

RADFORD SEMELE PARISH COUNCIL

APPROVED MINUTES

A meeting of the Parish Council was held on Monday 25th March 2024 at 7.30 pm in the Community Hall, Lewis Road, Radford Semele.

Participants: Cllr S Sabin (in the chair), Cllr A J Dempsey, Cllr D Carter, Cllr B Friar, Cllr Mrs J P Malin, Cllr R Munn, and Cllr Mrs J Sanderson

In attendance: WCC Cllr W Redford and WDC Cllr Mrs Noonan

1. Apologies for Absence and Declarations of Interest

Apologies for absence received from Cllr S Roe (holidays). Cllr Carter declared an interest in a planning application concerning 50 Southam Road.

2. Approval of the Minutes of the Council meeting on 26th February 2024

The Minutes of the meeting on 26th February 2024 were approved, subject to a small amendment, proposed by Cllr Carter and seconded by Cllr Friar.

3. Matters arising from the Minutes of the Council meeting on 26th February 2024

Summarised from the Clerk's notes:-

- a) A thank you note had been sent to Henry Marriott for his help with the bollard
- b) Rugby Pest Control had been notified that we wish to change the terms of contract but they had not yet responded
- c) A report on the emergency planning personnel had been lodged with WDC
- d) The Clerk had not received any response from Mr Wagstaff on the recent proposal to him
- e) Cllr Friar had been touch with Katy Wild of WDC on finalisation of arrangements for the installation of new dog bins, and he had in hand procurement of the necessary extra bins.

4. Update on SpeedWatch

Cllr Munn spoke to his report which had been tabled. In addition, he reported on the meeting of the WRE Councillors meeting held on the 11th March 2024, at Police HQ, which was facilitated by the Safer Neighbourhood Team. The meeting had been chaired by PCSO Ed King. He introduced a new member of the SNT, PC Amy Jones. Cllr Munn said the meeting was well organised and attended.

5. Update on traffic management issues

The Chairman expressed his satisfaction with the amount of work which had been carried out on the A425 under the direction of the WCC Senior Engineer, Jessica Consolaro. He said there were some items still outstanding in particular the installation of 40mph repeater signs between the Village and the Fosse Way.

6. Update on Section 106 and CIL issues

The Clerk reported that, following the Council's direction at the last meeting, he had written to Mr Philip Clarke, Head of Development Services at WDC on 28th February 2024 with a view to progressing drafting of the Funding Letter which appears to be causing WDC unnecessary concern. The Clerk had commissioned A C Lloyd to write to the Department twice now indicating they were quite happy with the amendment proposed by this Council. It was AGREED that the Clerk would write to the Chief Executive of WDC with a view to activating their file on the matter.

7. Warwickshire County Council – update

WCC Cllr Redford said he had three things to report before leaving the meeting early for another meeting:

- a) WCC has concern at the overall deterioration in road surfacing causing pot holes; he said it was important for Cllrs and residents to report the occurrence of pot holes to WCC Highways so they can be dealt with. These have occurred not just by pressure from traffic but constant influx of water from rainfall and WCC Highways can only know about them if they are reported. He said that WCC does get a number of claims from motor vehicle owners for damage to vehicles caused by pot holes and broken gulleys.
- b) WCC decided to suspend their contribution to the West Midlands Investment Plan which has now gone on hold. This is in the light of financial difficulties encountered by Birmingham City Council.

8. Warwick District Council – update

WDC Cllr Mrs Noonan had little to report save reference to developments concerning the canal bridge access. Council had already received a report from Mr Dave Steele on the latest developments with his approach to the MP., Matt Western. The Chairman asked Cllr Noonan to see what she could do to ensure all election material for the forthcoming elections was promptly delivered to householders.

9. Financial Matters

- 1) The Clerk reported that the balance on the operating account is currently approximately £4,793; the balance on the investment account is currently approximately £91,305 of which unrestricted reserves are £44,762.38. Cllr Friar said that on the bank reconciliation sheet reference to the sum of £335.06 outstanding CIL money could be disregarded as he had appropriated that towards the cost of the new defibrillators. The Chairman drew reference to the Section 106 fund of £5,552 on the bank reconciliation sheet; this represents money held by the Council in respect of a payment some time ago for the site previously occupied by The Lodge. The time limit for uplift expires in July 2025 so action must be taken in early course.
- 2) A number of payments identified on the authorisation sheet were approved by Council; proposed by Cllr Friar and seconded by Cllr Carter. It was noted whilst approval was given to the sum payable to Barriers Direct, this should not be processed until they had supplied and installed the replacement bollard recently commissioned.
- 3) The Chairman said that the provision for self-audit was still in hand. The Clerk remarked that shortly it will be necessary to send papers to the Internal Auditor, Mrs Best, to provide her year end audit.

10. Correspondence

The Clerk referred to a number of items:

- a. He and Cllr Friar have looked at the insurance details provided by M/s Roberts in respect of a bouncy castle to be provided for a children's party on 24th April 2024 at the Community Hall; the equipment is to be located outside the Hall. The point was made that insurance details proffered by her are applicable to the provider of the bouncy castle facility so it is essential that the same individual should run the facility. Cllr Friar made the point that the unit will not be able to use the electrical supply in the Community Hall and therefore a generator will be required. Subject to that, the Clerk was authorised to indicate approval.
- b. Detailed discussion took place concerning an application from Sunbeams for the provision by this Council of Easter eggs to be donated to their children over the forthcoming weekend; it was decided that this was not appropriate as Sunbeams had received a reasonable donation in the Autumn along with other local good causes and this Council wished to create a fair distribution of donations between the different causes. The Clerk was instructed to inform Sunbeams accordingly.
- c. The Clerk said he had written to the RSS&SC Secretary explaining that insurance details were required by this Council if they were to give permission for the Open Day in August; he had not received a response; opinion amongst Cllrs was to the effect that no doubt the Club Committee would get around to it in the near future.
- d. The Clerk reported that following an issue raised by M/s Roberts as to the satisfactory manoeuvring of motor vehicles around the School at dropping off and collection times, he had requested the intervention of PC Ed King. The latter had kindly sent out a circular to appropriate residents forthwith requesting better motoring habits.
- e. The Clerk had attended a WALC virtual meeting on 14th March; highlighted was a training/consultation to be run by them on 16th April 2024 expressly for rank and file Cllrs to receive advice etc. This is not open to Chairmen or Clerks.
- f. The Clerk had received a request from M/s Ptasek to have installed a public bench in a suitable location; she is about to give birth and the intention of her partner and herself is that the bench should bear the name of their new child. They are proposing to finance the cost which is said to be in the region of £700. The Clerk suggested that the matter should be given some thought by her and also by the Council as to a location for the bench. It was AGREED that he would arrange for Cllr Dempsey to confirm with her as to the way forward.

11. Current Planning Matters

Cllr Carter spoke to the following matters:

- 1) W/23/0471 & W/23/1574 – The Leasowes, Southam Road is on-going
- 2) W/24/0092 – 61 Lewis Road is ongoing
- 3) W/24/0101 – 50 Southam Road. Cllr Carter repeated his declaration of interest for 50 Southam Road but confirmed that this Council's Planning Committee, in his absence, had lodged an objection to the application; there was therefore nothing to add at this stage.
- 4) South Warwickshire Plan – He reported that Councillors Friar and himself represented the council at the South Warwickshire Local Plan consultation meeting on 13th March 2024. The area considered was the Leamington/ Warwick/ Whitnash urban area and the adjoining villages plus Kenilworth. There was a great deal of agreement about the main strengths of the area and the problems which it faced. The difficulty will arise when the Local Plan allocates housing and other development land. Councillors Carter and Friar had stressed the importance of maintaining the gap between Radford Semele and Leamington/Whitnash as well as maintaining the character of the village.
- 5) He noted an application for lawful use of a loft from the occupiers of 24 Bloxham Way and he said there could be no objection. (W/24/0259 refers)
- 6) There was an application by the occupiers of 108 Lewis Road which was curious; it is the first one he has come across locally under the new legislation created by Michael Gove MP. It requires an applicant to request the Planning Dept as to whether the application will be appropriate before putting it forward on a formal basis. Currently the householder is engaged in that process. (W/24/0325 refers)
- 7) The application for an extension at 35 Lewis Road has been granted.

12. Playing Field update

Cllr Dempsey spoke to his report which had been tabled.

- a. Consideration was given to rival quotations in respect of repairs and the adult gym surfacing issue from Proludic and HAGS. Following Cllr Friar's observations, it was AGREED that there were sufficient funds in hand to proceed with the repairs to various items on the Playing Field highlighted by the last RoSPA report. Cllr Friar made the point that this was practical risk management. Further thought is to be given to the funding of the gym surfacing cost as it is in the region of £20,000.
- b. Cllr Friar highlighted that an email had been received from Terry Davidson at RSS&SC asking for permission from the Council to reactivate football games on the Playing Field. It was unanimously AGREED that this should be supported. The Clerk to advise Mr Davidson.
- c. The goalposts and ancillary equipment had been recovered from former councillor Tony Hitchcox and stored at the Community Hall.
- d. There was detailed discussion concerning a retainer for Mr Wagstaff for grass cutting on the Playing Field; he had not responded to the Clerk's letter of 1st March 2024 containing the settlement offer previously debated. Cllr Mrs Sanderson said the position was getting critical because the first mowing of the season should take place in mid or end of April. It was AGREED to follow the Clerk's suggestion that he write again to Mr Wagstaff giving him a deadline to respond – 5th April 2024. He will also suggest a site meeting with Cllr Dempsey and Cllr Mrs Sanderson to resolve matters.

13. Report from the Community Hall

Cllr Mrs Malin spoke to a report which had been tabled. She highlighted the Hall's concern that the electrical installation was needed to be renewed. They are also unhappy with the existing arrangements for the fire extinguishers.

14. Report from the Sports & Social Club

A written report had been tabled by Cllr Roe in his absence. His suggestion had transpired for the reintroduction of a newsletter combined with other organisations to be economical as to costs and input. This might be in combination with the Parish Council and with FoRGE. It was AGREED that this should be looked at further by Cllr Roe in combination with Cllr Friar and Mr Davidson from the Club.

15. Environmental Matters

Cllr Mrs Sanderson spoke to her report which she had tabled:

- a) It was recommended by FoRGE that pond maintenance should be suspended until the Autumn to avoid disturbing wildlife. The vegetation needs to be cut back. A report expected from Mr Tim Precious on environmental issues had not yet been received.
- b) Peg markers had been put out in the Playing field to indicate the wildflower meadow to ensure that when grass cutting is undertaken, that that area is avoided.

- c) Cllr Friar had spoken to farmer Sam Gibbs about maintaining the ditch and cutting back the vegetation in The Valley. This is to be followed up.
- d) With particular reference to The Jitty, FoRGE had asked for assistance from Richard Barnard of WCC Footpaths Dept but a response had not yet been received.
- e) The Canal River Trust planning application had been duly granted but currently problems of funding still remain. Mr Steele has written to the MP, Matt Western, to seek his assistance.
- f) Warwickshire Wildlife Trust have reserved space at the Community Hall for the next Green Conversations session on 7th May.
- g) An application from Mr Slater of Butterfly Conservation has asked to use the Village for a case study as part of their old species project, siting the Playing Field initiative.
- h) The Footpath Group have undertaken a number of maintenance works on PROW's in the Village.

16. Telephone Box

Cllr Friar said that the equipment for the telephone box renovation is in hand and it is a question of getting a start date by organising volunteers. Attention will be paid to the occupiers of 74 Southam Road from the point of view of risk management and also convenience to the householder.

17. Following a request from Cllr Friar that the Council should review and affirm seven of the Policies published on the website, it was pointed out that there were a number of typographical errors, different styles etc. It was AGREED that Cllr Friar would amend where appropriate; proposed by Cllr Carter and seconded by Cllr Mrs Sanderson.

18. Defibrillators

Cllr Friar said the replacement defibrillator at the Shop has now been registered. The replacement of the one at The White Lion is likely to be installed on 3rd April and a training session will also be facilitated at 10.30am either inside the public house or outside. Cllr Munn is involved in arranging a subsequent defibrillator training event for the Village on 28th May, this training is being undertaken by a charity, free of charge, but he felt that this Council could make a donation. The Clerk advised that the suggested sum of £100 was proportionate to the relevance of the facility; it was AGREED that the donation should be made, proposed by Cllr Friar and seconded by Cllr Mrs Malin. Cllr Munn to provide the Clerk with their formal, written instruction before payment.

19. Emergency Planning

Cllr Mrs Malin is working on arrangements for this; an action meeting for the Committee will be arranged and she is currently looking into the items of equipment which should be to hand for an emergency but which currently are lacking.

20. Footpath W123

There was no update on this item.

21. Any other business

- 1. The Chairman flagged up the need to prepare for the Annual Parish Assembly on 18th May; it is contemplated that the usual round of stands/stalls would be seen, e.g. a stall for SpeedWatch and one for FoRGE. Cllr Mrs Malin suggested it would be a good idea to have short but formal presentation to explain the work of the Parish Council; the Chairman to consider this.

21. Date of next Council meeting

The next meeting will be on the 29th April 2024. This meeting closed at 10 pm.

Signed.....
Chairman of the Parish Council

Date April 2024

Counter signed.....
Clerk

Date April 2024