

RADFORD SEMELE PARISH COUNCIL

2024/6

MINUTES

A meeting of the Parish Council was held on Monday 30th September 2024 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 Mrs J Sanderson, Mr David Leigh-Hunt (Clerk)

In attendance: WDC Cllr M/s Davidson, WCC Cllr W Redford, a member of the public and Mrs Christine Wilson (Minutes)

The Clerk expressed his appreciation for the consideration and support from the Council during his illness and the Chairman welcomed the Clerk back.

1. Apologies for Absence and Declarations of Interest

There were no apologies and there were Declarations of Interest from Cllr Friar regarding donation to the Scouts and Cllr Sabin regarding donation to the RBL Poppy Appeal.

2. Approval of the Minutes of the Council meeting on 5th August 2024

The Minutes of the meeting on 5th August 2024 were approved by Cllr Friar and seconded by Cllr Dempsey.

3. Matters arising from the Minutes of the Council meeting on 5th August 2024

Any matters arising to be covered under the agenda items below.

4. Update on SpeedWatch

1. Cllr Munn had tabled his report which outlined the sessions and the number of vehicles recorded (one of which recorded at 42 mph on the A425). He will pursue a training session for a new recruit as the current wait time is too long.
2. The report also included a report on the Warwickshire CSW Celebration and Long Service Awards which was held on 11th September at Shire Hall, Warwick. The Warwick Road Safety Partnership was present, and the Chairman had the opportunity to press the Council's objection to the (non) policing of the 20mph zones. The Police and Crime Commissioner, Philip Seccombe, did show some interest but there was no progress. The Chairman read a letter from Kathie Johnson, of Milverton Speedwatch Team, to the PCC regarding lack of feedback and lack of regard of challenge of SpeedWatch. The letter asked him to follow up the issue as they felt they were not supported.

Cllr Carter said that the PCC had confirmed, at a different meeting, that he was considering the issue. However Cllr Dempsey felt that the PCC had not actually read the RSPC submission.

5. Update on traffic management issues

The Chairman reported that he had walked around the Village with WCC Senior Engineer, Jessica Consolaro, her colleague Chris Round and Cllr Dempsey. The items that were highlighted were:

- a. The bus stop is still an issue
- b. The Village sign is still misplaced and the resident must have moved it as Ms Consolaro confirmed that WCC had not.
- c. The bus stop sign by the White Lion still has not been moved.
- d. The bollards have not been replaced.
- e. The Chairman asked about vegetation and the height of the hedgerow; and branches have fallen into the road recently.
- f. 20 mph roundels on the road were requested.
- g. No work on changing the kerb which is protruding.

6. Update on Section 106 and CIL issues

- a) The Chairman reported that the Cricketers Section 106 funding of £62,350.21. had been received. This can be used for the management and improvement to the Playing Field and can be used within 20 years. The Clerk confirmed that he has vetted the paperwork before it went in to WDC; the Chairman wrote and thanked Alistair Clark for his help in expediting the matter.
- b) Cllr Sanderson had previously expressed concern that the restricted funds being held by the Parish Council, in respect of the canal access project, may be at risk of forfeiture if the scheme was not commenced soon. The Chairman quoted from the relevant S106 agreement, 'which has not been expended and/or committed in accordance with the provisions of this Deed within seven (7) years of the date of receipt by the County Council'. The money was received by WCC on 6th December 2018. The Chairman believed that it could also be argued that it has been committed.
- c) The Chairman will write to Janet Neale, WCC officer, to request a balance sheet of the S106 contributions specific to Radford Semele, namely from planning applications, Ricardo – W/03/0281 and Bovis - W/14/0322 and W/16/0196.

7. Warwickshire County Council – update

WCC Cllr Redford reported that:

- a. The Community Grant is open again so any project that needs additional finance can make an application
- b. WCC are instigating a household support grant for those having difficulties with heating bills this winter; they must be receiving benefits though.
- c. He will pursue the issue of dropped kerbs and will inspect the local ones with the Chairman at a date to be agreed.

8. Warwick District Council – update

WDC Cllr M/s Davidson reported that

- a. She has sent round a newsletter recently.
- b. The Local Plan has been pushed back.
- c. A resident contacted her about the parking situation in School Lane
- d. The Newbold bridge repairs are now underway and the bridge erected in November. There will be further landscaping around the bridge and she will enquire at her next meeting on the timescale.
- e. The Pension Credit deadline for applications is 21st December 2024
- f. Many issues to be decided on Solar Farm; this item was discussed later in the meeting

Cllr Munn asked for clarification regarding the parking and advised that the White Lion car park is available for children at drop off and pick up times. Perhaps the School Head could request parents use this suggestion.

9. Financial Matters

- 1) Cllr Friar and the Clerk referred to statements which had been circulated; the balance on the investment account is currently £ 172,980.36 which includes a total Restricted Reserve of £108,548.42; the balance on the operating account is £ 7071.11. Cllr Friar reported that the second section of the Precept has been received but this will take the total over the account limit of protection afforded by a bank at £85,000.00. He had not got anywhere with RBS . He will look into the possibility of a new account with Unity Trust Bank
- 2) A number of payments identified on the list which had been circulated were approved; an invoice from HAGS was approved in principle but Cllr Dempsey will check their work first before payment. The list of payments were approved, proposed by Cllr Friar and seconded by Cllr Mrs Malin. It was agreed that the Clerk will now take back finance; the Chairman and the Clerk expressed much appreciation to Cllr Friar for holding control of the Council's finances over the last three months.
- 3) The External Auditors have completed their report and the Council are required to approve section 1 and 2. of the Auditors' certificate on page 6 of the AGAR form. The Auditors highlighted the following -
 - a. References in Council minutes should be aligned with the AGAR form
 - b. Previous instructions from the Auditors should have been actioned
 - c. A review of the Standing Orders and Finance Regulations should be made on an annual basis
 - d. There was a rounding error of £1
 - e. Clarification required each year that the Council has not held petty cash

Section 1 of the External Auditor Report and Certificate 2023/2024 was approved; proposed by Cllr Carter and seconded by Cllr Dempsey. Section 2 of the same document was approved; proposed by Cllr Carter and seconded by Cllr Dempsey. It was AGREED that a review of Standing Orders and Finance Regulations be allocated to the Agenda for every February meeting.

There was a short discussion on the Schedule of Donations. Cllr Sanderson asked about a possible increase, but the Precept had been concluded before any increase was budgeted for. It was agreed that they should remain at the same amounts as last year; proposed by Cllr Dempsey and seconded by Cllr Carter.

10. Correspondence

The Chairman had received a letter from Stewart Roe explaining that he has tendered his resignation as Cllr immediately and wishing the Council well in the future. The Chairman declared a vacancy and confirmed that there are now 3 vacancies. The Clerk will notify WDC and put the vacancies notice on the noticeboard. Cllr Friar expressed his appreciation of Cllr Roe's work on the Council and highlighted that his motivation had got the newsletter off the ground.

- a. The Clerk had received notification from a resident regarding a large commercial van which has been parked regularly near Hatherell Road so PC Ed King has been made aware.
- b. The resident at 33 Lewis Road has dumped garden rubbish etc onto a piece of WCC land next door. The Chairman reported this as fly tipping, and someone investigated but no help was forthcoming.
- c. A booking the Community Hall for a cross-country event has been made but now the erection of a gazebo has been requested for the event on 3rd November. This is Parish Council land and in theory only for Village residents. Following discussion, it was agreed that Cllr Dempsey will write to them and ask them if they have insurance and for further clarification of the proposal.
- d. A letter from Royal Leamington Spa Archery Assn asking for a new permanent home has been received; this was declined. The Clerk to advise them.
- e. Chairman has received a notification from WALC for their AGM on 6th November at Warwick University campus from 9.30am to 3pm. Cllr Friar and Chairman to attend.
- f. The Chairman reported that he had been made aware that NALC had been responding to the Governments planned amendments to the NPPF. It was possible the planning application fees would be increased.

11. Current Planning Matters

Cllr Carter spoke to his report

- 1) W/23/0471 & W/23/1574 – The Leasowes, Southam Road is still ongoing
- 2) W/24/0630 – 108 Lewis Road was approved on 16th August 2024
- 3) W/24/0951TCA – The Vicarage, Church Lane (work to trees) was approved on 27th August 2024
- 4) South Warwickshire Local Plan – An addition to the South Warwickshire Local Plan section about the implications of the new government's planning proposals. It is estimated that this may increase Warwick District's annual housing target from 811 to 1080 houses. In relation to solar energy the government aims to treble national capacity by 2030.
- 5) Fosse Way Solar Farm – no application has been put in yet. The Chairman had read a news item that reported that the President of the NFU, Mr Tom Bradshaw, has been in talks with a senior Government team regarding food security. In the light of that the Chairman has written to Mr Bradshaw in an attempt to ascertain the NFU's policy position on using valuable agricultural land for extensive solar farms for periods up to forty years. A reply is awaited.
A letter from Staffordshire Solar One Ltd has been circulated to our adjoining two local parish councils with a new coloured plan which indicates more acreage is planned. SSO say they are happy to meet the 3 parish councils to explain. They are planning to put their application in for approval shortly. Cllr Sanderson says that FoRGE's only objection is that this proposed plan is too big. The Chairman will chase the other two councils (Harbury and Ufton) as to a meeting before a possible face to face meeting with SSO. WDC Cllr M/s Davidson gave some background to larger planning applications.
- 6) This Council have objected to the AC Lloyd development at Whitnash but looks that it will be approved.

12. Playing Field update

Cllr Dempsey spoke to his report which had been tabled:

- a. HAGS have almost completed the minor repairs and maintenance to all the play equipment. Andy from HAGS prepared an updated quote (c£3000) – which was forwarded to the PC via email on 11/6. Equipment repair monies exist to pay for this and a final invoice is expected upon agreed satisfactory completion of the work.

- b. He plans to meet with Paul Rawlings to discuss green maintenance on the playing field to be conducted over the winter months. Paul Rawlings is also to be asked to look at the drain in the car park outside of the Community Hall.
- c. On 31st August 2024, Bubbenhall PC took possession of the four dog waste bins that were being stored in the RSS&SC / Community Hall yard. These were passed on free of charge.
- d. Following intrusion of travellers in June, it has been decided to have a substantial galvanised steel gate installed at the vulnerable entry point alongside the social. Three companies quoted for the work. The Playing Field Committee have accepted the quote from George Worrall Engineering (GWE) and will liaise with them as to exact design and manufacturing/installation timings.
- e. Cllr Friar had a walk around the field with Henry Marriot on Monday 8/7/24 to catalogue the trees. Henry pointed out the Ash trees with die back and offered to come along and take them out. There is also a rogue elm which is a left over from when he took the elms out a few years ago and he has suggested he will take that away as it will be trouble in the future (it's in between the Plane Trees). He has also said he will do something about the ivy climbing the trees on the Spring Lane side of the field and also suggested removing the branch over hanging the fence laying on top of the new bushes. He spoke to Henry who agreed to carry out the work as listed but this would be done in the autumn as this was best for the ongoing health of the trees. Cllr Friar has catalogued the trees on Parish Online.
- f. He has had communication from a resident asking if gates could be erected at the children's park in the playing field. After discussion at the last meeting he will approach GWE to quote.
- g. He will look to request Proludic attend for the annual maintenance on the Outdoor Gym.

13. Report from the Community Hall

Cllr Mrs Malin had circulated her report:

- a. After the summer holiday period, all regular hirers of the Community Hall have returned. At weekends between September and November, every Saturday and most Sundays have at least one booking. Going into 2025 bookings for the hire of the Hall are coming in, with one regular monthly weekend booking confirmed for the whole of 2025 and 2026.
- b. All regular groups seem to be doing well. In particular the Art Group continues to flourish and welcome new members – some accomplished artists and some who are trying something new for the first time – but all who enjoy the sociable aspect.
- c. The Hall Committee are running a Macmillan Coffee Morning on September 28, to help raise funds for this very worthy cause.
- d. On 5 and 6 October for the Annual Scarecrow Festival, this will start and finish at the Community Hall where refreshments will be available.
- e. With the thought that there are residents who live alone and who may be lonely – starting on Tuesday 8 October - the new Welcome Café will be open - offering some company and a warm drink in a comfortable space.
- f. Based on the fact that the Community Hall has very little storage space, our Treasurer Brian has kindly fitted four new cupboards in the kitchen and a further cupboard in one of the toilets.
- g. The Community Hall welcomes the 'birth' of the new Village Newsletter, with contributions from FoRGE, the Hall, the Sports & Social Club and Parish Council.

14. Report from the Sports & Social Club - There was no report.

15. Environmental Matters

Cllr Mrs Sanderson had circulated her report:

- a. Warwickshire Conservation Volunteers carried out maintenance on the village pond, along with clearance of the Leigh Fosse permissive path, on 14th August. They were able to clear more vegetation this year due to having chest waders and being a larger group.
- b. Wagstaff cut Playing field wildflower meadow area on 11th September and will collect and remove the grass from the site late September. She will trim the hedge plants during the winter when the plants are dormant.
- c. The maintenance of hedge in The Valley will be carried out in October.
- d. Canal Access project - The new design comprises a double switchback, which avoids tree roots and reduces the gradient of the slope. Still no news of whether this will need to be submitted for planning permission.
- e. She attended the Town & Parish Council Reference Group meeting on 17th September, with a presentation on the Citizens Advice Bureau (Julie Robinson) and how they are supporting people

through the cost of living crisis; and Act on Energy, presented by Rachel Jones. The next meeting takes place on 17th September. As a result of the meeting Julie Robinson will share publicity materials with the group to ensure a wider awareness of the service that they offer.

- f. The wet footpath problem on path leading to Southam Rd was discussed.
- g. The FoRGE Footpath Group did not meet up in August due to holiday commitments.
- h. The next edition of FoRGE News will be distributed during September/October as a combined newsletter, with distribution being shared amongst FoRGE, The Social Club, The Community Hall and the Parish Council.

16. Telephone Box

Cllr Mrs Sanderson said that a risk assessment is in the process of being created, with a view to starting work in October. The occupier of the nearby residence and County Highways will be informed once the RA is complete and we have a clear working schedule. The RA must be submitted to WDC and the Clerk said Gerald Brooks at WCC Highways was a possible point of contact as he had previously been in contact with him on this project.

17. Emergency Planning

Cllr Mrs Malin spoke to her report.

- a. In terms of emergencies, we were faced with one Thursday 26 September, following excessive rainfall for many hours. The result was that The Valley and Valley Road were severely flooded, to the extent that some vehicles were flooded out.
- b. Cllr Mrs Malin had had difficulty in reporting local flooding to Warwick District Council with either no or poor response. Wherever flooding has happened, or where it could happen, we should make sure all residents have emergency contact numbers. This is something she is happy to do.
- c. In the end the Coventry Solihull & Warwickshire Resilience Committee helped and supported her. However as the CSW Resilience Team number is confidential – she feels that residents should be able to contact a sperate number for the Parish Council.
- d. She did not feel it is practical to consider using sandbags and think Hydrosacks would seem to be a sensible option, but perhaps residents should purchase their own. They are not expensive; about £15-£20 for two. This way they would have something at the ready and not have to rely on outside help. In addition, perhaps the Parish Council should have a small stock of Hydrosacks – although the difficulty is lack of storage space.
- e. She suggested every house be contacted to reassure and confirm the Council's responsibility to help safeguard residents.
- f. She asked if any Parish Councillor who knows of any other area of the village so affected, could let her know, so that the residents involved can be contacted in future.
- g. Cllr Munn agreed to be on the Emergency Planning Committee

18. Footpath W123 - There was nothing to report.

19. Any other business

- 1) The Community noticeboard has been agreed by Bovis in an email. The management company who looks after the communal area had been taken over in March 2023 and there are no contact details. It was noted that their dog bin was overflowing on the site. It had been noted that CAVA have put attractive noticeboards up in Stratford and the Chairman will investigate where they were obtained.
- 2) Cllr Friar to investigate an updated website and more sophisticated email system.
- 3) Cllr Dempsey asked that the hard standing under the outdoor gym to be put on the next Agenda.

20. Date of next Council meeting

The next meeting will be on the 28th October 2024. This meeting closed at 9.40 pm.

Signed.....
Chairman of the Parish Council

Date October 2024

Counter signed.....
Clerk

Date October 2024