

RADFORD SEMELE PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES

A meeting of the Parish Council was held in the Community Hall, Lewis Road, Radford Semele, on Monday 2nd May 2016 at 7.30 pm.

Present: Cllr M Doody (in the Chair), Cllr D E Chater, Cllr B Follett, Cllr B Friar, Cllr Mr A T Hitchcox, Cllr Mrs J Loveridge, Cllr Mrs J P Malin and Cllr S P Sabin.

This was the Council's adjourned meeting from 25th April 2016.

1. Apologies for absence: Cllr A E Malin and Cllr H E J Marriott

2. Minutes of the Council meeting on 21st March 2016

The Minutes of the last Council meeting on 21st March were approved subject to some amendments attended by Cllr Chater and accepted – amendments to be put in place and signed off by the Chairman.

3. Matters arising from the Minutes of the 21st March 2016

The Chairman moved to deal with these under the different headings on the Agenda.

4. Report from WCC

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

5. Financial Matters

(a) The Clerk reported that the balance on the investment account is approximately £26,850 and the balance on the operating account is approximately £40,756. With reference to the Annual Parish Meeting (to follow) he tabled a financial summary for the year 2015/2016 which he had prepared. The figures on the financial summary were not precise to the last penny but showed the ballpark situation of the Council at the beginning of April 2016. It could be seen that the combination of the two bank accounts and the Precept received in April of £14,061 produced a total balance available to the Council of approximately £70,000.

(b) A number of payments were approved by the Council, in particular the following:

- i. Retrospective approval was given for action by the Clerk and the Vice Chairman for payment of tax on the Clerk's pay before HMRC deadline;
- ii. The Clerk's pay for the last quarter of 2015/2016 in the sum of £1,209.95 was approved;
- iii. It was acknowledged that the annual renewal of the insurance on the three year contract should be paid in the sum of £1,310.62;
- iv. Approval was given to payment to Ludus Leisure Ltd in respect of the installation of play equipment in the sum of £37,101.60.

(c) The Clerk said it had not yet been possible to calculate in combination with the Finance Committee the appropriate uplift for his salary for the year 2015/2016 because, on a national level, the percentage uplift was still being negotiated. He tabled an email from the Secretary to WALC on the position. It was agreed this matter would be put on the Agenda for a future meeting when more information was to hand. **Action: Clerk**

6. Correspondence

- 6.1 Following a complaint by a resident as to the condition of the pavements on the main road (following her fall there), the Clerk confirmed that he had written to the Highways Authority to tell them about it; he had received a written response recently from them stating that work would be carried out. Coincidentally, Cllr Chater had received a letter from the lady concerned enquiring as to action being taken – as the lady was known to the Clerk, he had written her a personal letter advising her of the position and had received an acknowledgement of thanks.
- 6.2 The Clerk had received notice from the WALC Secretary that the amount permitted by a Council to pay out under Section 137 for the year 2016/2017 had been increased to £7.42 per elector.
- 6.3 The Clerk had received a written request from the Police for access by way of the code, to the CCTV camera system inside the Post Office. The view was expressed that simple access could be obtained by reference to the Postmaster. The Clerk is to advise.

Action: Clerk

7. Report from WDC and Planning Matters

- 7.1 There was a short but intense debate in Council on the outcome of the two planning applications affecting the Village heard by the WDC Planning Committee on 25th April 2016. It was common knowledge that the applications had been permitted by the Planning Committee in circumstance which were unsatisfactory. The principle objections that this Council had as to how the proceedings were conducted was as follows:
- i. Cllrs Doody & Chater had a very short period in which to address the Planning Committee together with one or two residents; thereafter the environmental and planning details were not discussed by the Planning Committee more than in a perfunctory manner;
 - ii. Three officers from the Planning Dept of WDC were in attendance and were allowed by the Chairman of the Planning committee to address the Committee at considerable length (in contrast with the brevity of time allocated to presentations on behalf of residents);
 - iii. The procedure also allowed for the three officers to have the right of reply which they exercised extensively.
 - iv. In case of each planning application, the issue was proposed for the vote by two particular councillors and passed without any detailed analysis of the case in either application.
 - v. It was disappointing that representations from WCC as the highways situation and the education situation were not forceful. In particular, accepting the applicants and planning officers' arguments that primary school age children in the Village should be transported by bus to other locations for their schooling if the Village school was unable to expand sufficiently to take increased numbers.
- 7.2 Cllr Doody said that he had difficulty in that he was currently Chairman of WDC but after the 18th May, he would stand down and then he would propose to make representations about this case as both he and other parish councillors felt strongly about the way in which the procedure on the 25th April had been conducted.

7.3 The significant point is that permission for about 275 houses has now been granted; this number when taken in combination with other potential developments on the horizon are likely to have the effect of the number of houses in the Village being increased by more than 50% on the current number.

7.4 Councillors also referred to the traffic impact that these many houses would have, bearing in mind the flow of traffic from Southam (where there are other housing developments) and the particular pressure upon the crossroads at the junction of School Lane and Church Lane and the A425.

8. Neighbourhood Plan

There had been no developments on this. The Clerk reminded the Council that previous discussion had centred on having a meeting with the Chief Planning Officer (Tracey Darke) but this had not so far been pursued. It was agreed that this should be further discussed and put on the Agenda for the next meeting. **Action: Clerk**

9. Bus Shelter

In the absence of Cllr Marriott, the Chairman tabled a quotation from Shires Oak Buildings in a sum of £6,444 + VAT for the installation of a second bus shelter adjacent to Church Lane. (The Council had previously approved in principle this project.) The drawing of the shelter previously seen by the Council was annexed to the letter. It was agreed that the project should go forward and the Clerk was instructed to write a letter to the contractors to accept their quotation. **Action: Clerk**

10. Speedwatch and Traffic Control

10.1 Cllr J P Malin spoke briefly to this item. It was felt that it was a good idea but doubt was expressed as to whether any headway would be achieved with the Highways Dept. It was agreed that further action in this respect should be considered by Cllr Malin.

Action: Cllr J P Malin

10.2 Cllr Malin also raised the question of indiscriminate parking in Lewis Road and the speed of vehicles travelling on the road. The Chairman said that he had met up with the policewoman assigned to the Village together with her colleague PCSO and walked along the road pointing out the various hazards. She told the Chairman that the police were aware of the problem but it was a difficult one to tackle. They decided they would adopt the procedure of warning people by official police letters to see if that worked and then they might proceed to prosecute people for illegal parking. The Chairman's understanding was that the police will come back to the Council so it was agreed that this should be awaited.

11. Report on Playing Field Matters and Play Equipment

11.1 Cllr Follett had already spoken on the invoice authorised to be paid to Ludus Leisure. He was satisfied that the job had been done; he stated that they had gone beyond their contract to do a good job.

11.2 The Chairman reminded the Council that they had at the previous meeting accepted in principle that a plaque should be put up on the play equipment area to acknowledge the community debt to the voluntary contribution made through the Sunny Dhillon Trust. This is to be further looked at. The Chairman said that the Trust was having a fun day to raise money in July and that might be the appropriate time to have a ceremony for the installation of the plaque. **Action: Chairman**

- 11.3 Cllr Follett reported that so far as phase 2 of the site is concerned, the paperwork had gone in to WREN on 27th April 2016 and a result was being awaited. The application for the RUCIS grant had also gone in. There should not therefore be any shortfall on the quoted contractor's price which would fall to the Parish Council to pay.
- 11.4 Cllr Follett recorded that Cllr Marriott had re-laid the drain outside the Community Hall following the complaint about flooding at the last meeting of the Council. This was a big improvement and he had also dealt with the tree outside the shop following a recent complaint.
- 11.5 The Chairman thanked Councillors Marriott, Follett and Mr Ingram for their work on the trees outside the village shop. This was appreciated by the shop and at no cost to the Parish.

12. Football pitches

The Chairman reported on the discussion that he, Cllr Chater and Cllr Sabin had had with Mr Davidson who had raised the question of facilities on the football pitches. The allocation of times and dates needs to be pursued but it was agreed that the facilities should be made available to the two local teams – the object of having the Playing Field was to provide a facility for residents not as a commercial enterprise to let out to football teams with their base outside the Village (it is relevant to note that the football teams pay a fee of £150 to the Community Hall as a contribution to the heating of the changing room facilities which they use.) **Action: Chairman & Cllrs Chater & Sabin**

13. Scout Hut

Cllr Friar reported no progress on this. They are still looking for finance, a site, possibly sponsorship. He contemplated that the project could form part of the Village Plan. It was agreed that the matter should stay on the Agenda so that it could be kept in mind by the Council. **Action: Clerk**

14. Sports and Social Club Matters

In the absence of Cllr A Malin (through ill health), Cllr Sabin reported that there was nothing to report.

15. Report from Community Hall Committee

Cllr Loveridge indicated to the new lighting in the ceiling of the Community Hall at this meeting – she explained that the grant of £500 recently received had covered the cost of that. The lighting is a big improvement on the previous units which had been there for a very many years.

16. Village School Matters

There was no report.

17. Defibrillators

The Chairman explained that now two defibrillators had been installed in the Village and there was a third one at the premises of Ricardo's which was managed by them. He will ask Ricardo's to put a notice up at their gate to indicate to the public that there was this facility. The Clerk referred to the voluntary funds which had been accumulated for the defibrillators with donations and the WDC grant. The figure of £2,389 appears on his financial summary. The Clerk pointed out that most of that had been spent on the

purchase of the second defibrillator at approximately £1,300 + VAT. The Chairman expressed the view that it was appropriate to put further installations on hold for the time being; he will approach Ricardo's.

Action: Chairman

18. Any Other Business

- (a) Benches in public places – Cllr Loveridge had requested that this item be put on the Agenda; Cllr Follett explained that bench provision was part of the project for the play equipment and would be catered for. It was agreed therefore there was no need to take this matter further at this stage.
- (b) Cllr Loveridge had asked for an additional item to be discussed in respect of the afternoon tea being organised by the Vicar to celebrate the Queen's birthday. The Vicar had originally intended that there should be a jazz band but had ascertained that the cost of this would be prohibitive. This is to take place on 21st June 2016 at 3.30pm until 5.30 pm. She had been asked whether the Council would support financially this enterprise; it was considered that direct sponsorship would not be appropriate for a venture of this kind but the Council agreed to make a donation of £100 to the cost of a bouncy castle which was proposed by the Vicar.
- (c) The Chairman said he wished to reinforce the point that despite representations made by himself and other Councillors the Diocese were not prepared to buy any further land adjacent to the St Nicholas' Church graveyard for burials. It appears that there is a small amount of additional land will be available in the graveyard following removal of the portacabin (Church room) but that facility will be limited.

19. Date of next meeting: 23rd May 2016

The meeting ended at 8.35pm.

Signed.....

Date.....

Chairman of the Parish Council

Signed.....

Date.....

Clerk to the Parish Council