

RADFORD SEMELE PARISH COUNCIL

APPROVED MINUTES

A meeting of the Parish Council was held on Monday 31st October 2022 at 7.30 pm in the Community Hall, Lewis Road, Radford Semele.

Participants: Cllr J Sudbury (in the chair), Cllr D Carter, Cllr A J Dempsey, 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

1. Apologies for Absence and Declarations of Interest

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr S Sabin (holidays) and WCC Cllr Redford. There were no declarations of interest.

2. Approval of the Minutes of the Council meeting on 26th September 2022

The Minutes of the last meeting were approved (incorporating a couple of amendments proposed by Cllr Friar), proposed by Cllr Friar and seconded by Cllr Munn.

3. Matters arising from the Minutes of the Council meeting on 26th September 2022

The Clerk outlined matters on which he had focus:-

- a. There has not been any news from WCC on the review of the incline in Lewis Road/The Valley (the Clerk expressed the view that it is unlikely that any response will be received due to the intractable engineering problems of the site).
- b. The human faeces in the bus shelter has been finally cleared in October having been pending since July 2022.
- c. A response had been received from A C Lloyd regarding the apparent waste land at the back of Slade Meadow which is under their management pending adoption by WDC; Mr Clarke at A C Lloyd confirmed, he had instructed his site manager to tidy things up. The Clerk had advised the resident who raised the complaint.
- d. The positive news is that the Ricardo Section 106 monies are to be applied to the improvement of our bus stops – see details below.
- e. Cllr Follett had requested that a circular letter be sent to residents in Hatherell Road whose premises back on to the Playing Field (concerning the proposal to install flowers and other vegetation in their vicinity). The Clerk had hand delivered the circular letter to the relevant residents.

4. Speedwatch update

Cllr Munn spoke to his report of 31st October which had been tabled. His team now comprises 10 volunteers plus an extra prospective one; he and Cllr Dempsey think that the team could do with 12/16 personnel altogether in order to organise a balanced number of shifts. He thanked the editors of the FoRGE newsletter for promoting the scheme.

5. Traffic management issues

In the absence of Cllr Sabin, the Clerk summarised the current position.

1. The Minutes of the meeting on the 12th January 2022 had been prepared by the Clerk and sent to the representatives of WCC; they had been returned to the Chairman and the Clerk with annotations (in green) of observations by Highways Dept. The Clerk showed a copy of the annotated document to this meeting; there had been inadequate follow up to that, hence arrangements by WCC Cllr Redford to bring two senior officers to this Council on 28th November. The Clerk reminded Council that its case was originally put forward in May 2019 in his detailed letter to WCC.
2. During the summer recess our Chairman discovered some WCC minutes which disclosed that an internal accounts enquiry had unearthed a record that WCC had stockpiled a fund of approximately £49,000 derived from a Section 106 agreement with the developers of the Ricardo site more than a decade ago. This sum had been lodged with WCC but overlooked. On 5th August 2022, the Deputy

Leader (Finance and Property) of WCC gave approval to allocation of this fund to a number of capital programmes; one of these is the provision of two bus stops on the A425 at Radford Semele. This was provided for in Section 106 Agreement but this Council was unaware of this at the time this Council carried out refurbishment of the bus stop adjacent to Lewis Road and subsequently the construction of a further bus stop on the A425 adjacent to Kingshurst.

3. By email dated 17th August 2022, Cllr Sabin corresponded with Nigel Whyte (a senior officer at Highways Dept) as to implementation of these improvements. In ensuing correspondence it is confirmed that improvements are to be made to the bus stop at the junction of Lewis Road and the A425. Cllr Sabin then further raised the question of available funds being spent on the creation of a footpath from the bus stop on the A425 to the vicinity of the pedestrian refuge at Kingshurst. Mr Whyte had confirmed that should there be underspend of the Section 106 fund consideration would be given to this improvement.
4. The current position is that in the collateral note to WCC Cllr Redford our Chairman requested his support, encouragement and action in ensuring that these proposals from Mr Whyte are implemented.
5. Before his short absence, our Chairman had discussed with the Clerk the suggested installation of 'dragons' teeth' on the A425 at the east side of the Village in the vicinity of the 30mph signs facing drivers coming to the Village from that direction. He had identified an email from Mr Chohan that 'dragons' teeth' markings would be installed following completion of the Highways Dept's planned maintenance of that section of the A425.

6. Section 106 and CIL issues

Apart from the above issues, the Clerk reported that he is still awaiting a written redraft of the Funding Letter in respect of The Cricketers. The Chairman and the Clerk had been in negotiation with Helen Hancox of WDC many months ago when consensus was reached between them as to the contents of a fresh version of the Funding Letter. She has not yet finalised the redraft; the Clerk has sent many reminders, the last one being on the 4th September 2022. She responded to the effect that the redraft would be sent out to us in the week commencing 24th October 2022; this had not yet been received.

7. Warwickshire County Council –

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

8. Warwick District Council – update report

WDC Cllr Mrs Leigh-Hunt gave her report verbally as follows:

- a. Net zero carbon DPD submitted to Secretary of State will be examined for soundness and legal compliance
- b. WDC working with "Act of Energy", a local organisation advising on home energy efficiency – tariffs, insulation etc ; it may be able to access funds to alleviate hardship
- c. WDC has made £12,500 from disposal of implants recovered from the Crematorium – this has been paid to MacMillan Nurses
- d. Work is progressing on the Budget to include provision for vulnerable households
- e. No evidence yet produced to substantiate claims by adjoining owner over footpath W123

Supplementary note: Cllr Hitchcox submitted that the case against the occupier of 9 Lythall Close is clear cut and should be firmly dealt with. The Clerk reported that, in conjunction with our Chairman, he was in the process of completing an information note for PCSO Sharon Underwood.

There was a history of correspondence with WCC Footpaths Dept. The declared stance of the Dept as of May 2022 was that information received by WCC as to his legal rights submitted by the occupier is confidential sent in by his legal advisors and could not be disclosed to this Council. In conjunction with the Chairman, the Clerk had corresponded with Mr Barnard of the Footpaths Dept to challenge the legal basis of the refusal. None had been received save an indication that the WCC Legal Dept would reply.

Cllr Carter expressed the view that a formal application under the Freedom of Information Act should be made in order to counter further prevarication. The Clerk said he had in mind that in the event of no specific response being received as indicated above he had in mind a formal application; however he advised Council that in the event of a likely refusal by Footpaths Dept to such a request then a formal application by this Council in the

Courts would incur expense. It was AGREED that the Clerk would formulate a simple request by correspondence and see what reaction was received.

Action: Clerk

9. Telephone box

Cllr Friar said that the working group appointed at the last Council meeting had had a brief discussion but there was nothing to report. Earlier he had observed that an estimate of the costs would be around £50,000 not the figure of £5,000 / £7,500 previously mentioned. Cllr Carter challenged the figure of £50,000 but after a brief discussion it was acknowledged that the actual cost could be near to that.

10. Review of Risk Management Procedure

The Risk Management Procedure had been put together by Cllr Friar and the Clerk earlier in the year. The resulting version was currently on the website. At a previous Council meeting, all Cllrs had been asked to consider its contents so as approval decision could be made at this meeting. It was unanimously AGREED that the current version of the Risk Management Procedure is acceptable.

11. Financial Matters

1. The Clerk reported that the balance on the investment account was approximately £96,300 of which unrestricted reserves amount to approximately £48,000. The balance on the operating account was approximately £3,500. A bank reconciliation statement had been previously circulated.
2. A couple of payments were made as per the list circulated; Cllr Mrs Malin confirmed that the invoice submitted to the Clerk on behalf of the Community Hall was inaccurate and required revision.
3. It was AGREED that at the previous meeting, Cllr Friar and the Clerk had been authorised to deal with the Internal Audit Control document each quarter and further discussion was not required.
4. Cllr Friar spoke in detail as to the Budget proposals for 2023/2024. Copies of the account statements had been previously circulated and a revision was tabled. The Budget was unanimously approved, and it was AGREED that it was not necessary to have a special meeting between now and the New Year to agree the Budget. This was proposed by Cllr Carter and seconded by Cllr Hitchcox. It was AGREED that upon receipt of the WDC information as to the tax base for their future CT arrangements, Cllr Friar and the Clerk would prepare the Precept to be submitted to WDC in January 2023. The current Budget proposals will be the basis of the Precept application.
5. At the suggestion of the Clerk, it was AGREED that Cllr Follett be asked to join the Finance Committee with Cllr Friar and Cllr Carter.

12. Correspondence

- a. The Clerk reported that he had received thank you letters in respect of donations from St Nicholas Church, Sunbeams and Warwickshire Wildlife Trust; the latter had asked to what project the payment should be allocated. It was AGREED that the Clerk would advise them that this sum could be applied to general purposes.
Action: Clerk
- b. Whilst not strictly correspondence, the Clerk reported that on 27th September 2022 the Chairman and he had attended a special presentation on Zoom by WCC and chaired by their Chairman, Mrs Izzy Seccombe. The core of the presentation had been put together by Rob Powell, Senior Resources Manager. The declared objective of the session (of one hour) was to foster more meaningful interface with town and parish councils. Mr Powell had constructed a pie chart showing about a dozen areas of potential action (such as skills, education, wellbeing, health, climate control, housing etc). Cllr Sabin and the Clerk considered that the presentation was lacking in substance.
- c. The Clerk had been in touch with Rev Martin Green as to his arrangements for Remembrance Sunday. There will be a service in conjunction with the Baptist Church at St Nicholas Church at 10.30am; the service will be lead by the Rev Katherine Pickford. Cllr Sudbury said that he will attend the service.
- d. Today the Clerk had received a communication from the Chief Executive of WCC with an invitation to this Council and others to attend a presentation on 25th November 2022 at the Rootes Building at Warwick University from 1pm to 4pm. The theme of this session is a "Warwickshire Cost of Living" summit. As the

notice had only just arrived, the Clerk will liaise with Cllr Sabin as to our response - the response of other Cllrs is welcome.

- e. Cllr Dempsey had received an email on behalf of Warwickshire Air Ambulance Service requesting for one of their clothing banks to be sited in the vicinity of the Community Hall. It was AGREED that in principle, the request should be granted subject to terms and conditions being identified. The Clerk advised that any negotiations should be committed to writing and takes the form of a licence not a lease. This was AGREED and it was further AGREED that Cllr Dempsey would enter into discussion with Air Ambulance Service as to terms and conditions. In particular, it should be made clear that the Service would be responsible for maintaining the clothing bank and ensuring that it is not a health hazard or an accident risk item.

Action: Cllr Dempsey & Clerk

13. Planning Matters

1. W/15/1635 - 56 Southam Road - nothing further to report
2. SDC22/00001 - Middle Rd Farm, Harbury (Solar Farm) - application refused on 28th October on the grounds that it was too large
3. W/22/0471 - The Leasowes – nothing further to report
4. W/22/0493 - The Leasowes, House & Cottage – nothing further to report
5. W/22/1393 - 3 Lewis Road – nothing further to report
6. W/22/1428 - 7 Williams Road - certificate of lawfulness granted on 26th October
7. W/22/1482TCA - 4 Radford Hall – tree works allowed on 18th October
8. W/22/1530 - 6 Gillingham Way – certificate of lawfulness granted on 16th October
9. W/22/1574 - Leasowe House - new application for a certificate of lawfulness re use as a garden
10. W/22/1661 - 40 The Greswoldes - new application for single storey front and rear extensions

14. Website

Cllr Friar confirmed that the domain name for the website had been renewed in September; currently support charge for the website by Site 123 required renewal. Currently a charge labelled a Platinum Subscription in place; he recommended staying with that; he tabled a schedule of potential subscription rates covering a range of one year to ten years. It was AGREED to accept his recommendation for a three-year term at a cost of £1,198.14 (equivalent to £399.38 per year). Proposed by Cllr Friar and seconded by Cllr Mrs Malin.

He said the online survey as to the Playing Field gym equipment had been concluded. 49 responses had been received; they were mixed with some in favour and some not in favour.

15. Update on the Playing Field

1. Since the last Council meeting, Cllr Follett had prepared drafts of three notices to be installed in the Playing Field, which had been approved by the Chairman and the /Clerk. The cost of going into production would be £1,945. It was AGREED that he should proceed to instruct the manufacturers to prepare the notices at the cost. Proposed by Cllr Sudbury and seconded by Cllr Dempsey.
2. Cllr Follett had been asked to cost potential work to three trees on the Playing Field and the two trees outside the Shop. It was AGREED that Cllr Follett be authorised to incur the expected cost of £1,450 + VAT and apply his discretion as to when the work should be undertaken. Proposed by Cllr Munn and seconded by Cllr Mrs Malin.

16. School Matters

Cllr Sudbury said that Sunbeams are doing tremendous work keeping the ageing portacabin in repair, which is a serious challenge.

17. Report on the Community Hall

Cllr Mrs Malin said she is currently Chairman of the Committee; they have taken on a new cleaner who is enthusiastic. They have a continuing problem with domestic / family parties who hire the Hall at weekends; the regular institutional users during the week tidy up after their meetings but the weekend people leave a lot of mess. Currently a £50 deposit is taken from them against cleaning costs; the Clerk suggested that this figure be increased as it is too low to intimidate negligent hirers.

She said that they are in the process of reviewing the terms and conditions of hire and the question of the deposit will be looked at. The Committee are contemplating putting up a form of open day, possibly in March 2023 which would be a combined event with the Sports & Social Club.

18. Update on Sports & Social Club

Cllr Sudbury said that as the time of the last management meeting had been changed, he had not been able to attend so he had nothing to report.

19. Any other business

1. Footpath W123
See above

2. Councillor Vacancy
The Clerk reported that he had received clearance from the Electoral Registration Officer as to the way forward was to look for a recruit (i.e. no one had come forward to seek an election.

3. There was a discussion about the safety of the gate ways to the children's play equipment; there is open access at present so random access is possible; should there be installed a different form of gates? It was suggested that soft closing gates are required which are not liable to be an accident risk for children. It was AGREED that Cllr Follett would look into it. **Action: Cllr Follett**

4. The Clerk reminded Council that at the next meeting on 28th November, WCC Cllr Redford will be in attendance with Mr Scott Tompkins and Mr Shail Chohan from WCC specifically to discuss traffic management issues.

20. Date of next Council meeting

The next meeting will be on 28th November 2022. This meeting closed at 9.25 pm

Signed.....
Chairman of the Parish Council

Date.....November 2022

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

Date.....November 2022