

RADFORD SEMELE PARISH COUNCIL

2024/8

MINUTES

A meeting of the Parish Council was held on Monday 25th November 2024 at 7.30 pm in the Community Hall, Lewis Road, Radford Semele.

Participants: Cllr S Sabin (in the chair), Cllr D Carter, Cllr B Friar, Cllr Mrs J P Malin, Cllr Mrs J Sanderson and Mr David Leigh-Hunt (Clerk)

In attendance: WDC Cllr M/s Davidson and a member of the public

1. Apologies for Absence and Declarations of Interest

Apologies were received from Cllr A J Dempsey, Cllr R Munn, WCC Cllr W Redford (another meeting) and Mr Owain Lloyd-Davies. There were no Declarations of Interest.

2. Approval of the Minutes of the Council meeting on 28th October 2024

The Minutes of the meeting on 28th October 2024 were approved; proposed by Cllr Carter and seconded by Cllr Friar.

3. Matters arising from the Minutes of the Council meeting on 28th October 2024

There were no matters arising from the Minutes not dealt with elsewhere in this meeting.

4. Update on SpeedWatch

In the absence of Cllr Munn, he had tabled his report. Discussion on the report referred to an invitation issued on behalf of the Police and Crime Commissioner to two sessions for town and parish councils on 17th December and 20th December next. These are open sessions with an opportunity to ask the Commissioner questions as seen fit. The Chairman indicated that he has already registered himself for one of these meetings.

5. Update on traffic management issues

There has been no update on the traffic management situation. However a damaged bollard has been replaced by WCC Highways Dept.

6. Update on Section 106 and CIL issues

There was no update on this topic; the Clerk expressed his concern that there could be a time limit on utilisation of funds received in connection with the canal access project. The Chairman said that as the funds had been committed to the project he did think they were at risk of recovery by the developer. He will write to Janet Neale, WCC, requesting clarification.

7. Warwickshire County Council – update

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

8. Warwick District Council – update

WDC Cllr M/s Davidson presented her report and in particular she presented photographs taken of the fly-tipping aspect of rubbish piled up between the shop and the adjoining bungalow. It was noted that already WCC had declined to take any action although the land on which the rubbish is placed is technically WCC land. She said that whilst there is, in principle, a policy against fly-tipping there is no prospect of WDC taking action in respect of the site but she will persevere.

9. Financial Matters

- 1) The Clerk had tabled a bank reconciliation statement which shows the balance on the operating account is to date £6,594 approximately and the balance on the investment account is to date £166,267 approximately. Cllr Friar again expressed his concern that this significant sum is not earning as much interest on the current bank account as it might be if placed elsewhere. In addition, the banks' standard protected fund level of

£85,000 had been greatly exceeded in this case. He is continuing to investigate the possibility of finding another bank account/deposit account where the excess sum can be invested at a better rate of interest and with risk protection.

- 2) A number of payments were authorised to be paid, proposed by Cllr Carter and seconded by Cllr Mrs Malin.
- 3) Cllr Friar had tabled a paper on website migration; he recommended to Council that there is a transfer of the administration of the Council's website to 'ParishOnline'. The website will have a 'gov.uk' address as will Cllrs and Clerk's email addresses. It is of interest to note that gov.uk addresses are monitored by GCHQ. There is no initial charge for the transfer. There will be an annual charge of £480 + VAT for maintaining it. It was proposed that this be adopted, proposed by Cllr Carter and seconded by Cllr Mrs Malin.
- 4) Cllr Friar presented his paper on the proposed Budget. This had already been reviewed by a meeting primarily of the Finance Committee but with the addition of Cllr Dempsey and the Clerk as a group had convened for another purpose. Cllr Friar went through the figures on the balance sheet which he had prepared for the Budget explaining the different items and he pointed out that the draft was subject to receipt by the Council at the end of November of the Tax Base schedule from WDC with their indication of property valuations for the purposes of raising Council Tax. A special meeting of this Council may be required to approve the Precept based on that budget; the Precept normally being required before the end of January. The recommendation was approved, proposed by Cllr Mrs Malin and Cllr Mrs Sanderson.

10. Correspondence

- a. The Clerk had received a request from the Open Spaces Society for a donation; it was resolved to leave the matter in abeyance as the Council had recently granted a donation in line with its annual session awarding donations.
- b. The Chairman and the Clerk had received a paper from the Government with their proposals for a vote/proxy meetings; if passed into legislation, this will enable local councils to have meetings on a virtual basis and/or appoint a councillor to act as proxy for another councillor. It was AGREED that the Clerk and the Chairman would complete answers to the questionnaire and return it to Government.
- c. There had been a WRE meeting on 4th November; this is referred to in a report tabled by Cllr Munn.
- d. The Clerk had put before the Chairman and the Vice Chairman a report from his IT consultant, Mr Ron Douglas, following the view expressed by Cllr Friar and others that it was time for the Clerk to be supplied with a new laptop. Mr Douglas' report refers to supplying the Clerk with a new printer; the Clerk said the latter would be his own cost but sought approval on the laptop. It was approved that the Clerk accept Mr Douglas' quotation for an Acer laptop at a cost of approximately £600; proposed by Cllr Mrs Sanderson and seconded by Cllr Mrs Malin.

11. Current Planning Matters

Cllr Carter had tabled a report covering matters such as the South Warwickshire Local Plan, the Fosse Way Solar Farm and a number of individual, domestic planning applications with details of them.

- 1) W/22/0471 & W/22/1574 – The Leasowes, Southam Road (subject to appeal)
- 2) W/23/1766 south of Chesterton Gardens just over the parish border in Whitnash (granted 31.10.2024)
W/23/1746, for the above site has an appeal lodged for non-determination.
- 3) South Warwickshire Local Plan
- 4) W/24/1404 Fosse Way Solar Farm – Cllr Carter explained that a great deal of time had been taken up by himself, the Clerk and Christine Wilson in redrafting on several occasions an initial submission prepared by the consultant selected by the Clerk, Andrew Towleron. Following a recommendation from Kate Pittel of the Residents Objection group, the services of a landscape expert, Richard Hodgetts, had been retained and he was in the course of preparing a report. It is intended that the two documents will be submitted to WDC Planning Dept before the end of the published deadline on the application of 3rd December 2024. The Clerk expressed a commendation to Council for Cllr Carter and Mrs Wilson for the great amount of time they had spent at the last weekend, particularly on the Sunday.

12. Playing Field update

Being on holiday, Cllr Dempsey had tabled his report in advance. The Clerk confirmed that today he had lent the keys of the Playing Field gate to John McGowan to engage in tree trimming work as previously planned.

13. Report from the Community Hall

Cllr Mrs Malin had circulated her report on behalf of the Community Hall.

14. Report from the Sports & Social Club

Cllr Mrs Malin spoke briefly to her tabled report. There had been a small increase in takings but the financial situation was still critical.

15. Environmental Matters

- a. Cllr Mrs Sanderson spoke briefly to her tabled report which was extensive in substance. There was a resulting discussion on how to deal with the trimming of hedges in The Valley and Valley Road (a perennial problem for this Council ever since the Clerk took up office). It was felt that the adjoining landowner should take some responsibility, and it was suggested that an application should be made to WCC to take such responsibility.
- b. It was noted that a contractor is being hired to deal with the canal access project where construction is planned to commence in early 2025.
- c. Cllr Mrs Sanderson had obtained approval from Gerald Brooks at WCC Highways to proceed with the telephone box restoration project and the adjoining occupier of the property had been advised of the start date – Friday 22nd November 2024.

16. Telephone Box – see above

17. Emergency Planning

In the absence of Cllr Munn, Cllr Mrs Malin spoke briefly to a report tabled by her which confirms that letters to residents in the flooded areas have been delivered commending the purchase by the residents of hydrosacks.

18. Footpath W123

There was no update.

19. Any other business

The Clerk reported that Mr Lloyd-Davies had not been able to attend tonight’s meeting due to a family bereavement, but he had expressed his interest and proposed to come to our January meeting.

20. Date of next Council meeting

The next meeting will be on the 27th January 2025; the Chairman wished all Councillors and Clerk and their families a happy and peaceful Christmas. This meeting closed at 9.20 pm.

Signed.....
Chairman of the Parish Council

Date January 2025

Counter signed.....
Clerk

Date January 2025