

# RADFORD SEMELE PARISH COUNCIL

## MINUTES

A meeting of the Parish Council was held on Monday 28<sup>th</sup> February 2022 at 7.30 pm in the Community Hall, Lewis Road, Radford Semele.

**Participants:** Cllr S Sabin (in the chair), Cllr B Follett, Cllr B Friar, Cllr A T Hitchcox, Cllr Mrs J P Malin and Cllr R Munn

**In attendance:** WDC Cllr Mrs Leigh-Hunt

Mrs Barbara Wyatt attended briefly and addressed the Council with regard to tree planting. She was expecting to receive about 30 trees during March of different species and asked the Council for ideas as to their location. One suggestion was to install some of them on the canal side. It was AGREED that the Council would give thought to the matter.

**Ukraine:** The Chairman expressed on behalf of the Council condolences to the people of Ukraine in the present crisis.

### 1. Apologies for Absence and Declarations of Interest

Apologies for absence from Cllr D Carter, Cllr Musa, Cllr J Sudbury and WCC Cllr W A Redford. There were no declarations of interest.

### 2. Approval of the Minutes of the Council meeting on 31<sup>st</sup> January 2022

The Minutes of the meeting on 31<sup>st</sup> January 2022 were approved; proposed by Cllr Mrs Malin and seconded by Cllr Friar.

### 3. Matters arising from the Minutes of the Council meeting on 31<sup>st</sup> January 2022

The Clerk outlined matters not dealt with elsewhere:

1. Limited information was available as to action by Severn Trent Water on current leaks. The Chairman noted that the manhole at the junction of Church Lane and the A425 had been flushed out and there appeared to be no resulting puddle.
2. There was no news on the review of the hedges adjacent to the school; it was noted that WCC PROW (Public Rights of Way) had served 28-day notices on adjoining householders
3. Following a response to the Clerk's request of WCC Highways Dept for a review of the incline in Lewis Road, nothing further had been heard from them.
4. The Clerk had not yet had any notification that the new WDC/ SDC Code of Conduct had been signed off.
5. The Clerk had written to the householder who had requested that the safety installation at the pond should be moved, and he had heard nothing further.
6. The Chairman had attended a (free) zoom presentation on the use of the Parish Online digital mapping package, which the Council subscribe to. A number of improvements have been made to the system since the initial purchase. Cllr Friar viewed the video later and also found it informative. He commented that it would be useful if WDC improved their digital connectivity. This is to be pursued with them.

**Action: WDC Cllr Mrs Leigh-Hunt**

### 4. Speedwatch update

Cllr Munn updated on this:

1. At a recent session they had recorded 22 vehicles travelling at excess speed. Recently the bad weather had been a problem in getting out and about.

2. He was pleased to report they acquired three new volunteers, so the team now numbered 12 altogether; a further volunteer is likely to come forward.
3. He is pursuing the training programme for the volunteers with the Police, but it seemed to be hard work getting Police time spent on this.
4. He had obtained a quotation for the purchase of a tripod for the laser speed device in the sum of £346.99. This is to be put on the Agenda for the next meeting for approval of the purchase.
5. Shipston Town Council had collected signatures on a petition, in support of the 20's Plenty campaign, which is to be presented to WCC at their meeting on 15<sup>th</sup> March. The WCC Cabinet are due to discuss the issue of 20mph speed limits on 12<sup>th</sup> April 2022.
6. Cllr Sabin proposed that the 20's Plenty for Us campaign and the agreed motion of support should be advertised on our website, and this was AGREED.

## 5. Traffic management issues

The Clerk had written to Charles Barlow at WCC requesting that his team come back with a positive response for our last meeting of the year on 28<sup>th</sup> March 2022; he had not had a reply. However, he had been sent a note by one of the team, Paul Taylor, who stated that their recent review concluded, there was a reasonable case for double yellow lines at the junctions of the A425 with Lewis Road and School Lane. No date as to implementation had been indicated.

## 6. Section 106 and CIL payments

1. The Clerk had sent a chaser email to Helen Hancox of WDC regarding the drafting of the Funding Letter concerning The Cricketers money. The Council were aware that it had been many months of silence on her part since the Chairman and the Clerk submitted amendments to her draft in the summer. She had responded with an email received late today by the Clerk with various alternative amendments. Neither the Chairman nor the Clerk had had an opportunity to study them but will do so. **Action : Chairman and Clerk**
2. There was no further news from the Canal and River Trust concerning the proposed pedestrian canal access.

## 7. Warwickshire County Council – update report

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

## 8. Warwick District Council – update report

WDC Cllr Mrs Leigh-Hunt outlined:

- a) Rebates due on Council tax will be available for lower-level council taxpayers; these will be assessed by WDC using government funds issued to WDC
- b) The new waste collection will start in August 2022; green bins will be optional but at a charge [ £20 per year for the first year] new bins will be issued comprising three sections for different types of waste
- c) There is likely to be a separate food waste collection system
- d) The proposed merger with SDC is awaiting Government review
- e) Planning enforcement is currently not good due to shortage of staff; WDC have tried to recruit without success
- f) The scoping sites review has not moved forward; the information is relevant to WDC for preparation of the new Local Plan; this is currently in the course of preparation
- g) WDC is having difficulty in acquiring cheap properties for council housing as the proprietors of new developments are able to obtain good sale prices in the current market.

## 9. Telephone box

In the absence of Cllr Musa, there was no report on the telephone box; save that he had informed the Clerk that he would update the Media Committee as soon as possible.

## 10. Financial Matters

1. The Clerk reported that the balance on the operating account is approximately £4,998 and the balance on the investment account is approximately £69,319 (as per reconciliation statement circulated).
2. He asked for approval of two payments listed on the sheet already circulated; one was a figure of £1,763.76 for the purchase of Jubilee mugs discussed at the previous Council meeting. A figure of £2,000 had been estimated at the previous meeting but on reviewing the calculation, the Chairman had achieved a lower figure. The payments were proposed by Cllr Hitchcox and seconded by Cllr Mrs Malin.
3. The Clerk had visited Coventry Building Society to discuss with them the opening of a new bank account; he had been informed that they are not now looking for new business from institutions such as this Council.

## 11. Correspondence

The Clerk outlined this item:

- a. A WDC press release dealt with their finance outcome on fixing council tax for the forthcoming year; copies of the press release had been put on the notice board.
- b. PC Ed King had circulated a familiar written request for the public's view on policing priorities – the response end date is 10<sup>th</sup> March 2022; it was AGREED that Cllr Munn would deal with that in the context of Speedwatch. **Action: Cllr Munn**
- c. WALC had invited parish councils to respond to the Government paper on levelling up; it was AGREED that Cllr Carter would deal with that. **Action: Cllr Carter**
- d. WDC Cllr Mrs Leigh-Hunt had received a letter from a resident in Thornley Close which had been reviewed by the Clerk and by the Chairman; it raised a number of complaints formulated in the letter which was originally addressed to one of her colleagues at WDC who had passed it on. She had made a written response to the resident, but the Chairman opined that no current action was required of this Council in respect of the complaint because they are all matters which are being currently dealt with elsewhere.
- e. By way of information, the Clerk reported that the Community Hall Chairman had concluded an employment contract with the new booking clerk on which the Clerk referred him to suitable lawyers to prepare it.
- f. A written suggestion from a resident had been received that the Council should purchase a convenient piece of land near to St Nicholas' Church for the purposes of creating a fresh burial ground. (Traditionally this Council had not seen fit to include management of a burial ground within its remit)

There was some discussion on this item and the Council came to the conclusion that currently this is not a project which this Council should undertake. The Clerk is to notify the resident. **Action: Clerk**

- g. An application had been received from Lisa Johnson on behalf of Sunbeams to hold a fundraising event on the Playing Field on Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> June 2022. A week or so ago, the Clerk had written to her requesting a number of points of information about the event but had not had a response until the day before this meeting; She had thought she had sent an email response but resent this on Sunday evening. In his opinion, the information given does not deal with the issues which might concern this Council.

In her note she states that bouncy castles are to be employed along with a carousel ride and there a proposal to hold a Fun Run around the Village. The Clerk advised the Council that to ensure that the Council's position is preserved, such an application must come with satisfactory evidence of insurance cover for the people running the event and for activities to be carried on. This is particularly acute in the case of the Fun Run; a number of Councillors agreed with his point.

He had replied to her overnight requesting information about insurance cover which had not yet been provided. It was AGREED that in principle, the event should have permission, but the Clerk is to pursue further enquiries, particularly with reference to the identity of people actually running the event and the specific insurance cover for all their activities.

- h. The Clerk reported on a second application; this is for the date of Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> March 2022 for the parent of a boy celebrating his birthday to have a party on the Playing Field (expected to be a football game). The application had not been presented to the Clerk directly by the proposer but had been submitted to the Secretary of the Sports & Social Club and email correspondence had ensued between him, the Chairman and the Clerk.

The current position is that the Clerk is not comfortable on behalf of this Council with the evidence which has been produced concerning insurance cover for the event; he has requested specific documentation which identifies who is to run the activities, this to be expressed in documentary form by the underwriters as opposed to local brokers. The Council took the view that it did not favour granting permission unless these matters were clarified. The Clerk is to notify those concerned. **Action: Clerk**

**Note** The Clerk advised Council that he did not wish to appear to be pedantic but professional experience showed that in the event of a crisis insurers would be likely to elide responsibility if they saw it in their interest to do so, particularly where there was a cross issue between insurers for different parties involved in the crisis. Discussions he had had with this Council's brokers on various occasions over the years came up with the comment from them that, as far as this Council is concerned, it should ensure that participants in activities on the Playing Field have proper insurance of their own (as the Council's own position was covered by our public liability insurance). In the Clerk's professional experience, there could be slippage in these situations in that the proffered insurance covered some activity but not the specific activity actually carried on and covered some persons for such activity but not necessarily the persons who actually managed the event in question. Cllr Friar endorsed the Clerk's observations.

## 12. Planning Matters

1. W/15/1635 - 56 Southam Road – ongoing (in the hands of Planning Enforcement Dept)
2. Canalside Development Plan Document Consultation – ongoing (not further information to hand)
3. W/21/0432 - The planning application in respect of 3 Hallfields was refused.
4. W/21/0862 - The planning application in respect of St Andrews House is due to be heard by the WDC Planning Committee on 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2022; it had been arranged that Cllrs Sabin, Carter and WDC Cllr Mrs Leigh-Hunt will speak of this Council's objection to the application.
5. W/22/0015 - The application in respect of Fallowfield, 18 Southam Road is pending; this Council has not lodged any objection.
6. W/22/0056 - The application in respect of 6 Offchurch Lane is pending, and this Council has not lodged any objection.
7. W22/0109 – 28A Southam Road - pending
8. SDC22/00001 - Cllr Carter on behalf of this Council has objected to the application in respect of the proposed solar farm in Harbury; this is a matter for Stratford District Council Planning Committee, but it was brought to the Clerk's attention by the Clerk at Ufton as being an issue that had potential to impinge upon residents within this Parish. The matter is pending.

The Chairman commented on the list of potential development sites that had been published following the 'Call for Sites' as part of the South Warwickshire Plan. A site at Tinkers Close has been offered but as yet does not appear on the Interactive Map.

## 13. Website

Cllr Friar had circulated a report on the outcome from a meeting of the Media Committee which the Clerk had attended. Cllr Friar observed that the quality of the website could be improved significantly by upgrading from the current Gold package to a Platinum package. This would give additional scope in posting items and provide a significant extra number of email addresses. The package for 3 years has been

quoted, with a commencement of November 2022. It would be advantageous to upgrade temporarily until the end of the current contract in November. The price of the new package is quoted at £1,198.08; meanwhile a monthly instalment of £17.94 would secure the upgrade during the interim period. It was RESOLVED that this should be adopted, proposed by Cllr Follett and seconded by Cllr Munn

#### 14. Update on the Playing Field

Cllr Follett reported:

1. Wicksteed had recently completed their inspection which for their administrative reasons had been divided into three parts. Once the documentation was collated, they will forward an invoice for the attention of the Clerk in the sum of £516 + VAT.
2. He had been asked to obtain contractors' quotations for trimming the tree outside the Village Shop and carrying out tree surgery in respect of the weeping willow tree adjacent to the Community Hall car park. He had received a quotation from A P Tree Services and also a quotation for the tree surgeon work to the willow tree but had also received a much more competitive quotation from Henry Marriott. There was not notice of a financial issue listed on the agenda, but the Clerk took the view that the circumstances of the previous discussion of these two projects gave adequate notice. The total outlay would be £500 + VAT; the practical approach would be for this Council to instruct Cllr Follett to proceed with the two projects. This was RESOLVED, proposed by Cllr Friar and seconded by Cllr Hitchcox.  
**Action: Cllr Follett**
3. The Chairman had considered a circular on behalf of the British Legion which the Clerk had received promoting the idea of a Queen's Canopy being reproduced in respect of tree planting in the Playing Field. He is reviewing the question of a plaque being installed and will revert to Council.  
**Action: Chairman**

#### 15. School Matters

In the absence of Cllr Sudbury, there was no report.

#### 16. Any other business

1. The Clerk said Mr Jack Dempsey tendered his apologies for absence at this meeting and expressed his continuing interest in the councillor vacancy.
2. Cllr Mrs Malin presented reports for the Sports & Social Club and the Community Hall Committee respectively, which she had previously circulated. A significant issue arising out of both is the heavy cost of refurbishing the car park, a joint liability. The most competitive quotation received to date is approximately £21,000. There had been discussions between the two institutions as to how to share this cost and her report outlined that an application for a Government grant had been applied for and if successful will go a significant way towards meeting the quoted figure.

She said that, arising out of difficulties of the pandemic, the Hall Committee had restricted booking for events to residents of the Parish and had subsequently found this practical because there was less incentive on the part of visitors from outside the Parish to cooperate in terms of keeping the Hall clean and tidy. They have now decided to remove the restriction.

3. The review of the Complaints Policy has been deferred pending the new Code of Conduct from WDC.
4. The Clerk is continuing his enquiries into potential title rights around footpath W123.

#### 17. Date of next meeting - The next meeting will be on 28<sup>th</sup> March 2022. This meeting closed at 9.30 pm.

Signed.....  
**Chairman of the Parish Council**

Date..... 2022

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

Date.....2022