

RADFORD SEMELE PARISH COUNCIL

APPROVED MINUTES

A meeting of the Parish Council was held on Monday 26th June 2023 at 7.30 pm in the Community Hall, Lewis Road, Radford Semele.

Participants: Cllr S Sabin (in the chair), Cllr D Carter, Cllr A J Dempsey, Cllr B Friar, Cllr Mrs J P Malin, Cllr R Munn and Cllr Josie Sanderson

In attendance: WDC Cllr Becky Noonan

On behalf of the Council, the Chairman expressed their condolences to the Clerk and his wife on the recent death of one of their sons after a long illness and he asked that it be recorded in these Minutes.

1. Apologies for Absence and Declarations of Interest

Apologies received from WCC Cllr Redford (on holiday). Cllr Sabin recorded a declaration of interest in a matter relating to the Sports & Social Club. Cllr Mrs Sanderson recorded a declaration in respect of a planning matter.

2. Approval of the Minutes of the Council meeting on 15th May 2023

The Minutes of the meeting on 15th May 2023 were approved, proposed by Cllr Friar and seconded by Cllr Mrs Malin.

3. Matters arising from the Minutes of the Council meeting on 15th May 2023

There were no matters arising from those Minutes that were not dealt with under other headings in these Minutes.

4. Update on SpeedWatch

Cllr Munn spoke to the activities of SpeedWatch, having tabled a short report. In particular, he stressed the team's difficulty in getting specific training from the WRE Safer Neighbourhood Team of Warwickshire Police.

5. Update on traffic management issues

The Clerk reported that Scott Tompkins had aborted at short notice the site meeting proposed for 1st June on the grounds that his department had been unable to complete the preparatory paperwork for the meeting due to being inundated with work. He says he will proffer a new date asap but one has not yet been received.

6. Update on Section 106 and CIL issues

1. The Clerk said he was still waiting for a detailed response from Helen Hancox, WDC Open Spaces Officer, on the Section 106 agreement issue arising out of the money due from The Cricketers development. She is in the process of taking advice from her legal department.
2. He confirmed that the annual CIL report had been filed with WDC and acknowledgement of receipt had been received.

7. Warwickshire County Council – update

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

8. Warwick District Council – update

WDC Cllr Mrs Noonan reported on her involvement in the dilapidated building at the end of Hamilton Road; it had come to her attention that it had potential for youth drug users and irresponsible people who posed a fire risk.

She had been in negotiation with A C Lloyd, who own the building, with a view to having it demolished. The land adjacent to the building is farmed land but it appears that the farmer concerned is not involved with the building.

9. Financial Matters

- a) The Clerk reported that the balance on the investment account is currently approximately £96,000 and the balance on operating account is currently approximately £3,700.
- a) A number of payments were authorised to be made as per the tabled sheet, proposed by Cllr Friar and seconded by Cllr Mrs Malin. Outstanding commitments to WALC and SLCC were adjourned due to a lack of invoices. One of the payments authorised was the Clerk's first quarter salary of £2,155.
- b) The Clerk reported that AGAR paperwork had been lodged with the External Auditor (Moore & Co) who had acknowledged receipt but nothing further had been heard. From past experience, he did not expect them to start work on any paperwork from parish councils until after their deadline date of 30th June.
- c) The Clerk raised the matter of points made by the Internal Auditor, Mrs Best, in her report as to a review of documentation, in particular Standing Orders and the Financial Regulations. Cllr Friar expressed the view that there was time enough to review these as it was not long since they had been checked over.

10. Correspondence

- 1) A note had been received by the Chairman and the Clerk from the School in support of their newly formed Eco Committee. It was AGREED that Cllr Mrs Sanderson would look into this.
- 2) Cllr Mrs Sanderson had tabled a note concerning the Village pond; it was pointed out that some maintenance is required to the over development of the vegetation. It was AGREED that she in combination with FoRGE should organise this (as set out in her email of 19th June 2023). The Clerk emphasised, supported by Cllr Friar, the need for the working party to check the stability of the surrounding fencing at the same time.
- 3) A circular invitation had been received via WALC for a seminar on South Warwickshire Climate Engagement; this is to take place on Thursday 29th June at 6pm until 7.15pm. Eventbrite is providing the link and the Clerk will circulate the email to all Cllrs – individual application is appropriate.
- 4) Cllr Mrs Malin had lodged with the Clerk an email concerning a matter raised by a resident at 17 School Lane and this concerned a passageway between his house and the house next door which is very overgrown with weeds. After discussion, the conclusion reached was that clearance of the land is a matter for the householders involved and is not something that this Council can undertake. The resident should be advised accordingly.
- 5) The Clerk reminded Council that he had previously received a complaint from a resident at 37 Slade Meadow concerning the 'back land' at the rear of the development sign for The Cricketers; he had previously asked A C Lloyd to take action to tidy up this land but it appears from her recent complaint that this has fallen by the wayside. It was AGREED that the Clerk should remind A C Lloyd of their previous undertaking.
- 6) The Clerk had received a circular letter from the Monitoring Officer at WDC that they are providing a free training session for Cllrs and Clerks on the newly adopted Code of Conduct (adopted by this Council earlier in 2023). This is online training on 27th September 2023 at 6pm. It is a matter for individual Cllrs to log in.
- 7) For this item, the Chair was taken by Cllr Friar as Vice Chairman – Cllr Sabin declared an interest. The Clerk had received a written complaint from a resident; the note gave his name but he had expressed the intention that he remain anonymous. The complaint centred on noise and disturbance created by members of the Sports & Social Club using the outdoor area in the evenings. The complaint alleged that there was unduly loud music and a lot of shouting and swearing. The Clerk said the thrust of the written complaint was to ask this Council to cancel the permission for the Club to use the outside area and as soon as it was practical / legal to do so. The Clerk reminded Council that this matter was of concern when taken in conjunction with the previous incident (a few months ago) when a BBQ appears to have caused a fire in this area. Following that, he had written to the Club Secretary about the fire but had not received any response. It was AGREED that this Council would be reluctant to withdraw the permission permanently, but the incidents were of concern; it was AGREED that the Clerk would write again to the Club drawing attention to the situation and requesting confirmation that situation would be remedied. (Although the complainant had asked for the date of this Council meeting, he did not attend.)

11. Current Planning Matters

- 1) W/23/0514 – 44 Offchurch Lane (granted)
- 2) W/23/0690 – Cllr Carter outlined his Committee's submission on 17 Offchurch Lane; a detailed, written submission had been received by the Clerk from an adjoining householder expressing concern over the construction of an extension to the garage at No 17 and the potential to encroachment on the footpath to an unreasonable extent. Cllr Carter had taken on board the resident's complaint but the view taken was that the overall scenario must be assessed by the WDC Planning Officer.
- 3) W/23/0730 - There was a short debate concerning 7 St Nicholas Terrace (Cllr Mrs Sanderson withdrew from the meeting having declared an interest). There was a difficult issue with this particular property but after a debate, it was unanimously AGREED that Cllr Carter would lodge an objection to the planning application.
- 4) 22/00001/FUL - Concern was expressed as to the Planning Appeal for the Solar Farm for premises adjacent to Ufton. Cllr Carter had ascertained that part of a revised application, 23/01305/FUL, was in fact within this Council's boundaries. There are two applications pending; one with an appeal to the Government Inspector in respect of refusal of a previous application and the other was a reconstituted application. A letter from the MP had been filed in supporting the objection to the application. The nature of the proposed development indicates that the solar farm would be extensive in area. This Council again expressed its concern that this kind of application should be dealt with via Stratford on Avon District Council Planning Committee without reference to this Parish Council, in effect, deliberating over an application for land within the area of WDC. This particular matter had come to the attention of this Council because the Clerk to Ufton Parish Council had referred it this Council's Clerk.
- 5) South Warwickshire Plan – it was observed that there was no need for action on this matter at present.

12. Footpath W123

As previously reported, the Clerk had filed with the Information Commissioners Office a complaint against WCC for failing to provide information requested earlier. He said that initially the ICO sought to reject the application on the grounds that it was "out of time" (it had been noted that no specific time limit is specified by regulation). On the Clerk sending a robust response to the Case Officer, the latter changed his attitude and the Clerk has received a note saying the matter is being considered. There is no indication as to how long this will take.

13. Playing Field update

1. Cllr Dempsey had explored with Proludic their terms and charging rates for ongoing maintenance of the adult gym equipment; it appears they are looking at a daily rate of £375 for a half day's work. Before an agreement is reached with them, the Clerk requested that a specific written quotation be obtained.
1. It appears that, with good intentions, operatives of A C Lloyd from The Cricketers site, have been disturbing the wildflower/wildlife base on the boundary between the footpath they created for the development and the Playing Field. The Clerk is to request them to desist from this.
2. Debate followed the emergency action taken by Cllr Dempsey and Cllr Friar to install necessary bollards to obstruct travellers from installing themselves on the Playing Field. This followed a scare as a result of travellers being ejected from a site near Bishops Tachbrook and making their way northwards. An investigation into the cost of suitable bollards arrived at a specific quotation from suppliers of £2,482 inc VAT for the supply of a suitable number of bollards and their installation (7 in all). As an emergency measure, the Chairman had approved this figure (in the absence from the locality of the Clerk due to his son's illness). The Council in this meeting confirmed the Chairman's decision. It was AGREED that Cllr Dempsey will proceed to arrange installation.
3. There was a short debate on the maintenance of the Playing Field, with particular reference to the football pitch. The Clerk explained that since he took up office there had always been a contract with a mole catcher. The objective was to maintain the quality of the football pitch although infestation of moles was infrequent. The question was raised whether it was necessary to carry on with the contract; he said that regularly he received reports from inspections by the current mole catchers but did not see fit to put them in front of Council where they confirm that no infestation had been found. He pointed out that a few years ago, former Cllr Sudbury had observed an infestation and the mole catchers had been called in expeditiously to deal with it. On balance therefore, Council considered it was worth continuing with the contract.
4. There was discussion concerning the instruction of a safety report by an independent body (following on discussion at the last Council meeting); the Clerk had made contact with RoSPA as agreed – they quoted a special charge for an immediate special visit (approximately £ 700.00) but if the inspection is part of an

annual routine the charge is £75 plus £3.50 per additional items . It was agreed the Clerk would approach them for the lower price.

14. Report from the Community Hall

Cllr Mrs Malin had tabled a report and she said she had had some serious trouble with an oversubscribed party in the Hall. Approximately 100 people were present and the surroundings including the floor were left in a mess. It appears that currently a deposit of £50 is taken for a booking; the Clerk suggested that this figure should be significantly increased so as to dissuade people from leaving a mess.

15. Report on Sports & Social Club

Cllr Mrs Malin had tabled a report and she said there was nothing further to report.

16. Telephone Box

Cllr Mrs Sanderson tabled an email note with proposals by FoRGE for revamping the telephone box. The Council approved the outline of her proposals and it was AGREED that she and Cllr Friar should proceed to see how the telephone box could be fully restored to a point where it was not an attraction to vandals. The Clerk raised the question of the modest electricity supply to the box and Cllr Friar said he would investigate that; the working party are to produce costings figures for the next Council meeting.

17. Subsidy to residents for cost of living

The Chairman said there was nothing to update on this item.

18. Any other business

1. It was AGREED that recruitment of new Cllrs should be pursued; Cllr Friar expressed the opinion that it was not necessary to publish notice of a vacancy under Section 87 (2) of the Local Government Act 1972 as the vacancies arose not from resignations but from non-election of candidates at the recent Local Government Elections. Cllr Mrs Malin requested a form of notice which could be put up in the Community Hall (a copy being posted on the notice board also); the Clerk will prepare this.
1. The Chairman referred briefly to the Annual Parish Assembly on 20th May; he said the outfall was disappointing but in principle it was worth carrying out. A review of arrangements is to be made for next year's meeting.
2. The Clerk drew attention to the date of the Annual General Meeting to be held by CPRE on 7th August 2023 – it was open to any Cllrs to attend although usually no-one did.

19. Date of next Council meeting

The next meeting will be on the 31st July 2023. This meeting closed at 9.50 pm.

Signed.....
Chairman of the Parish Council

Date June 2023

Counter signed.....
Clerk

Date June 2023