

RADFORD SEMELE PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES

A meeting of the Parish Council was held in the Community Hall, Lewis Road, Radford Semele, on Monday 29th March 2010 at 7.30 pm.

Present: Councillor J M Whitehead (in the Chair), Cllr D E Chater, Cllr Mrs J A Edwards, Cllr J Hodder, Cllr Mrs J Loveridge and Cllr H E Marriott.

In attendance: WDC/WCC Cllr Doody and, for part of the meeting, a member of the public.

1. **Apologies for Absence:** Cllr A J Malin, Cllr Mrs J P Malin and Cllr Mrs F M Walsh

2. **Minutes of the last meeting**

The Minutes of the last meeting on the 22nd February 2010 were approved.

3. **Police Matters**

3.1 There was no Police report and no officers in attendance. The Clerk tabled several emails send by PC Gary Holtby. These were circulated during the meeting.

4. **WCC & WDC Matters**

4.1 Cllr Doody said both Authorities were strapped for cash; the Government had imposed a local council tax cap at 3%. WDC were continuing to look for savings.

4.2 He said the major matter he wanted to report was news of the high speed railway track to run from Euston to Birmingham (Curzon Street). He showed Councillors a map of the proposed link. All political parties in Parliament had approved the scheme. There will be a seven year period of consultation (presumably negotiation with landowners) and after that it would take ten years to build. So far as Warwickshire is concerned, the track will be almost entirely in open green countryside.

The proposal is that there will be only two stations at Euston and Birmingham. The time travelled between Birmingham and London will be cut by 20 minutes. In his opinion, the new railway will be no use to local people and, because of its alleged strategic importance to Britain to make a link with the Continent, no planning permission is required.

It is likely that the route of the railway has been settled subject to minor changes. It is likely to carry 14 trains per hour. They are against putting too much of the railway in tunnels because of the cost and in respect to Warwickshire there will be raised-up portions of the track which will create a lot of noise.

- 4.3 He is chairing the WCC Scrutiny Committee which is to meet at 10 am on the 28th April 2010. Members of the Public can attend. The only argument against the line of the railway appeared to be those of hardship.

It was agreed that notice of this meeting would be put up by the Clerk.

Action: Clerk

5. Matters Arising

- 5.1 There were no matters arising which are not dealt with under other headings.

6. Finance and Accounts

- 6.1 The Clerk reported that the investment account stands at approximately £35,300 and the operating account stands at approximately £6.700
- 6.2 The Council approved a number of payments in particular it was agreed that the WALC subscription of £484 should be renewed this year.
- 6.3 The Clerk had recently met with the Finance Committee and his pay award had been settled. For the year end to 31st March 2010 his pay would be £4,873. His charge for his office support services would be fixed at last year's figure plus an appropriate percentage for inflation as fixed by WDC.

7. Correspondence

- 7.1 The Clerk reported that WALC are doing a training session for chairmen and aspiring chairmen on Saturday 12th June 2010 at Fillongley. There were no takers.
- 7.2 The Clerk had received a circular email from the WDC Planning Dept advising on the new procedure for consulting parish/town councils. Consultation response forms will not be sent out in future and a response is expected by email. The Clerk will let Cllr Walsh have a copy of the circular email.

Action: Clerk

8. CCTV at the Post Office

- 8.1 Cllr Chater reported that he had discussed the position with the Chairman and the Clerk when they met the other day for another purpose. It appeared that the Postmaster had obtained a licence from the Information Commissioner's Office despite the fact that the Clerk had not received a full reply to his letter in February.
- 8.2 Cllr Chater and the Postmaster had discussed it with the Police who regarded themselves as inspectors of the system of the last resort – i.e. if there was an incident they would open up the CCTV but would not be responsible for monitoring it on a regular basis or servicing it

- 8.3 It was agreed that the Postmaster would be invited to proceed with his original installer following receipt of two quotations. The Council will then pay the contractor direct upon satisfactory completion of the works.
- 8.4 It was agreed that a letter setting terms and conditions by the Council should be delivered to the Postmaster so he would know what the Council's position was as to payment etc. Cllr Chater and the Clerk are to prepare the letter. **Action: Cllr Chater and Clerk**
- 8.5 It was agreed that the Clerk should not pursue his correspondence with the Information Commissioner.

9. Website

- 9.1 In the absence of Cllr Walsh, there was little to report. She had informed the Chairman that she had applied for all the necessary documents for a domain name for the website and it was ready to be set up. She asked the Council for input as to what the contents of the website would be. It appears that it would be about four pages.
- 9.2 It was agreed that all Councillors should put forward ideas for material to go in the website – one in particular will be to have a permanent information slot on meetings of the Council and the constitution of committees. Ideas are to be submitted to Cllr Walsh. **Action: All Cllrs**

10. Telephone Box

- 10.1 The Chairman said that he had studied the correspondence that the Clerk had had with BT and also the draft contract which came off the internet. It was noted that it was a standard form contract and do doubt not negotiable.
- 10.2 The Council was divided on whether to take over the telephone box from BT at this stage or leave it as a service for the public. In an email to the Clerk BT stated the box was used 34 times in the 12 month period prior to the issue of the invitation letter.
- 10.3 It was noted that if the telephone box was taken over, the communications network would be cut off by BT although the electricity supply would be kept intact for some time (probably about five years), underground. The box would need to be sealed up and then maintained.
- 10.4 The core of the debate was whether the Council could make a decision on the low use by the public or whether it was necessary to canvass public opinion and/or consult with WDC; on the latter there was an implication in the BT paperwork that there should be prior approval by WDC before the service was discontinued. The Clerk advised that, as a matter of legal formality, this was probably the case and that he should confirm with WDC before a final decision was made.
- 10.5 It was agreed that the Clerk would contact WDC and that Chairman would prepare the draft of a notice to be placed in the notice board inviting the public to make comments on the proposal to discontinue the

telephone service and take over the telephone box.

Action: Chairman & Clerk

11. Notice board

The Chairman said he had not had any time to consider the implications of the notice board although he had acquired from the Clerk and elsewhere a large number of brochures with pictures and specifications of boards. It was felt that probably the existing posts could be used as they were firmly embedded in the ground but it was agreed that a larger and more imposing board was required. The item is to be further reviewed and put on the agenda for the next meeting.

Action: Clerk

12. Bus shelters

Cllr Hodder said he may have misunderstood the Highways Dept of WCC. He was expecting an approach from their representative but this has not happened. He had learned that various documents were required to be submitted, in particular, estimates of costs and drawings or photographs of the proposed projects. It was also necessary to give notice to the 8 closest residents (whoever they might be). The Council were to follow the guidelines in the email dated 11th February 2010 from Chris Burrows.

Action: Cllrs Hodder & Loveridge

13. Village Plan

13.1 Cllr Hodder reported that he had circulated by email to Cllrs and the Clerk a draft leaflet which he had proposed to publish to coincide with the special Village meeting to be called by WDC Cllr Doody - this meeting was to consider the Spatial Strategy.

13.2 Cllr Hodder has left this in abeyance as Cllr Doody will not be calling the meeting until the autumn 2010 at the earliest. This is because of the impact of the General Election. There had been no success in identifying people who would be prepared to form a steering committee. It was agreed to leave the matter until the October meeting of the Council.

Action: Clerk

14. Memorials

14.1 The conclusion of a suitable memorial for Mrs Lay had not been reached either by the Council, St Nicholas' Church or the School. The School were keen to do something but they might do it by way of prizes being given for pupil achievement. The Chairman expressed the view that the payment should be a one off and this decision could not be left indefinitely. It was felt that there might be a case for making a donation to the restoration of St Nicholas' Church by way of a specific memorial to Mrs Lay – a specific item to be identified as a subject for donation (i.e. not a donation into general funds).

Action: Chairman

14.2 The Chairman expressed the view that the funds which had been collected as a memorial to Sunny Dillon were still with the fundraisers and it was a matter for their decision as to how the money should be spent. The Council could only advise and not usurp their function. The

Cllrs felt that it might be appropriate for the funds to be applied to a project in the Indian sub-continent where the value of the money would carry more weight in a local village project than being spent on something in the Village which might not be appreciated as much. It was agreed that the Chairman would canvas this idea with the fundraisers.

Action: Chairman

15. Church Appeal

15.1 Cllr Marriott reminded the Council that at the time of the fire at St Nicholas' Church it had been thought appropriate to consider a donation to the restoration work. He had been advised that the prospective cost of replacing the church organ was £25,000.

15.2 The Council discussed making a substantial donation towards this fund (but not the whole of it) and perhaps payable in instalments. It was envisaged that the organ would then carry a plaque indicating that the funds had been donated by the Parish Council.

15.3 It was agreed that no decision should be made immediately but enquires about the possibility of a donation were to be made with St Nicholas' Church.

Action: Cllr Marriott

16. Report from the Planning Committee

There have been two planning applications for consideration and both had been approved (including one for an isolated application concerning a wind turbine on farmland).

17. Report from the Playing Field Committee

17.1 Cllr Marriott reported that the plants that he had purchased a few weeks ago had now been installed and so far had survived vandals etc.

17.2 The new bin in the carpark seems to be utilised as the car park around it is much tidier than it was. It has yet to be painted.

Action: Cllr Whitehead

18. Report from the Finance Committee

There was nothing to report in addition to that already reported in these Minutes.

19. Report from the Sports and Social Club Committee

The Clerk reported that he had not received any information or report from Cllr Tony Malin (absent). Cllr Chater reported that there had been a complaint from the Sports & Social Club of a blocked drain but his assessment was that the blockage was internal to the Club and their responsibility.

20. Report from the Youth Club Committee

There was nothing to report.

21. Report from the Community Hall Committee

- 21.1 Cllr Chater reported that there had been an electrical check on the Hall for Health and Safety which had cost about £2,000.
- 21.2 Cllr Chater and Cllr Marriott will attend to the rodent problem in the hall loft space.
- 21.3 The Clerk raised the question of whether rent should be pursued with the football clubs as he had been directed previously to leave the matter in abeyance; that was six months ago. It was agreed that the Chairman would consult with the football club managers and a decision will then be made whether to pursue the rent.

Action: Chairman

22. Report from the Emergency Planning Committee

Cllr Edwards had received from the Clerk a list of the electors in the Village. She had been working on a revision of the emergency plan. She would circulate this amongst councillors for their observations. When consolidated, she will organise copies for all the Cllrs and the Clerk.

Action: Cllr Edwards

23. Report from the School Governors

- 23.1 Loveridge reported that she had canvassed the potential candidate to be a School Governor who had been mentioned in Council meetings previously. Clearly this person did not want to pursue the matter and had not returned telephone calls. Cllr Hodder reported that there is currently a shortage of School Governors representing the Church's interest on the Board of Governors.
- 23.2 There was a discussion as to how to find a recruit and it was agreed that a note should be put up in the notice board inviting people who were interested to contact one of the Cllrs.

Action: Cllr Whitehead

24. Any Other Business

- (a) The Clerk asked whether all Cllrs were content with the draft Minutes for the Annual Parish Meeting in April 2009 and it was confirmed they were approved.
- Action: Clerk**
- (b) The Chairman asked the Clerk to prepare a schedule showing the dates of payments to be made by the Council over a given year. **Action: Clerk**

25. Date of next meeting: Monday 26th April 2010

Signed..... Date.....

Chairman of the Parish Council