

RADFORD SEMELE PARISH COUNCIL

APPROVED MINUTES

A meeting of the Parish Council was held on Monday 24th April 2023 at 7.30 pm in the Community Hall, Lewis Road, Radford Semele.

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

In attendance: WDC Cllr Mrs Leigh-Hunt; a representative from FoRGE – Josie Sanderson

1. Apologies for Absence and Declarations of Interest

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr A J Dempsey (holidays). There were no declarations of interest at that stage.

2. Approval of the Minutes of the Council meeting on 27th March 2023

The Minutes of the meeting on 27th March 2023 were approved, proposed by Cllr Friar and seconded by Cllr Mrs Malin.

3. Matters arising from the Minutes of the Council meeting on 27th March 2023

There were no matters arising.

4. SpeedWatch update

Cllr Munn had tabled a report for the current month concerning SpeedWatch. They are in the process of recruiting a further volunteer.

5. Traffic management issues

The Clerk had today sent a reminder note to Scott Tompkins at WCC Highways Dept as the self appointed period of time for reverting to this Council from the site meeting on 23rd February 2023 had expired on or about 23rd April. This had produced an immediate response from Mr Tompkins who said that they had had insufficient time to put the paperwork together due to holidays and the need to carry out a topographical examination of the site in question. This was supported by additional note from Paul Taylor, Head of Full Works. No forward date was proffered but the Clerk will monitor the position.

6. Section 106 and CIL issues

The Clerk reminded Council that following his meeting with A C Lloyd at the beginning of March, he had waited for Helen Hancox at WDC to come back to him with proposals on the drafting of the Funding Letter for The Cricketers. This was to allow her time for consideration. In the last day or so he had sent a reminder to her which had provoked an instant response; this was in the form of copying him an email which she had sent contemporaneously to A C Lloyd after the meeting in March. In the note to them she said it was nice to hear from them further etc but she would have to revert to her legal advisors the suggestion that the terms of the Section 106 agreement signed by A C Lloyd should now be modified by revised terms of the Funding Letter. The Clerk will keep this under review.

7. Warwickshire County Council – update report

In the absence of WCC Cllr Redford, there was no report.

8. Warwick District Council – update report

WDC Cllr Mrs Leigh-Hunt had tabled a brief report which provoked a brief discussion on the issue of calculation of housing numbers for the purposes of encouraging more building development. The Chairman reminded Council that in recent weeks a detailed analysis of housing numbers had been carried out by the Council for the Protection of Rural England; their summary report had been to hand at the last Council meeting but their full

report numbered approximately 42 pages. This was a serious paper that cast doubt upon the figures which had been obtained by those putting together the South Warwickshire Development Plan. Cllr Carter questioned the statement that there appeared to be a revision of view as to people working in Coventry residing in the Warwick District Council area. He said he had no details of that but it was a theme under discussion so far as the South Warwickshire Development Plan is concerned. It was agreed that he would examine the paper to see what conclusions this Council could draw from it.

9. Financial Matters

1. The Clerk reported that the balance on the investment bank account was approximately £83,000 and the balance on the operating account was approximately £2,500.
2. A number of payments were authorised to be paid as per the list tabled. The Clerk had today received an invoice from the Community Hall for £180; it was not clear whether this was a correct figure and related to the correct record of hirings by this Council so the Invoice was taken back by Cllr Mrs Malin for investigation.
3. Cllr Sudbury said that he was working on his revision of the Internal Audit check document and hoped to complete this before the conclusion of his office as Councillor.
4. The Clerk said that Cllr Friar and himself had in hand preparation of papers for the Internal Auditor, Mrs Best, and he expected to issue the papers to her in the near future.
5. Cllr Friar had prepared in draft form the content of the AGAR form for scrutiny by Mrs Best; the Clerk said that new External Auditors had been appointed by HM Government following the conclusion of the contract with the previous auditors but the format of the process appeared to be basically the same as before.

10. Correspondence

- a) The Clerk had received from the Police a form of poster/brochure seeking engagement with the Public; he had circulated this to Cllrs. The objective of the Police was to make wider public awareness of engaging with the Police.
- b) Email correspondence had been received from former Cllr Naomi Northey expressing concern at the pruning operation on trees outside the Village Shop and adjacent to the Community Hall. The Clerk had written her a note explaining that the work had been carried out by professional tree surgeons, commissioned by the Chairman of the Playing Field Committee and that pruning was necessary due to overgrowth on the part of the trees. She had accepted the explanation and proffered the names of two alternative tree surgeons which whom she considers would have done a better job.
- c) Following the issue raised by FoRGE as to dilapidated fencing at the rear of properties in Chance Fields, the Chairman had identified the properties to which the relevant fencing probably belongs (being two neighbours) so the Clerk had written to the occupiers requesting rectification should be taken as soon as possible.
- d) Following the previous discussion in Council concerning insurance liability in respect of bins put out on the highways for collection purposes by WDC contractors and a complaint raised by Cllr Munn as to overflowing bins, the Clerk had written to the Contract Manager at WDC, Mrs Court. There had been a slight delay due to her absence on holiday, but a response had been received from her dated 18th April 2023 which Council felt was inadequate. The Council agreed with the Clerk's proposal that he write to the Chief Executive at WDC to make this observation.
- e) An email of complaint had been received from Mrs Pat Follett detailing 8 issues which she raised concerning the outcome of a fire which had been engaged by Social Club members over the Easter weekend. Cllr Sabin declared an interest in this matter. The Clerk read out the 8 points raised in Mrs Follett's email and he pointed out that the core of the matter was that however innocent intentions might be, Club members had undertaken a BBQ in the area immediately outside the Club building which they held under licence from this Council. The licence which had been prepared in 2021 after negotiations between Cllr Sudbury and the Club contains a clear condition that BBQs must not be undertaken nor the use of any equipment involving fire. The recent occurrence was a clear breach of the licence. The licence also provided for it to be revoked by this Council at any time. A debate ensued in which Cllr Sabin did not take part; it was AGREED that the Clerk should write to the Club making the aforementioned points but no other action should be taken at this time.

Action: Clerk

11. Current Planning Matters

- a) Cllr Carter said that items 1, 2 and 3 on the Agenda (The Leasowes and 9 Chance Fields etc) had not yet received a decision from the Planning Committee.
- b) He had observed a planning application ref: W/23/0514 for 44 Offchurch Lane; notice had not been directly received for this application but he had seen it on the website. It is an application for retrospective planning consent arising out of a development in 1997. He will make further enquiries.

c) The Clerk said he had put on the Agenda reference to the South Warwickshire Local Plan because an invitation had been received from the project managers asking for feedback from this Council (along with others). The Clerk questioned whether it was worth the time dealing with this but it was AGREED that Cllr Carter would look into it and see whether it could be dealt with expeditiously.

12. Footpath W123

The Clerk said he had not had an opportunity to deal fully with the submission of this Council's case to the Information Commissioners Office. The application had to be made online; his preliminary investigation had found that the online system operated a filter whereby the ICO on their website stated that a number of questions had to be answered by the potential applicant; if they considered in the light of those questions, it was not an appropriate case to take onboard then they would decline to take it up. The Clerk therefore wished to make deeper investigations to avoid the risk of being rejected. He had telephoned the helpline to get some clarification, but little was provided beyond the advice that normally the ICO will not take up a complaint which was more than 3 months after the date of the last response from the local authority being questioned (the Clerk said in this case a response was received from WCC on 23rd March 2023).

13. Update on Website

Cllr Friar said there was nothing to report.

14. Playing Field update

- a) Cllr Follett said he was still waiting for a quotation from Proludic in competition with that already received from Wicksteed concerning the closing gates to be installed in the children's play area. He said that the Proludic were definitely interested in quoting.
- b) He had clarified with Wagstaff the area of flowers on the Playing Field to be avoided whilst Wagstaff is cutting the grass; the parameters have been agreed.

15. Report from the Community Hall

Cllr Mrs Malin said there was little to report; things had been quiet since the Open Day. They now have a new logo designed by Cllr Friar, a copy of which was shown to the meeting.

16. Report on Sports & Social Club

Cllr Mrs Malin said she was unable to report on the recent meeting of the Sports & Social Club as she had been away and not present at the meeting.

17. Subsidy to residents for cost of living

Cllr Mrs Malin said there was nothing to report on the support of residents for the cost of living; the Community Hall Committee still have in mind making a facility available but shortage of volunteers to run the sessions is a problem. As regard the Village, the predominance of need is not the supply of food but the facility of a community hub to attend as social benefit.

18. Any other business

1. Cllr Friar pointed out that the Cllrs who expect to be re-elected are required to submit their expenses form to the Monitoring Officer at WDC even if they have not incurred any expenses. A recent communication from the Monitoring Officer had been noted to the effect that formal declarations of interest are not required from the newly elected councillors if their circumstances have not changed; they are simply required to file a note with the Clerk to that effect.
2. Cllr Mrs Malin and Cllr Friar have in hand preparations for the Annual Parish Assembly on 20th May; she volunteered giving a talk to those present on the work of a parish councillor and the attractions of the office. The Clerk said he was willing to give a short talk in support on the technicalities of running a council and being a councillor.

19. Date of next Council meeting

It was AGREED that the diary date of 22nd May 2023 for a proposed meeting be retained; it will be reviewed at the inaugural meeting of the new Council on 15th May next. This meeting closed at 8.30 pm.

Signed.....
Chairman of the Parish Council

Date May 2023

Counter signed.....
Clerk to the Parish Council

Date May 2023