

RADFORD SEMELE PARISH COUNCIL

2024/1

DRAFT UNAPPROVED MINUTES

A meeting of the Parish Council was held on Monday 29th April 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, Cllr S Roe and Cllr Mrs J Sanderson

In attendance: WCC Cllr W Redford

1. Apologies for Absence and Declarations of Interest

There were no apologies, and no Declarations save Cllr Carter renewed his declaration of interest in the planning application for 50 Southam Road.

2. Approval of the Minutes of the Council meeting on 25th March 2024

The Minutes of the meeting on 25th March 2024 were approved, proposed by Cllr Carter and seconded by Cllr Dempsey.

3. Matters arising from the Minutes of the Council meeting on 25th March 2024

The Clerk raised one matter outstanding; this was his note to Rugby Pest Control asking to change the terms of the contract with them to which no reply had been received. However, with the impending use of the football field by the new football team, it may be that we retain the existing program of scheduled inspections.

4. Update on SpeedWatch

Cllr Munn spoke to his report which had been tabled. Reference was made by him and elsewhere in the meeting to an invitation from PC Ed King to the WRE Police and Councillors meeting to take place on 17th June 2024; those attending are asked to lodge their names them PC King.

He mentioned a campaign in Warwickshire asking the public to submit dashcam/headcam footage of drivers operating mobile phones at the wheel. This had taken off and a number of prosecutions have resulted, comprising fines and 6 points on the driver's licence. He said that also mooted was a form of app to be devised by members of the public and could alert a SpeedWatch team to cars and number plates seen to be speeding.

5. Update on traffic management issues

The Chairman had been in correspondence with the WCC Senior Engineer, Jessica Consolaro, over tidying up procedures on the recent traffic works carried out in the Village. There was a proposal to resurface the bus stop and to cut back the grass verges on the junction of Lewis Road with the A425.

6. Update on Section 106 and CIL issues

The Clerk reported that, following the item in the Minutes of the meeting of the 25th March, he had written to the Chief Executive of WDC asking him to progress some action in the Dept headed by Mr Philip Clarke and in which his colleague Helen Hancox is a more junior member. The objective was to get a conclusion on the drafting of a document called Funding Letter; this is a form of agreement between this Council and WDC as to disposal of funds to be paid by WDC from the Section 106 payment made by A C Lloyd in respect of development at The Cricketers. A number of amendments to the original draft had been proposed by the Chairman and the Clerk over recent years and more recently Alistair Clark of A C Lloyd had proposed some draft amendments to Philip Clarke but all with no response. It was AGREED that the Clerk would again take up the matter with the Chief Executive.

7. Warwickshire County Council – update

WCC Cllr Redford had several items to report:

- a) There seemed to be a need for more drop kerbs and details should be submitted to him as he is about to set his personal budget at WCC which will include costing for kerbs.
- b) As the financial year for WCC commenced on 1st April 2024, the budget had been a difficult one due to shortage of resources.
The Fire Service assessment has been concluded; he is content with that.
- c) With the new financial year, his personal budget will be restructured in the light of expected receipts from Section 106 Agreements; if it is thought that a claim might be made on his budget, and he will welcome details/enquiries.

He confirmed that the election in respect of his seat on WCC is in 2025 so his term of office will run for one more year. However there has been a revision of the catchment areas from the point of view from the Conservative Associations; due to the reorganisation, he has not been reselected to run again in 2025 so his time on WCC will come to an end.

8. Warwick District Council – update

In the absence of WDC Cllr Mrs Noonan, there was no report.

9. Financial Matters

- 1) The Clerk reported that the balance on the operating account is currently approx. £6,900. He has adjusted this in the light of receipt recently of the first half year Precept from WDC of approx. £18,000. He made a transfer to the investment account of the major part of this sum so that the investment account is currently approx. £105,400. Of this sum the restricted reserves total approx. £46,198 and the unrestricted reserves at approx. £59,202. The restricted reserves comprise two outstanding funds from Section 106 Agreements the outcome of which will need to be reviewed by this Council in the near future.
- 2) A number of payments were listed on the sheet of authorisations which had been tabled; authority to pay these was given, proposed by Cllr Roe and seconded by Cllr Dempsey. Included in these was renewal of the Council's insurance with Zurich Insurance for the forthcoming year in the sum of £1,676.99; this is a slight uplift on last year's premium. The currently the position is under a three-year contract. It was recorded that one of the payments was a donation of £100 to Central Fast Response, originally proposed by Cllr Munn, in recognition of the most helpful training they have provided to Cllrs on use of the new defibrillator units.
- 3) The Chairman reported that recently he and the Vice Chairman had completed a pro forma sheet of self-audit; This had been recommended by the Internal Auditor, Mrs Best, in her last year's report. A copy will be forwarded to her.
- 4) Cllr Friar and the Clerk had recently had a meeting to consolidate the documentation for the External Auditors; the Clerk expressed his thanks to Cllr Friar for dealing with this and confirmed that the External Audit draft papers will be forwarded to the Internal Auditor shortly as she is required to sign off the External Audit Papers before they are forwarded on. Cllr Friar and the Clerk had also discussed the potential utilisation of IT software known as Scribe; Cllr Friar explained this was a Cloud based system where, effectively, template documents required for all our accounting purposes could be preserved along with completed documents. This would make the process of keeping financial records and preparing documents for audit very much easier and less time consuming. It was AGREED by Council that they would take up Cllr Friar's suggestion of obtaining a trial run of the system to assess how it works. While in place, the regular payment is approximately £24 per month for the standard version.

10. Correspondence

The Clerk referred to a number of items:

- a. The Clerk reminded Council of the permission given to Ms Roberts to employ a bouncy castle for her child's party on the Playing Field; Cllr Friar and Cllr Mrs Malin reported that the operation on the day had proved onerous and they would not recommend giving permission for a similar event in the future. Cllr Friar spent a great deal of personal time in assisting Ms Roberts to put the bouncy castle into place. The Clerk reminded Council there had been reports of children who had suffered serious injuries and death as a result of accidents on bouncy castles.
- b. Council was aware of a serious issue recently of a serious sewage leak at the junction of School Lane and Church Lane; numerous efforts had been made by the Chairman and the Clerk to activate either WDC or STW but so far without success. This matter is to be pursued.
- c. The Clerk said that in line with the usual permission for events on the Playing Field, he had asked the secretary of the Sports & Social Club for insurance details some time ago but had still had no response. Cllr Roe said he would chase up the matter.

- d. The Clerk reported that recently there had been two WALC training sessions on Zoom, one for Cllrs generally and the other on utility aid. The first had been attended by Cllr Mrs Sanderson and the second by the Chairman
- e. The Clerk raised the outstanding application by Ms Ptassek to install a public bench at her own expense; Cllr Dempsey said he was continuing to have discussions with her because the location she had chosen would be a difficult one. He was investigating the landownership concerned; (the Clerk advised that the land previously formed part of The Cricketers development and was technically public land owned by WDC).
- f. The Chairman had been in correspondence with A C Lloyd concerning the bollard on the footpath location adjoining The Cricketers development but had not obtained any cooperation from them. In the light of that, it was proposed that the bollard be removed, and contact to be made with A C Lloyd to either remove it or agree to the Parish Council removing it.

11. Current Planning Matters

Cllr Carter spoke briefly to the following matters:

- 1) W/23/0471 & W/23/1574 – The Leasowes, Southam Road is still subject to appeal.
- 2) W/24/0092 – 61 Lewis Road is ongoing.
- 3) W/24/0101 – 50 Southam Road. Cllr Carter retired from the room whilst the Applicant for 50 Southam Road spoke briefly to his position; the Chairman explained that the other members of this Council's Planning Committee (excluding Cllr Carter) had deliberated and reported to the WDC Planning Dept and made modest objections to the application. However, the Planning Dept had granted the application.
- 4) W/24/0259 – 24 Bloxham Way is ongoing.
- 5) W/24/0325 – 108 Lewis Road is still pending.

Cllr Carter reported that the application by A C Lloyd in respect of about 200 houses at Chesterton had been approved by WDC Planning Dept but a final decision had yet to be issued.

There is to be another SWLP meeting for Cllrs generally on 7th or 13th May; Cllr Carter confirmed that he will attend one of these two dates.

The Chairman raised again the question of Cllrs and the Clerk receiving a list of validated planning applications on a regular basis; one time these were received automatically which enabled proper track of the applications being maintained. In recent months, these have stopped being distributed; he was pursuing the matter further with Philip Clarke, Head of Planning Services.

12. Playing Field update

Cllr Dempsey spoke to his report which had been tabled.

- a. A working relationship had been re-established by Cllr Dempsey and Cllr Mrs Sanderson with Mr Wagstaffe following a recent successful meeting on site with him. Cllr Mrs Sanderson suggested that it would be appropriate now to settle his invoice submitted last year to which this Council objected. The Clerk will bring the matter forward for review at the next Council meeting.
- b. Cllr Dempsey had called for a quotation from Mr Rawlings connected with the new dog bins; this quote for £330 was accepted by the Council and it was AGREED that Mr Rawlings should be instructed to proceed. Proposed by Cllr Friar and seconded by Cllr Roe.
- c. Cllr Dempsey is in the process of having a funding bid to the National Lottery Community Fund to finance repairs to all the gym equipment (as flagged up by the RoSPA report in October 2023).
- d. He is keeping under review quotations from Proludic and HAGS as regards the hard standing for the adult gym. These are the only quotes that have been received.

13. Report from the Community Hall

Cllr Mrs Malin spoke to her report which had been tabled. The thrust of the report is there continued to be a healthy level of regular bookings. Following the 5 yearly statutory wiring inspection, a significant upgrade of some of the electrical systems is required which is likely to involve significant cost. A replacement of the water heater in the kitchen which had been estimated at £400. She is receiving considerable assistance from Cllr Friar in his capacity as Treasurer of the Hall for which she is much obliged. She is also working closely with the bar steward of the Club so the Club can benefit from extra business as a result of events held in the Hall.

14. Report from the Sports & Social Club

Cllr Roe spoke to his report tabled. The chief matter of interest was a proposal to reintroduce a local newsletter; this would be created by the Club in combination with other organisations, in particular the suggestion was being put to this Council. In the process, he is trying to organise a meeting with all concerned to ascertain the level of commitment. A significant feature will be getting the services of a person willing to write/edit the newsletter on a regular basis.

15. Environmental Matters

Cllr Mrs Sanderson spoke to her report which had been tabled, in outline the points made were as follows:

- a) A working relationship with Mr Wagstaffe has been renewed and an understanding reached with him concerning the different meadow sections.
- b) Attempts have been made to liaise with Sam Gibbs regarding a date for ditch maintenance in The Valley. The current query is identifying an appropriate date for the work to be carried out.
- c) Regarding The Jitty, she attended the WALC training session mentioned above, and she had asked the WALC Chief Executive for guidance as to who had responsibility for the fence problem. The answer given was that it was a matter for the County Council on the basis that the fences concerned abut on a public footpath. Attempts are being made to have Richard Barnard of WCC Footpaths Dept to take some action.
- d) The Canal access from the A425 – there had been a meeting between the engineers and project managers from Active Travel England, Sustrans and the Canal River Trust and WCC to investigate solutions to space constraints now identified as a problem. Therefore the basic design is being reviewed.
- e) She sought to publicise the ‘No Mow May’ event and this would be promoted by Cllr Friar on the Council’s website.
- f) A Footpath Group of FoRGE had met to consider widening the footpath that leads from the footbridge by the pond. Also the clearance of the accumulation of mud, the installation of signage, strengthening fencing to include dogs intruding into the wild life pond. They will also look at the issue of the permissive path abutting on The Valley in the near future.

16. Telephone Box

There was nothing to report.

17. Defibrillators

Cllr Friar mooted that it would be advantageous to add bleed control kits into the defibrillator cabinets which have an estimated cost of £100 each. This was APPROVED, proposed by Cllr Mrs Malin, and seconded by Cllr Friar.

18. Emergency Planning

Cllr Mrs Malin reported that she is still waiting for replies from people to whom she has interest enquiries before making a contribution to the planning programme.

19. Footpath W123

There was nothing to report – the Chairman observed that the scenario had been quiet in recent months.

20. Preparations for the Annual Parish Assembly on 18th May

Cllr Mrs Malin prepared a poster for publication in respect of the Annual Parish Assembly. Amongst other stall holders it is expected that Cllr Munn would present a SpeedWatch tableau and Cllr Mrs Sanderson together with FoRGE would have a unit relating to FoRGE activities. Cllr Roe submitted his apologies for absence at the APM on 18th May and the Council Meeting on 20th May.

21. Any other business - There was no other business.

22. Date of next Council meeting

The next meeting will be on the 20th May 2024. This meeting closed at 9.45 pm.

Signed.....

Date May 2024

Chairman of the Parish Council

Counter signed.....
Clerk

Date May 2024

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