

# RADFORD SEMELE PARISH COUNCIL

## APPROVED MINUTES

A meeting of the Parish Council was held on Monday 26<sup>th</sup> February 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

Apologies for absence received from WDC Cllr Mrs Noonan (unwell) and there were no Declarations of Interest.

### 2. Approval of the Minutes of the Council meeting on 29<sup>th</sup> January 2024

The Minutes of the meeting on 29<sup>th</sup> January 2024 were approved, proposed by Cllr Dempsey and seconded by Cllr Roe.

### 3. Matters arising from the Minutes of the Council meeting on 29<sup>th</sup> January 2024

The Clerk had arranged with the WDC CEO for an on-site meeting on 16<sup>th</sup> February 2024 to review the severe state of the dog bins. The meeting was attended by himself, the Chairman and Cllrs Friar, Dempsey and Roe. Katy Wild of WDC attended and a consensus was reached [ to be reflected in documentation prepared by Cllr Friar.]

Summarised, larger bins are to be utilised for dog waste (now permitted but not when the bins were originally installed.). Ms Wild is to review the practical arrangements of waste collectors' operations so that the bins in the area of the Playing Field (whether reconstituted or otherwise) will be attended to by the collectors. Cllr Friar's documentation was submitted and understood to be acceptable. The revised scheme will likely require purchase by this Council of two replacement waste bins at an approximate cost of £340 each. Cllr Friar to report back. The overall scheme was approved by Council; proposed by Cllr Roe and seconded by Cllr Dempsey.

### 4. Update on SpeedWatch

Cllr Munn had recently recovered from a hospital operation (he was wished well for a full recovery) and tabled a brief report. He had a shortage of volunteers to work on the scheme. A resident had written to say that whilst the SpeedWatch teams' accent was on the A425, it would be useful if they gave attention to traffic on Offchurch Lane; it was AGREED that the Chairman would write to the resident.

### 5. Update on traffic management issues

The Chairman expressed his pleasure that after many years of lobbying by this Council, work was actually being undertaken for improvement in traffic management which this Council had proposed. One new pedestrian refuge had been installed adjacent to Kingshurst and the new footpath, to the bus shelter, looks good. The pavement in front of the bus stop has been raised to facilitate boarding and dismounting from buses. Two new village gates had been installed on the A425 in the vicinity of Semele Park and dropped kerbs have been installed in Church Lane. Further work by Highways Dept was anticipated in respect of the two bus bays in the vicinity of Lewis Road and the installation of bollards on the east side of Lewis Road at the junction with the A425 to deter parking.

### 6. Update on Section 106 and CIL issues

Following the last Council meeting, the Clerk had contacted Alistair Clark at A C Lloyd to see if he could persuade WDC Officer, Helen Hancox, to speed up a conclusion of the issues concerning the Section 106 money due in respect of The Cricketers. The Clerk had not heard from her in response to his email of 17<sup>th</sup> January 2024. This was despite an email sent from Alistair Clark to her in November 2023 expressing complete consent by A C Lloyd

to amendments proposed by the Clerk to the draft Funding Letter. Alistair Clark had responded to the request immediately, but nothing further had been heard from WDC. It was AGREED that the Clerk would send another email, this time to her superior, Philip Clarke, Head of Development Services.

## **7. Warwickshire County Council – update**

WCC Cllr Redford said he had nothing to report but repeated the advice that if this Council required more dropped kerbs then the Council should forward a list of sites to him. The Chairman agreed to do this. Cllr Carter said it appeared that a number of circulars sent out by Cllr Redford did not reach this group of Cllrs as a general item; the Clerk said that he did edit some of them, depending on the content and an assessment of whether Cllrs here would be concerned with the content. It was intimated that the Clerk should forward all material from Cllr Redford.

## **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 was currently approximately £3,600; the reserved balance on the investment account was approximately £46,600 and there was approximately £46,500 as to unrestricted reserves. From the restricted reserves the figure notified at the previous Council meeting, he had removed a sum of £1,754.94 from the CIL account to cover the recent outlay on the telephone box.
- 2) A number of payments were authorised to be made, as per the list circulated; proposed by Cllr Friar and seconded by Cllr Dempsey.
- 3) The Chairman said the self-audit was still pending.
- 4) There had been discussion about a formal contract with WDC concerning dog bins; it seems that currently this is not in prospect.

## **10. Correspondence**

- a. The Clerk confirmed that ICO have issued a fresh data certificate for the current year and uplifted their annual renewal fee from the bank account.
- b. The Clerk reported on the quotation proposed by Rugby Pest Control if this Council changed to a call out basis for charging instead of a regular attendance on an annual basis. It was AGREED that the Council should transfer to the call out basis and see how it progresses, proposed by Cllr Friar and seconded by Cllr Dempsey.
- c. The Clerk raised the question of the outstanding request from residents on the Bovis estate to have grit bins installed; He confirmed that Mr Brooks of WCC Highways had advised that installation of bins was a matter for this Council although they would be filled on a periodic basis by WCC. However, they could only be installed once the roads were adopted which was still pending. The Chairman reported that he had succeeded in making contact with Vistry (Bovis) with a view to this Council installing a noticeboard; (That matter is still pending)
- d. The Clerk said that a response was required on filing details with WDC as to personnel of this Council being the contacts for flood action; it was AGREED that Cllr Mrs Malin will complete the appropriate form with updated details.
- e. Cllr Mrs Sanderson had responded to the consultation paper issued by WCC Footpaths Dept; the subject of footpath W123 not being raised.
- f. The Clerk had filed with WDC a copy of the notice of vacancy for a councillor (following the resignation of Mrs Gulliver).
- g. The Clerk had notified RSSSC (Radford Semele Sports & Social Club) officially that Cllr Roe is this Council's representative.
- h. The Clerk reported that he had managed to achieve some correspondence with Mr Wagstaffe concerning operations on the Playing Field; he had replied to the Clerk expressing his disappointment with the fact that his invoice created in the summer had not been met and hinted at his limited amount of time and attention he could give at each operational visit. Cllr Mrs Sanderson expressed her disappointment at the reaction and also the difficulties that ensued from this style of operation. The Clerk advised her that the matter needed to be resolved but clearly a decision had to be made as regards Mr Wagstaffe's unpaid invoice. He suggested a way of compromise and it was AGREED that the Clerk should make an offer to Mr Wagstaffe in a sum

agreed by Council but confidential and tender the offer of a meeting in March with Cllr Mrs Sanderson and Cllr Dempsey to resolve operational matters. This was proposed by Cllr Friar and seconded by Cllr Dempsey.

- i. The Clerk had attended a WALC virtual session for clerks on 13<sup>th</sup> February; this was a standard WALC session, but the main theme was a talk from a Government representative as to current legislation on borrowing by local councils from Government. Summarised, it appears that the amount to be borrowed is in principle unlimited but depends upon the credibility of the local council and in fact the actual borrowing is an average of £50,000; such loans are for specific projects, not for general operational use.
- j. The Clerk reported that he had had a complaint from a resident concerning the state of rundown garages in Thornley Close; with the Chairman's concurrence, he had passed this matter to WDC Cllr Noonan as the Chairman considered that there was little that could be done about the issue.
- k. In the last few days, the Clerk had received a written formal request from the RSSSC to have an open day in the Playing Field on 10<sup>th</sup> August 2024; the Council approved this in principle subject to satisfactory insurance arrangements being made – the Clerk to pursue.

## **11. Current Planning Matters**

Cllr Carter spoke to the following matters:

- 1) W/23/0471 & W/23/1574 – The application relating to potential demolition of the building at The Leasowes is still pending.
- 2) W/23/1437 – A425, Canal Access. Planning consent has now been approved for the canal access.
- 3) W/23/1588 – 8 Ashby Road. Planning consent was approved for this application – Cllr Carter had not submitted any objections.
- 4) W/24/0092 – 61 Lewis Road. This application is still pending.
- 5) South Warwickshire Plan – there was considerable public emotion by residents in respect of the revised application by AC Lloyd to develop housing in the vicinity of Chesterton Heights; Cllr Carter said the documentation is obscure because it is in fact a revised version of a previous application made by AC Lloyd which was refused by WDC Planning Dept but upheld by the Inspector on appeal. It remains to be seen whether WDC Planning Officials lodge an objection this time round. A large number of objections have been lodged to the planning application and a vociferous action group have published a paper on it. He made the point that this Council is content provided the development does not expand beyond the Whitnash Brook into the open land between that area and the area of this Parish.
- 6) The Clerk had recently received a circular invitation to those managing the South Warwickshire Plan giving notice of a meeting on 13<sup>th</sup> March 2024 for interested parties to come together to discuss the issues involved in the Plan. It was AGREED that Cllr Carter and Cllr Friar would attend as representatives of this Council – the Clerk to notify the organisers.

## **12. Playing Field update**

Cllr Dempsey spoke to his written report which had been tabled. He is waiting for a quotation from Fairways for installation of the surfacing for the adult gym; they seem to be going rather slow.

The part time gardener that he has employed to look after the Playing Field environment is due to send him an invoice shortly. His application to tasks involved has been most satisfactory.

A recently damaged bollard was discovered, apparently a deliberate act of vandalism; initially it was feared that it might be an approach from travellers but after discussion with the Police, it appeared not to be so. Cllr Dempsey has taken urgent action to replace the bollard; with particular thanks to Henry Marriott who assisted the replacement using one of his machines. The Clerk to write to him to express thanks. Cllr Dempsey had obtained a quotation from Barriers Direct (who had supplied the bollards previously) for a sum of approximately £480. The Chairman and Vice Chairman had approved this quotation today and the order had been placed as an emergency measure; the Council approved this action.

## **13. Report from the Community Hall**

Cllr Mrs Malin said generally things look good although recently there has been a water leak in the roof. Four days of adult learning that were envisaged had to be held in abeyance due to the lack of staff.

## **14. Report from the Sports & Social Club**

Cllr Roe had tabled a report - there is now a new steward in place and it is hoped to bring out a newsletter in the near future.

## **15. Environmental Matters**

Cllr. Mrs Sanderson spoke to her report which had been put on the website.

- a) On reviewing the responsibility for the clearance of the ditches in The Valley and Valley Road, it was AGREED that Cllr Friar would meet the Gibbs family with a view to obtaining their cooperation.
- b) She said that she had discussed in outline with Richard Barnard of WCC Footpaths Dept the issues arising over the Jitty. She pointed out that the footpath is in fact a technical responsibility of WCC; he has asked for photos so he can investigate.
- c) The footpath group had installed a way marker post at the end of Footpath W123
- d) The wildflower meadow will be mown in March and again in the autumn; it is hoped to liaise more closely with Mr Wagstaffe over mowing routines
- e) She had sought a fixed date with Tim Precious at Warwickshire Wildlife to complete work on the Pond.
- f) WWT want to book the Community Hall for their next meeting in May; there is an opportunity through WWT to get more involved with other villages in the area.
- g) A review of community emergency planning needs to be undertaken but there are various levels of which action can be taken. Cllr Mrs Malin said she had been involved with emergency planning in the past and currently the old records and the equipment are inadequate. The depth of involvement of this Council has to be considered bearing in mind it's financial resources and availability of volunteers. Cllr Mrs Malin pointed out that a large number of names on the existing records are of people who are no longer available. It was AGREED that Cllr Mrs Malin to be Chairman of this Committee and a review meeting organised. A template on procedures was prepared by former councillor John Sudbury and should still be available; Cllr Friar to pursue.

## **16. Telephone Box**

Cllr Friar reported that the equipment recently ordered and paid for in respect of the telephone box had now arrived and he had put it into store. The volunteers to carry out the work were now being sought.

## **17. Defibrillators**

Cllr Friar reported that two defibrillators are now in situ; one at the Shop and one outside the Club and both are in working order. It was proposed that a third defibrillator should be acquired on a hiring only basis (as previously discussed) and Cllr Friar is to investigate and provide a quotation. The Council AGREED, in principle, to utilise a hiring contract as opposed to a contract for outright purchase.

## **18. Footpath W123**

There was no update on Footpath W123.

## **19. Any other business**

1. The Clerk reported there was no update report on the External Audit and one now seems unlikely; however, the CEO of WALC had mentioned to him recently that in a discussion, she had with the External Auditors, they had conceded that for the audit year 2022/2023, they had been on a learning curve.
2. The Chairman had circulated a revised list of Committees for 2023/2024; Cllrs were content with the list; the position of School Liaison Officer remains vacant at present.

**20. Date of next Council meeting**

The next meeting will be on the 25<sup>th</sup> March 2024. This meeting closed at 9.45 pm.

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

Date ..... March 2024

Counter signed.....  
**Clerk**

Date ..... March 2024