

# RADFORD SEMELE PARISH COUNCIL

## APPROVED MINUTES

A meeting of the Parish Council was held on Monday 27<sup>th</sup> March 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 A J Dempsey, Cllr B Friar, Cllr A T Hitchcox and Cllr Mrs J P Malin

**In attendance:** a representative from FoRGE – Josie Sanderson

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

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr R Munn (ill), Cllr B Follett (holidays), WDC Cllr Mrs Leigh-Hunt (ill) and WCC Cllr Redford (hospital). There were no declarations of interest.

### 2. Approval of the Minutes of the Council meeting on 27<sup>th</sup> February 2023

The Minutes of the meeting on 27<sup>th</sup> February 2023 were approved, proposed by Cllr Sudbury and seconded by Cllr Mrs Malin.

### 3. Matters arising from the Minutes of the Council meeting on 27<sup>th</sup> February 2023

There were no matters arising.

### 4. SpeedWatch update

Cllr Munn had earlier circulated a copy of his report on SpeedWatch; in his absence Cllr Dempsey spoke briefly to it.

### 5. Traffic management issues

Cllr Dempsey had put together a comprehensive file note on the discussions that took place at the site meeting on 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2023 between himself, Cllr Sabin and the Clerk with Scott Tompkins and colleagues from WCC Highways Dept on site. The Clerk had sent a copy of the note to Scott Tompkins who had immediately responded to say that the note was a correct interpretation of discussions. On site he had said that he would produce plans/drawings within 8 weeks of the date and the Clerk had sent him a note to remind him of the deadline. It seems that it may be slightly delayed due to holidays.

### 6. Section 106 and CIL issues

- a) The Clerk had had a good meeting with A C Lloyd on 13<sup>th</sup> March 2023 and they had expressed their support for this Council in their negotiations with Helen Hancox at WDC concerning the Funding Letter for The Cricketers. Their managing director had written to her to express the opinion that the requirements of the Funding Letter should give greater scope to this Council for the distribution of the fund and revise the restrictive terms of the draft Funding Letter. The Clerk said he would wait a few weeks for a reaction from her as she will realise that there have been discussions between this Council and A C Lloyd (on the terms of their email of 13<sup>th</sup> March to her).
- b) The Chairman advised that he had been updated, by Janet Neale of WCC, as to the actual amount collected by WCC via the S106 contribution made by Messrs Bovis for Highway Infrastructure works along the A425, from Sydenham Drive to the Fosse Way island. This fund now amounted to £617,428.29. The Chairman also advised that there is also a fund available of £7,375 as surplus from another S106 contribution made by Messrs Bovis.

### 7. Warwickshire County Council – update report

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

### 8. Warwick District Council – update report

In the absence of WDC Cllr Mrs Leigh-Hunt, the Clerk said that she had nothing relevant to report.

## **9. Financial Matters**

1. The Clerk reported that the balance on the investment account was approximately £85,000 and the balance on the operating account was approximately £4,500.
2. A number of payments listed on the tabled sheet were approved.
3. A payment to the Clerk of £2,515.83 representing a quarter's pay and also back pay due from April 2022 was approved, proposed by Cllr Friar and seconded by Cllr Sudbury.
4. Cllr Sudbury said that he had had a preliminary review of the copy of the January/February schedule which the Clerk had sent him. He had formed the view that it would be useful to have a spreadsheet which carried over from quarter to quarter instead of having separate quarterly reports. It would be better to have a record where the outcome rolled over from quarter to quarter. He will therefore prepare such a sheet and present it to Council.
5. The Clerk had been in touch with the Open Spaces Society and received confirmation that the annual subscription was £45. He had asked about financial support for any case that this Council might wish to take up; the response from the Office Manager at OSS was equivocal; she said there was a limited legal aid fund held by OSS which they could make available to needy members, and they could provide recommendations/access to appropriate barristers and solicitors. The Clerk inferred from this that the fund was likely to be very small and doubted that OSS would see fit to make any part of it available to this Council, which is relatively well off, particularly with reference to the Section 106 monies held. He thought the fund will probably be used by OSS to support individual claimants or local groups of residents who had a problem with a path but no funds to take any action over it. He reminded Council that he had been told by WALC that they have a scheme of obtaining discounted legal advice from solicitors; that might be a better approach for this Council in the event. He was under the impression that the leading panel member of solicitors promoted by WALC is the current editor of Arnold Baker (the textbook on council administration). The Clerk has met this solicitor many times and has confidence in him, having actually obtained his legal advice for this Council many years ago. As approval of the subscription to OSS had been agreed in principle at the last meeting it was AGREED that the payment of £45 should be made at this stage (to be added to the list of payments already tabled).

## **10. Correspondence**

The Clerk had said there were no items of correspondence of special note apart from two communications from FoRGE.

- a) The one reported on examination of footpaths they had carried out with Richard Barnard of WCC Footpaths Dept in the course of which he expressed a view that vehicle rights over Footpath W123 were registered in some form.
- b) the other communication was a report on the poor condition of fencing on the footpath between the A425 and Chance Fields. On the latter, the Chairman said he was investigating the position and would report back. On the discussion with Mr Barnard, the Chairman referred to item 12 below.

## **11. Current Planning Matters**

Cllr Carter said that the current position on planning matters identified as items 1 to 4 on the Agenda were as set out on the Agenda.

1. W/15/1635 - 56 Southam Road – this matter is ongoing but it was AGREED that it should be taken off the Agenda for future meetings
2. W/22/0471 - The Leasowes – the applications in respect of The Leasowes are continuing (no decision yet given)
3. W/22/0493 - The Leasowes, House & Cottage (see above)
4. W/23/0038 – 9 Hallfields – the application to alter windows was approved.
5. South Warwickshire Local Plan – the Chairman confirmed that on 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2023 himself, the Clerk and a significant number of Cllrs had completed the Consultation Paper. They had happily completed that in half a day instead of the projected two days which was very satisfactory. They were able to do this

because of the bulk of preparation and analysis was very well carried out by Cllr Carter in advance of the meeting. A vote of thanks was given to Cllr Carter for the work he had put in on this project.

The Chairman said that it was comforting to know that the time for an appeal by the applicants in respect of St Andrews House had now expired so their recent planning application was now void and they would have to start again if they saw fit.

Cllr Carter added a further item:

6. W/23/0350 – 9 Chance Fields – Removal of 1 willow tree, no objections from PC Planning Committee

## 12. Footpath W123

1. The Clerk outlined the current position; this Council's Response which he put in a few weeks ago to WCC Information Dept required them to answer under the terms of the Freedom of Information Act 2000. They had just done this prior to the weekend and the Chairman and the Clerk were studying its contents. Their preliminary view was that there was no substance in its contents. The next stage is to lodge a submission to the Information Commissioners Office; the Clerk and the Chairman are working on this.
2. With reference to the conversation relayed by FoRGE (referred to above), the Clerk reminded the Council that when WCC Information Dept had sent their earlier Response they had disclosed a copy of the HMLR registration certificate that ensued from the purchase by the occupier of 9 Lythall Close of a plot of land adjacent to Footpath W123.[ the certificate is a public document ] The certificate states that this occupier claims to have a right of vehicular access over Footpath W123 but, as stated by HMLR, it is a claim only and not a registered proprietary right.

## 13. Update on Website

There was nothing to report concerning the website.

## 14. Playing Field update

- a) In the absence of Cllr Follett, the Clerk reported that Cllr Follett had obtained a quotation from Wicksteed for installation of suitable gates for the children's play area; this quotation is for £5,400. The view was expressed that this quotation seems high; it was AGREED that Cllr Follett would be asked to obtain a second quotation (as required by normal protocol). There was also debate as to whether commissioning the work should be held back temporarily until this Council has secured the funds due from The Cricketers (referred to under item 6). Cllr Friar pointed out that within the restricted reserves set out in the bank reconciliation statement there are amounts of £5,052 received by this Council as an Open Space payment in respect of the site of The Lodge and £2,100 being the CIL payment this Council in respect of The Cricketers.
- b) Cllr Hitchcox raised the matter of the degraded condition of the footpath adjacent to the boundary of the Playing Field adjoining the development of The Cricketers. The path had been installed by A C Lloyd as part of their community contribution but now appeared to need some remedial work. The Clerk to take this matter up with A C Lloyd.  
**Action: Clerk**
- c) In his absence Cllr Follett had tabled an email note of communication between himself and Olivia Williams of Warwickshire Wildlife Trust; she had previously advised on the wildlife and plants in the Playing Field and he had consulted her on the question of replacing the hedgerow proposed by Cllr Hitchcox. Her advice in her email correspondence was not to disturb the hedgerow as a whole; it might be appropriate to reinstate in particular spots where vegetation had deteriorated but not carry out a wholesale reinstatement.
- d) Following the last Council meeting, the Clerk had written to Mr Brooks at WCC Highways Dept to request investigation concerning the significant tree roots of the trees outside the Village Shop which are a risk to the pavement and the public bench next to it. The Clerk confirmed that Mr Brooks had instructed personnel in WCC Highways Dept to check the position and report back.

## 15. Report from the Community Hall

Cllr Mrs Malin gave a detailed report on the outcome of the Open Day on 18<sup>th</sup> March. This had been a great success and she was very encouraged by the level of support in the way of prizes and other items had been provided which then went on stalls for sale.

- a) In particular, Tesco had come forward to provide a large bag of miscellaneous items and there had been some support from Ricardos as well.
- b) She identified three themes which came out of the day – good public relations for the Hall, a good opportunity for the community to get together and a good opportunity to demonstrate the history of the Village, particularly to a lot of new residents who have come to live here on the new housing developments and would not know the past history.
- c) Unplanned, she had been supplied with a considerable variety of vintage photographs which were of great interest to all.
- d) The Clerk said that when he attended the Hall was very full and there were an impressive number of stands representing different organisations including FoRGE and the WI. Cllr Munn had also maintained a stand to demonstrate the work of SpeedWatch.
- e) She was pleased to say that a successful wedding event took place on the previous weekend; this was the first booking for a wedding that they had received for a long time, and it was encouraging from the point of view of future bookings as we progress to summer months.
- f) Cllr Mrs Malin was congratulated on all the hard work she had put into the event and its success.

#### **16. Report on Sports & Social Club**

There was no specific update on this matter, but a discussion took place as to the installation of the electricity supply so that the Club would have its own meter. This would enable the Club to claim back VAT on purchases of power in effect separate their fuel account from that of the Community Hall. The Chairman declared an interest in this item.

#### **17. Subsidy to residents for cost of living**

Cllr Mrs Malin said that the Hall Committee were still keen to contribute to support needy residents, but she had a logistical problem of not having enough volunteers to man events; she pointed out that if the function of a ‘warm hub’ was undertaken it would have to be managed systematically and have regular, pre-dated sessions. Currently she does not have a team to put together to do it. The Clerk had heard nothing further from the Rev Green or Rev Pickford as to the progress of ‘warm hubs’ at their churches. Cllr Mrs Malin said she had been in contact with Rev Pickford and it seemed that the most people attending coffee mornings etc at the Baptist Church attended for the social element rather than for a physical need. She will continue to review the position.

#### **18. Any other business**

1. There was a brief discussion about preparation for the Elections. Both the Chairman and Cllr Dempsey outlined the procedure they had undergone to prepare their papers and file them physically at Riverside House with personal attendance when their application was scrutinised by an official. The Clerk reminded Cllrs that the deadline for filing nomination papers is 4<sup>th</sup> April 2023. He had not received any information of interest of anyone who is not a current parish councillor. Cllr Friar pointed out that the date for publication of the Notice of Election by WDC was 17<sup>th</sup> March 2023; he had placed a copy on the website and the Clerk said he would place a copy on the noticeboard.
2. The Chairman pointed out that the next meeting of this Council is on 24<sup>th</sup> April 2023; it will be an ordinary Council Meeting but immediately followed at 8.30pm by the Annual Parish Meeting. This is a meeting required by law; annual reports should be submitted, and he reminded the chairmen of committees and others to submit reports on Council activities during the last year. He said the social event, the Annual Parish Assembly, would take place on Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> May 2023 from 11am to 1pm; Cllr Friar and Cllr Mrs Malin will organise it.

#### **19. Date of next Council meeting**

The date of the next meeting is 24<sup>th</sup> April 2023. This meeting closed at 9.10 pm.

Signed.....  
**Chairman of the Parish Council**

Date ..... April 2023

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

Date ..... April 2023