

RADFORD SEMELE PARISH COUNCIL

APPROVED MINUTES

A meeting of the Parish Council was held on Monday 30th May 2022 at 7.30 pm in the Community Hall, Lewis Road, Radford Semele.

Participants: Cllr S Sabin, Cllr D Carter, Cllr A J Dempsey, Cllr B Friar and Cllr J Sudbury (for part of the time).

In attendance: WCC Cllr W A Redford and WDC Cllr Mrs Leigh-Hunt

1. Election of Chairman and Vice Chairman

Cllr Sabin was elected as Chairman for the forthcoming year, proposed by Cllr Sudbury and seconded by Cllr Friar. Cllr Sudbury was elected as Vice Chairman for the forthcoming year, proposed by Cllr Friar and seconded by Cllr Carter.

2. Appointment of Council committees

The list of Council committees was reviewed; and it was AGREED to continue the same structure and to allocate Cllr Dempsey to the Planning Committee and the Media Committee (proposed by Cllr Friar and seconded by Cllr Carter).

3. Apologies for Absence and Declarations of Interest

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr B Follett, Cllr A T Hitchcox, Cllr Mrs J P Malin and Cllr R Munn (all on holiday); apologies were also received from Cllr Musa (conflict). There were no declarations of interest. Cllr Sudbury withdrew from the meeting due to illness.

4. Approval of the Minutes of the Council meeting on 25th April 2022

The Minutes of the Council meeting on 25th April were approved, proposed by Cllr Carter and seconded by Cllr Dempsey.

5. Matters arising from the Minutes of the Council meeting on 25th April 2022

1. The Chairman reported on the presentation of the Jubilee mugs to the school children on Friday 27th May when he and the Clerk had a successful session with the schoolteachers and the children.
2. The Clerk reported that there had been no further news on review of the incline in Lewis Road/The Valley.
3. The Chairman reported that everyone considered that the Annual Parish Assembly on Saturday 30th April had been a success and everyone who attended was in favour of repeating the event next year.

6. Speedwatch update

Cllr Dempsey gave an update on Speedwatch, speaking to his report which had been tabled. Since the last Council meeting there had been 7 sessions with 1021 vehicles checked of which 31 were recorded as exceeding 34mph and were reported. The tripod for the laser has definitely increased the rate particularly over distance. They have received contact from Warwickshire Police with regard to laser training for more volunteers. He and Cllr Munn are considering writing an explanatory article for publishing appropriate newsletters plus insertion on the Council's website; this will explain the nature of the exercise.

7. Traffic management issues

1. The Chairman outlined correspondence that he and the Clerk had received from Mr Shail Chohan of WCC Highways Dept; this was a response to an email to his department from WCC Cllr Redford seeking action on their part in response to numerous requests from this Council. Mr Chohan's initial response demonstrated ignorance of the issues raised at this Council's meeting with Highways Dept representatives on 21st January 2022. Following that Mr Paul Taylor of the Dept sent an email dated 19th May 2022 amplifying comments from Mr Chohan; the net result of these emails is a lack of target dates for any action on the points arising (these points all reflect the issues raised in this Council's letter to Highways Dept in May 2019 which remain to be resolved).
2. It was noted that no response had been received from Highways Dept on the issues raised by the report by Tom Head, copies of which had been given to the WCC team on 21st January. It was agreed that a copy will be supplied to WCC Cllr Redford. **Action: Clerk**
3. The Chairman had had contact with Graham Palmer, the Section 106 Monitoring Officer for WCC; it appeared that a decision had been made at a WCC Cabinet meeting, held on 12th May, to allocate £58,000 to Sunbeams Pre-School; to fund a project which involved creating a new and improved outdoor classroom area where children can extend their learning outdoors in all weathers. The current outdoor area restricts the number of child places that can be offered. The Chairman noted that the gross amount in the fund held by WCC is now £69,256 due to indexation.
4. The Chairman had noted from Mr Palmer that just over £8,000 was left over from a S106 contribution from Bovis (W/14/0322); the Chairman maintained this could be used for one or more of the projects requested by this Council. (Village gates?)
5. Cllr Redford said that there was an opportunity for money from HS2 for highway infrastructure and this could be an outlet for securing funding for a pedestrian crossing. It was AGREED that a working party should be formed to pursue this comprising the Chairman, the Clerk, Cllr Carter and Cllr Munn. This was at the suggestion of Cllr Carter who emphasised that an officer from the Highways Dept should be asked to attend a meeting to formulate action as nothing had progressed from the meeting on 21st January.
6. There was then some discussion about the potential development of the cycle route from the Village to Sydenham; it was noted that a major difficulty was the structure/narrowness of the bridge over the canal. It was understood that £95k+ had been collected from Messrs AC Lloyd via a S106 contribution from site W/14/0433 to fund this project. The Chairman expressed concern that unless the money was allocated in due time, the expiry date under the Section 106 agreement could cause the money to be abated.

8. Section 106 and CIL issues

1. The Clerk reported that he had recently had a response from Helen Hancox at WDC concerning the Funding Letter regarding The Cricketers Section 106 monies; she had stated that she was away on holiday but would return in the week beginning 30th May. The Clerk will pursue enquiries with her. He anticipated that he and the Chairman on the one side and Ms Hancox on the other were not far apart on the terms of the Funding Letter.
2. No further news had been received in respect of the CRT and the pedestrian access to the canal.

9. Warwickshire County Council – update report

1. WCC Cllr Redford reported that the Covid infection rate was steadily falling.
2. He said that all hospitals in the County were working at 96% efficiency.

3. He said that HS2 Funding for Schemes is still available over a wide range of matters; the strategy would be to formulate a list and present it to them.
4. He said that the issue regarding footpath W123 was now closed. The bollard had been removed. The Clerk said this was not quite correct because he had very recently written a detailed email to Mr Barnard of the Footpaths Dept at WCC for a review of the matter. The view of this Council is the removal of the bollard is not the solution to the issues involved. The heart of the matter is whether the householder at 9 Lythall Close is within his legal title and right to take motor vehicles over the path and so far, the Council has not seen any evidence to support his continued contention that he has.
5. Cllr Redford said that there is in hand a development project to create a 'mini-Holland'; this is a craft/cultural area for Leamington, but he was unspecific and unable to give details of the scheme.

10. Warwick District Council – update report

WDC Cllr Mrs Leigh-Hunt reported:

1. The merger between WDC and SDC will not go ahead...
2. Officers of WDC and SDC will continue to work together on the new local plan
3. There is a shortage of qualified planning officers
4. Rebates are being undertaken for WDC tenants with disabilities or low wages to assist them with the current living costs threats
5. The new waste / rubbish collections start in August; leaflets have been sent out [although one or two members of this Council said they had not received one] the details are on the WDC website
6. The significant item in the above is there is an option to have a compost bin only [at cost] or in default take material to the recycling centres

11. Telephone box

In the absence of Cllr Musa, there was no report on the Telephone Box review.

12. Adoption of new Code of Conduct

The Clerk outlined that the new Code of Conduct had been circulated by him to all Cllrs. Broadly, the new Code has been produced in recent months by WDC on the basis of a template created by the LGA. The recommendation from the WDC Monitoring Officer (as in previous years) was that it was best practice for this Parish Council, along with others, to adopt the WDC Code of Conduct. Cllr Friar affirmed his support for that view. The Clerk emphasised that the Code of Conduct related to the conduct of individual councillors and applies a process for them being referred to the Monitoring Officer in the event of default; it is not a complaints policy at large applicable to this Council. It was therefore AGREED that the new Code of Conduct would be adopted, proposed by Cllr Friar and seconded by Cllr Carter.

The Clerk reminded Councillors that a new form of declaration of pecuniary interests is required to be completed under the new system; he had already received Cllr Munn's documentation.

13. Financial Matters

1. The Clerk had circulated a bank reconciliation statement; the balance on the operating account was £ 6,739 approx and the balance on the investment account was £ 79,320 approx.; of this £ 31,022 approx. represented unrestricted funds after taking into account amounts restricted by the terms under which held e.g., Sec 106 / CIL.
2. He had circulated an authorisation of payments sheet; doubt was expressed as to settlement of the invoice from AP Trees in the light of work done by them to the tree outside the Village Shop. It was

AGREED to put back this invoice to the June meeting of this Council so that further thought could be given to the matter, particularly on the return from holiday of Cllr Follett.

3. The remaining payments were authorised, proposed by Cllr Dempsey and seconded by Cllr Friar.
4. The Clerk confirmed that a good report had been received from the Internal Auditor, Mrs Best, and she had supplied some helpful templates for internal financial controls. It is necessary for the Council at this meeting to review and approve the AGAR form to be presented to the External Auditor before the end of June. Mrs Best had signed the form signifying her favourable audit; the Clerk expressed his thanks to Cllr Friar for putting the supporting paperwork in place required to be filed with the AGAR form and the Chairman said it was to be noted in this Minute the Council's appreciation of Cllr Friar's input. Cllr Friar spoke to the content of the form in outline; it was confirmed that the Chairman and the Clerk were to sign off the AGAR form as this Council was able to certify due compliance with appropriate areas of governance. This was proposed by Cllr Friar and seconded by Cllr Dempsey.
5. The Clerk emphasised that although payment of the insurance premium had been approved a short while earlier, it was imperative that those authorised to sign off the online banking facility should do so in respect of the insurance as it was due to expire by 1st June.
6. The Clerk reported the receipt of the VAT refund of £11,513.40 as a result of a submission presented by Cllr Friar and himself to HMRC.

14. Applications to hold events on the Playing Field

1. The Clerk reported he had not received any further information from the lady applicant to hold a party for 60 people on the Playing Field; it was noted that Cllr Hitchcox, at the previous meeting, had indicated that she was not going to proceed with the application.
2. The Chairman and the Clerk had received copy correspondence from the Secretary of the Sports & Social Club indicating that SWFT have in mind another 'It's a Knockout' event in September; the Secretary had told them to make representations to the Clerk and produce insurance details, but so far, the Clerk had not received any approach.

15. Correspondence

1. An email request had been received from the Secretary of Sunbeams hoping that this Council would support the event on 18th June by making a donation. It was AGREED to postpone consideration of this item until the June meeting when more Cllrs would be present, although it was appreciated this would be after the date of the event.
2. The Chairman had drawn attention to the lack of proper grass cutting at the junction of Lewis Road and St Nicholas Road; the Clerk had written to the contracts manager at WDC, and she had undertaken to bring the matter to the attention of the contractors next time they are on site.
3. The Chairman and the Clerk had discussed the outcome as regards the defibrillator at the White Lion PH. One point of view was that it should be transferred to the outside wall of the Community Hall. Accordingly the Clerk had contacted the Chairman of the Hall Committee, David Chater, to enquire whether that was acceptable; the Hall Committee will consider the matter and revert to the Clerk.
4. An email had been received from a resident seeking clarity about the strip of land to the west side of Slade Meadow which is an outsource from the development of The Cricketers by AC Lloyd. The Clerk had enquired of them for clarification and had received a very instant response from Alistair Clark that the strip of land is to be adopted by WDC in due course but in the interim, AC Lloyd will maintain it; it is a significant sized piece of land on which they have planted trees.
5. The Clerk had received an email from Mr Gavin Gill, one of the Committee members of the Community Hall. He had suggested the construction of a picket fence around a paved area behind the Community Hall allowing doors to be opened in warm weather. It could be devised in such a way as to contain small children. He had appended to his email a photograph of a prototype picket fence. After initial

discussion, the Council decided to put the matter over to the June meeting when more Cllrs would be present, in particular, Cllr Follett, Chairman of the Playing Field Committee.

16. Planning Matters

1. W/15/1635 - 56 Southam Road
This matter is still ongoing.
2. Canalside Development Plan Document Consultation
This matter is also ongoing.
3. W/21/0862 – St Andrews House
The application for St Andrews House has been refused.
4. SDC22/00001 – Middle Road Farm
The application for a proposed solar farm in Harbury has not yet been decided.
5. W/22/0514 – 2 St Nicholas Road
No decision has been made on 2 St Nicholas Road.
6. W/22/0593 – 6 Offchurch Lane
This Council did not object to the application, but it appears that WCC have lodged an objection
7. W/22/0789 – 13 Williams Road
This Council did not object but drew attention to the issue of the extension overlooking adjoining properties.
8. W/22/0682 – 15 The Greswoldes
There is no decision as yet.
9. W/22/0493 – The Leasowes, House & Cottage
A decision on The Leasowes houses has yet to be made.

At a prior invitation from the Chairman, Cllr Carter outlined the new Regeneration Bill which had been put forward by Michael Gove, Secretary of State for the Environment; there are a number of proposals in there which are likely to cause problems for this Council, but no consultation document has yet been issued. When it is, this Council but the details are unavailable.

17. Website

Cllr Friar outlined that the recent problems of the website being down had now been resolved. He had facilitated separate pages for the Planning Committee headed by Cllr Carter and the Playing Field Committee headed by Cllr Follett. Parish Online had come forward with a proposed service of hosting our website and linking in with a domain hosting. The two items are dealt with separately at present. He will be obtaining quotations from them so the matter can be further reviewed. **Action: Cllr Friar**

18. Update on the Playing Field

In the absence of Cllr Follett, his report which he had tabled was noted. A query arose on paragraph 4 on a reference to an approach to him by Ms Williams of the Warwickshire Wildlife Trust; the Council queried the background to this and wanted more information; the Clerk undertook to raise an enquiry with a Rotary colleague of his who is a lead player in the Warwickshire Wildlife Trust. He will report back. **Action: Clerk**

19. School Matters

In the absence of Cllr Sudbury, there was no report on the school (other than the matters raised by the Chairman above).

20. Report on the Community Hall

In the absence of Cllr Mrs Malin, there was no report on the Community Hall.

21. Update on Sports & Social Club

The Chairman reported that the Sports & Social Club had recently had their AGM and matters seemed to be in order.

22. Any other business

1. Cllr Friar had recently completed the annual CIL statement which had to be filed before June; the Chairman and the Clerk duly signed the document to be lodged with WDC by the Clerk.
2. The Clerk reported that Cllr Friar and himself had had a very productive meeting on Saturday 28th May and had reached agreement on the contents of the draft Financial Regulations and the draft Complaints Policy procedure document. It was AGREED that, due to short notice on the circulated draft Financial Regulations, they will be further reviewed at the next meeting in June but in advance the contents of the document were recommended by Cllr Friar and the Clerk. (Cllr Friar will not be in attendance at the June meeting)
3. The Clerk emphasised that he was keen to confirm the Complaints Policy and Procedures document as the matter had been outstanding for some months. Cllr Friar and himself were confident that the present document was satisfactory, to be read in conjunction with the new Code of Conduct. As the document had been circulated in the last day or so by Cllr Friar, it was approved and adopted, proposed by Cllr Carter and seconded by Cllr Dempsey.
4. The Clerk referred to a revision of the Standing Orders which Cllr Friar and he had been engaged in; they contemplated that the further draft will be reviewed at the June meeting.

23. Date of next Council meeting

The next meeting will be on 27th June 2022. This meeting closed at 9.40 pm.

Signed.....
Chairman of the Parish Council

Date..... 2022

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

Date.....2022