Parish Council was held in the Community Hall, Lewis Road, Radford Semele, on Monday 24th October 2016 at 7.15 pm.

Present: Cllr D E Chater (in the chair), Cllr B Follett, Cllr B Friar, Cllr A T Hitchcox, Cllr Mrs J Loveridge, Cllr H E J Marriott and Cllr S P Sabin

In attendance: WDC Chairman Cllr Jane Knight, WCC Cllr W Redford and WDC Cllr M Doody

1. **Apologies for absence:** Cllr A E Malin and Cllr Mrs J P Malin

2. **Minutes of the Council meeting on 26th September 2016**

The Minutes of the meeting on 26th September were approved subject to some clerical corrections (proposed by Cllr Follett and seconded by Cllr Friar).

3. **Matters arising from the Minutes of the 26th September 2016**

3.1 With reference to paragraph 19 (c) the Council considered that action should be taken to highlight the situation with the drainage (Cllr Marriott said the piping for the sewage system was elderly and inadequate and when there was heavy rainfall it overflowed into the ordinary drainage system causing water in the street). It was agreed that the Clerk would write to Severn Trent and WDC to raise the issue. **Action: Clerk**

3.2 With reference to paragraph 3.1 of the Minutes, the Clerk confirmed that a letter had been written to WDC to request better attention to the rubbish bin on Southam Road.

3.3 With reference to paragraph 3.4 of the Minutes, the Clerk reported that he had not forgotten a follow up letter to the MP but, when on point of sending, it he had received certain advice at the SLCC Clerks' Conference about two weeks earlier; the Planning Advisor to SLCC to using the 'call-in' procedure concerning an anticipated planning application. He wanted to sound out the Council's views on raising that with the MP in the follow up letter. It was agreed that the Clerk should do this. **Action: Clerk**

3.4 With reference to paragraph 3.5 of the Minutes, the Clerk reported that he had had feedback from his business contact concerning graffiti. His contact was unable to proffer a solution directly but had referred him to a website link which the Clerk had not yet had an opportunity to explore. He will investigate this. **Action: Clerk**

4. **Report on matters from Warwickshire County Council**

4.1 WCC Cllr Redford said the Community Forum still had money in its budget ready to allocate but the last meeting of the Forum to consider matters arising from that was February 2017; it was therefore imperative that this Council submitted any applications for grants in time before that date. **Action: all Cllrs & Clerk**

4.2 The Chairman raised the matter referred to at an earlier Council Meeting of a lady who suffered an accident on the footpath on the main road; the Clerk said that he had written to WCC and had been advised in writing that repair of the footway was being attended to. The Chairman stated that it had not been repaired and Cllr Redford undertook to take up the matter with the Highways Dept. He also agreed that the Clerk should send a follow up letter. **Action: Clerk**

5. Report on matters from Warwick District Council

- 5.1 WDC Cllr Doody confirmed that just recently WDC had reached a decision on withdrawal of the sum for concurrent services (approximately £3,000) following a consultation which has been going on for some months. Therefore this Council will be short in its budget of £3,000 and will have to look at ways of raising alternative funds. **Action: Chairman & Clerk**
- 5.2 WDC Cllr Doody drew attention to the fact that grants of £50 are available to residents in rural areas who have suffered as a result of the bus passes facility run by WDC which has now been discontinued.
- 5.3 WDC Chairman Jane Knight spoke briefly; she stated that she had come along to listen along with many other parish councils and she did not propose to speak. She had two special matters to raise:-
- i. She is campaigning to have more women on local authorities, in particular the district council and the parish councils. She urged members to think carefully as to how they could persuade women to participate in the work of local authorities.
 - ii. She said she was looking forward to the supper which she will be giving for chairmen and clerks on 18th November (the annual event) as this gives an opportunity for her and those concerned to meet together which they might not otherwise do.

6. Financial Matters

- (a) The Clerk reported that the current balance on the investment account is approximately £24,200 (this has not moved since the last Council Meeting) and the current balance on the operating account is approximately £10,900; a number of substantial payments were made as a result of the last Council meeting, but the balance was still reasonable; it represents approximately the amount of the Precept for the second quarter received at the end of September.
- (b) A number of payments were approved by the Council (as detailed on the filed schedule), in particular a payment to £12 to Cllr Chater to reimburse him for expenses incurred recently in connection with activities concerning the planning application for development in The Valley.

7. Vacancy for Parish Councillor

The Clerk reported that he had received a specific request in writing from a resident for selection as a parish councillor; the identity of this person is known to the Council members. A short debate ensued. It was noted that there might be two other candidates for the vacancy, one of whose identity needs to be established. The Chairman thought that it was possible to find out who this individual was and there is another potential candidate who is a contact of the Clerk but has not yet been approached. It was agreed to adjourn the debate until the next meeting of the Parish Council and meanwhile Councillors were invited to make known their views on a confidential basis to the Clerk concerning the person who has made the request.

Action: all Cllrs

8. Correspondence

- 8.1 The Clerk had received a reply from the Canalside Trust and he read out a summary of their letter. They raised an issue as to land ownership and Cllr Marriott agreed to check out details of an adjoining land owner who might be persuaded to make available part of his land for a pathway from the roadway to the canalside. **Action: Cllr Marriott**
- 8.2 The Clerk had received an email from Mrs Northey raising the possibility of a protective trust being created in respect of the Playing Field; this would have the effect of preventing any development on the Playing Field in the future. The Clerk advised this was a complex legal issue and it would need research on his part. A trust was an easy legal creation for land in

private ownership but this land is in the ownership of the Council which raises a number of issues.

Action: Clerk

- 8.3 Cllr Sabin drew attention to the publicised deliberations of the Parliamentary Boundaries Commission. Action had already been taken by Chris White, MP, and others to prevent the separation of Warwick from Leamington. There are to be public meetings on 7th and 11th November and Cllr Sabin questioned whether evidence of the Parish had been adequately notified of them. It was agreed that the Clerk would install a notice on the noticeboard drawing their attention to these meetings.

Action: Clerk

- 8.4 Cllr Sabin drew attention to an email which had been received by Councillors and the Clerk, regarding a complaint concerning the inclusion of dogs in the Playing Field; this is partly centred on the question of keeping dogs on a lead. It was regretted by the Council (as had been the position in the past) that they had had difficulties enforcing the bye laws for the park without members of the public willing to come forward as witnesses. It was agreed that the Clerk would seek to obtain from WDC readymade notices concerning the control of dogs which are available from WDC's dogs department.

Action: Clerk

9. Neighbourhood Plan

- 9.1 Cllr Friar tabled a comprehensive report on the current position of the working group in connection with the Neighbourhood Plan. Summarised the report detailed:-

- i. The group has expanded with further members
- ii. The recent meeting on an informal basis with one of the Planning Officers at WDC had confirmed that steps should be taken to register the Council's interest in achieving a Neighbourhood Plan and should be effected by the the lodging of a formal application supported by a plan of the proposed Neighbourhood Area.
- iii. It will be necessary to carry out a housing needs survey to confer with neighbouring parishes to consolidate the boundary of the Council's own area.
- iv. The Council will have to decide whether those working on the Plan will form a working group in conjunction with the Parish Council or will become a formal committee of the Parish Council. (It was agreed this should be further debated at a future meeting.)
- v. Grants are available to finance the work involved in preparation – a figure of £9,000 had been mentioned.
- vi. Cllr Friar said that there would be an option to do the work themselves but a more efficient way of going about it would be to instruct outside experts who were readily available; this would involve paying fees but the experts would know what they were doing and could be instructed to get on with the job on a paid basis whereas members of a working party would be giving their time on a part time unpaid basis.
- vii. Cllr Friar said there would be an influx of funds which would raise issues of banking; he assumed that funds would be incorporated as part of the Council's funds and would be managed by the Clerk. (The Clerk said he had no problem with being a banker but the Council must be attuned to cash flow issues because the Precept was not well endowed and as the concurrent grant of £3,000 had been axed it will be necessary for the Council to manage cash flow when paying the expenses on the Neighbourhood Plan; this was noted.)
- viii. It will be necessary to canvass the residents as their views as to what should go in the Neighbourhood Plan as in this respect try to achieve a response of a reasonable percentage to make the survey valid. He said there was a particular professional practice at Wellesbourne who are versed in these matters.
- ix. There had to be an initial consultation period which was understood to start once the initial application for registration had been entered

- 9.2 Cllr Sabin queried whether it was necessary or advantageous to have a Neighbourhood Plan; a short debate ensued – it being pointed out that if the Neighbourhood Plan had been put in place some years back it could have had the effect of avoiding the multiple applications for planning permission with which the Parish was now inundated. A member of the public was present throughout the debate (Bob Grainger) – he had considerable knowledge and experience of

preparing a Neighbourhood Plan and had done considerable research. He would be able to advise the working group (the Clerk had met him at another meeting in recent weeks independently of the working group).

9.3 Cllr Sabin then conceded the position and Cllr Friar asked the approval of the Council to proceed with the work for instruction not to take the matter further.

9.4 It was RESOLVED unanimously that Cllr Friar and Cllr Follett should continue to lead the working group and progress the preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan. In the interim, the Clerk was instructed to file the initial application for registration.

Action: Cllrs Friar & Follett & the Clerk

10. Report concerning Bus Shelter

10.1 Cllr Marriott reported that he had a quotation submitted by the contractor identified by ShireOaks (the manufacturers of the new bus shelter). The quotation mentioned was for £850 + VAT for excavating the foundations for the structure.

10.2 The Clerk advised that under due process it was appropriate to have more than one tender in writing for the work but the Council felt that given the amount involved and the circumstances the single quotation could be accepted.

10.3 The Clerk emphasised that clarification must be obtained from the Highways Dept that they had no objection to the installation and from the Planning Dept that there was no objection on planning grounds or alternatively planning permission was granted. He said that he had not had a reply from Highways Dept regarding his request for a list of approved contractors.

10.4 The Clerk drew attention to the fact that an email with detailed specifications had been received from the Highways Dept in response to his original letter requesting their views but the current position is that the Parish Council needs to respond to that; a response had not yet been formulated pending enquiries as to suitable contractors. The Clerk advised that, whatever may be the views of Councillors as to the boundary of the highway with private land the position needs to be clarified specifically otherwise the Council ran the risk of being required to demolish the structure if the authorities perceived there was an infringement.

10.5 It was agreed that the Clerk would revert to the Highways Dept to seek clarification of their position; this was the required first step because the Planning Dept had furnished the Clerk with an equivocal response to the effect that whether planning permission was required depended on the views of the Highways Dept as to the location.

Action: Clerk

10.6 Cllr Redford stated that if he was supplied with the plan which had previously been prepared by Cllr Marriott and the specification for the location he would then take it up with the Highways Dept.

11. Report on the Playing Field and Play Equipment

11.1 Cllr Follett reported that following agreement with a local resident who had complained about the structure of a climbing frame, alterations had been carried out by the contractors and so far the resident had not made any comment; he had however previously agreed to the specification of the alterations.

11.2 It was noted that the fence alongside the Playing Field had been taken down.

11.3 Cllr Follett confirmed that the contractors were due to start work on Phase Two on 1st November.

11.4 The Clerk reported that in view of his pending absence abroad negotiations had been undertaken with WREN that Cllr Follett would take his place as the representative to make claim for payment once the work had been done by the contractors.

12. Update on Scout Hut project

12.1 Cllr Friar confirmed that there was no progress on the Scout Hut – either as to location or specific finance.

12.2 The Chairman reported that he and the Clerk had experience in the last week of an unsatisfactory turn of events; some weeks ago a representative of the agents acting for the developers of the site on the south side of Southam Road had approached WDC Cllr Doody and Cllr Chater with the object of having a private meeting with them. The Councillors had not followed this up but without warning this individual telephoned the Clerk to pursue again the question of a private meeting. The Chairman and the Clerk were concerned that this individual appeared to be seeking to have the Council withdraw their submission in respect of the development in consideration of the developer financing the cost of a Scout hut.

12.3 The Clerk and the Chairman had concurred in rejecting this suggestion and the Clerk had written to the individual concerned making the point that he had advised the Council not to entertain this suggestion. The Councillors noted this with agreement.

13. Report on Sports and Social Club Matters

In view of the late hour of this meeting, the Chairman stated that there was no report on this matter and it could therefore be passed over at this stage.

14. Report from Community Hall Committee

In view of the late hour of this meeting, the Chairman stated that there was no report on this matter and it could therefore be passed over at this stage.

15. Update on any School Matters

In view of the late hour of this meeting, the Chairman stated that there was no report on this matter and it could therefore be passed over at this stage.

16. Report on current Planning Matters

There were no significant matters to process, save the following:-

- i. An application for approval for an extension to premises at Radford Hall had been received in the usual way; Cllr Sabin undertook to investigate that and take action accordingly. **Action: Cllr Sabin**
- ii. The Chairman said that he and the Clerk had put together a submission filed with the Government Inspector who was in the course of reviewing the new Local Plan submitted by WDC in draft; this is a consultation process and the Inspector will be carrying out a further hearing on 17th/18th November 2016 when on his agenda are two items affecting this Council (the other items being a diverse number of parishes and localities in the area of WDC). One item is the development on the north side of Southam Road and the other is the development in the area of Spring Lane. The Chairman will be out of the country at the time so it was agreed that the Clerk and Cllr Follett will attend the hearing (if allowed to participate in debate – on the basis of the written submission already filed on behalf of this Council.) **Action: Clerk & Cllr Follett**

17. Any Other Business

- (a) The Chairman stated that Clause 2 (ii) of the Council Minutes for 26th July 2016 did not reflect the true position and the record should be corrected.

It is not practical for the Council to prepare a Neighbourhood Plan on its own but a parish council's function is as described in the CPRE's current planning guidelines. The Parish Council is responsible for putting it together with input from the community at large, hence the need for a working party.

- (b) The Clerk had received from Cllr Marriott a written report on his recent tree survey; the Council were pleased to note that all trees were in good order.
- (c) Remembrance Sunday will be on 13th November at St Nicholas' Church; the Clerk will attend with the poppy wreath accompanied by Cllr Marriott (the Chairman will be abroad at that time).
- (d) The Clerk reported that the supper referred to by WDC Chairman Jane Knight was to take place on 18th November; he will attend. In the absence of Cllr Chater, Cllr Follett will stand in.
- (e) The Clerk reminded the Council that he had received a request from the former Chairman, Jon Whitehead, that in the course of the new development a street should be named after his father who had made a significant contribution to community affairs in his lifetime. It was agreed that Cllrs Loveridge and Marriott would review the list of names which they had been preparing and resubmit it to the Clerk who at the appropriate opportunity would add the name of the late Mr Whitehead.

18. Date of next meeting: 28th November 2016

The meeting ended at 10pm

Signed..... Date.....

Chairman of the Parish Council

Counter signed..... Date.....

Clerk to the Parish Council