

RADFORD SEMELE PARISH COUNCIL

2025/11

DRAFT UNAPPROVED MINUTES

A meeting of the Parish Council was held on Monday 27th April 2026 at 7.30 pm in the Community Hall, Lewis Road, Radford Semele.

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

In attendance: WDC Cllr Rebecca Davidson, Mr David Leigh-Hunt (Clerk). There were no members of the public present.

1. Election of Chairman for the Meeting

The Clerk called for nominations for the office of Chairman for this meeting; Cllr Carter was proposed by Cllr Mrs Malin and seconded by Cllr Dempsey. Cllr Carter then took the chair but withdrew from the meeting in connection with the following matter.

2. Apologies for Absence and Declarations of Interest

There were apologies for absence from Cllr B Friar, Cllr O Lloyd-Davies and WCC Cllr Ben Edwards and Cllr Carter declared an interest in the anticipated item dealing with the Old School building (see below).

The Clerk referred an item of other business brought forward along with the declaration of interest - Cllr Dempsey took the chair temporarily.

- a) the Clerk reported that Cllr Carter and himself had been heavily engaged with a large amount of documentation in the last 7 / 10 days arising from representations by James Nelson. The Clerk outlined the content of the documentation. Mr Nelson was a former pupil of the Village School.
- b) he expressed his concern that destruction of the Old School building in 2006 and development of the site with a number of houses was achieved by fraudulent strategy.
- c) a small parcel of land adjacent to the houses was acquired by Cllr Carter from the developer Michael Marshall. Mr Nelson alleged that a number of local people including Cllr Carter were involved in the fraudulent strategy.
- d) Council noted that a full planning application had been considered by WDC Planning Committee; strong objections were raised by a number of local people including Michael Doody then elected Parish and District Councillor for Radford Semele. Planning permission was granted under direction from the Secretary of State for Education.
- e) the case for the Education Authority was that the building was not fit for current education and Sec 106 funds received from the developer would be put to good use by the Authority.
- f) the Clerk referred to email correspondence between Mr Nelson and the Director of Operations at Coventry Diocese office which had been copied to the Clerk; in an email dated 24 April 2026 Mr Nelson said he was giving up his enquiry.
- g) therefore, Council considered no action on their part was appropriate but took the view that Cllr Carter was vindicated by the documentary research carried out by him and the Clerk. It was agreed that the Clerk should afford Mr Nelson perusal of the Council's Minutes in 2005 and 2006 if he wished to see them.

3. Approval of the Minutes of the Council meeting on 30th March 2026

The Minutes of the Council meeting on 30th March 2026 were approved for signature, subject to two small amendments: proposed by Cllr Dempsey and seconded by Cllr Munn.

4. Matters arising from the Minutes of the Council meeting on 30th March 2026

There were no matters arising from the Minutes of the last meeting, other than those referred to in the Agenda.

5. Report on SpeedWatch

Cllr Munn spoke briefly to his tabled report on SpeedWatch; his team had had a very successful session on 2nd April 2026 with a total of 206 vehicles were detected and a total of 13 were recorded as exceeding the 30mph

speed limit. Drivers will have received warding letters from the Police. A new volunteer has joined the team, a resident of Bloxham Way.

6. Warwickshire County Council – update

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

7. Warwick District Council – update

1. WDC Cllr M/s Davidson reported briefly on a hearing before the Planning Inspector on the appeal on the Fosse Way Solar Farm. She presented the case on behalf of objections along with Kate Pittel, the leader of the residents' action group and Cllr Carter. She said it was unfortunate that WDC administration had deployed the original Planning Officer as a manager/witness at the proceedings; his report had reported on the original planning application with which the Planning Committee had not agreed. Unfortunately, this gave the representatives, including the barrister for the Appellants' team, the opportunity to direct questions at him on the basis that he had originally supported the planning application. She said WDC are going to have arrangements made in future to avoid the situation arising again.
2. The Local Government Review comes up in July and observations/recommendations from the public will be sought.
3. On hearing from the Clerk that he had had no reaction on the request for jet hosing the bus stop shelter, she said she will take up the matter again with those concerned.
4. She reported that on 9th May 2026 there is an Open Day at the Crematorium and members of the public are welcome to attend if they wish.
5. On 27th September 2026, the Community Safety Event will take place.

8. Financial Matters

- 1) The Clerk reported that on the balance on the investment account is approximately £76,000 and the balance on the community account is approximately £6,000. This sum had been inflated by transfers by him to meet current commitments. He had received an email stating that the first instalment of the Precept had been paid; approximately £21,000 but on a check in the afternoon on 27th April, he found that the sum had not yet reached the Council's bank account.
- 2) A number of payments were authorised to be made, in particular the fees of Andrew Towleron for his very worthy input into the Solar Farm appeal. Also, a payment of £1,951.71 to Zurich Insurance for the renewal of our Public Liability cover; the Clerk reported that this was an increase on last year's premium of approximately £400. His experience was that this percentage increase was on a par with increases made by other insurers for other matters. Authorisation of the payment were proposed by Cllr Mrs Sanderson and seconded by Cllr Mrs Malin.
- 3) Documents prepared by Cllr Friar for the presentation of the AGAR Report to the External Auditors in due course were approved; signed by the Chairman and the Clerk. The Clerk expressed his gratitude to Cllr Friar for putting the documents together.
- 4) The Clerk reported that Mrs Louise Best had agreed to undertake the Internal Audit, and it was AGREED that Cllr Friar and the Clerk should make arrangements send her the appropriate paperwork for auditing.

9. Correspondence

Following the pattern of the last two meetings, in order to truncate time spent on analysing emails and letters, the Clerk devised a set of notes for the Chairman and himself to use, identifying current matters which require attention, not covered by other documentation:

- a. The Clerk had still not had a response from Joe Northorpe on the setting of the Village Gates.
- b. Cllr Mrs Sanderson is still waiting for a meeting date with the MP and Stagecoach (the previous date having been cancelled).
- c. PC Ed King's request for dates for walkabouts in the Village, it is understood that this is in hand by Cllr Friar.
- d. The Clerk proffered to Cllr Ms Davidson, a leaflet which he had received on circulation suggesting that subsidies from WDC were available to fund items connected with householders needs to keep warm and reduce fuel bills; she said the leaflet reflects a grant scheme designed to help people on low incomes and there is a process of obtaining funding which is not as straight forward as the leaflet might suggest.

- e. The Clerk had received a request from the Open Space Society to renew the Council's subscription at £45 this year; this was a special interest of former Cllr Sabin; after a brief discussion, it was AGREED that this matter be put on the Agenda for the next meeting to be given further consideration.

10. Current Planning Matters

Cllr Carter spoke briefly to his general report on planning:

1. W/24/1404 Fosse Way Solar Farm – Cllr Carter outlined the proceedings before the Inspector on 14th and 15th April. He said the Inspector was very fair in the way in which she handled the proceedings and allowed anybody to come forward and say something if they wished to. He agreed with WDC Cllr Ms Davidson that it was unfortunate that the Planning Officer put forward by WDC was in a position of conflict because he had recommended that planning permission be granted. The Council's expert witness, Richard Hodgetts, was very good and managed to claim the Inspector's attention for quite some time. Matt Western MP also addressed the Inspector. After the two-day hearing, on a third day the Inspector accompanied by participants walked about 5 miles round the site; she did in fact visit/check every area of the site on Friday 16th April. In particular she saw the Protected View identified in the Neighbourhood Plan; this is the view from the environs of the Village looking towards the hills and the Trig Point. This was identified specifically in the Neighbourhood Plan. He was pleased that she had focussed on this.
2. W/25/1716 Taylor Wimpey proposed site – this planning application is still pending; there is a concerted objection from Highways Department as to the traffic implications for the site.
3. W/25/0130 Land at the rear of 38-44 Offchurch Lane; a decision on this planning application is ongoing.
4. Update on the South Warwickshire Local Plan – this is coming up for its public consultation in June or July. A special meeting of the Parish Council will be needed near the time to prepare the Council's response to the consultation; this will be too detailed to be dealt with in an ordinary Council meeting.
5. W/25/1294 – Leasowe House; this application was granted on 21st April 2026.
6. There is an additional application pending (not on the Agenda) for Rose Grove Lodge, 22a Southam Road which concerns a two-storey extension to which there is no objection.

11. Playing Field Report

Cllr Dempsey spoke to his tabled report; he highlighted three matters:

- a. He now had a quotation from the Clark Playground Installations for repair of the playground equipment (referred to in his report). It had taken some time to get interest from a relevant contractor to deal with the repairs (which had been identified by the RoSPA report in September 2025). After some discussion, it was AGREED that the first option put forward by these contractors, would be accepted at a cost of about £11,400. proposed by Cllr Munn and seconded by Cllr Mrs Malin.
- b. He outlined in his report that there were continuing issues concerning the drainage in the Playing Field; specifically replacement of the manhole cover adjacent to the football pitch. It was AGREED that the quotation obtained by him from A-Line Drainage, for £1,250+VAT should be accepted proposed by Cllr Mrs Malin and seconded by Cllr Mrs Sanderson.

Further matters were the review of the signage around the Field (the wording, information and the inaccuracies in the notices have been addressed). Former Cllrs Henry Marriott and Stan Sabin and he had conducted seasonal tree husbandry on the Cubbington Pear Tree on the Playing Field which has now been fed and is thriving. There are ongoing discussions with Steve Hitchcox on his thoughts on managing the football pitch, in particular the goalpost has been damaged and the trees in the Playing Field will be reviewed in the Autumn in conjunction with Paul Rawlings.

12. Community Hall and Sports & Social Club report

Cllr Mrs Malin reported as per her tabled report. The Hall is doing well at present with an expanding number of events/bookings, in particular exercise sessions. She recently had trouble with a birthday party which got out of hand and there was damage. This has caused the Committee to review the amount of deposit which should be taken from those events bookings – currently the deposit is £50 but it may need to be raised. The Sports Club is ticking over but there are

inherent difficulties in that members of the Club Committee do not regularly attend meetings. However the management/finance agreement created by Cllr Friar on behalf of the Hall Committee with the Club Committee is being observed.

13. Report on Environmental Matters

Cllr Mrs Sanderson spoke briefly to her tabled report. In particular vegetation in the ditch at The Valley has been cleared in preparation for the expected visit from WCC personnel. They had not yet been in touch with a proposed date so she will chase this up. In the course of the next few months, she aims to start the development of a biodiversity action plan using the WCC template; this will raise awareness of what they do well and highlight areas for improvement.

14. Emergency Planning update

There was no report, but Cllr Munn reported that he needs guidance on what is expected so it was agreed that the issues will be discussed with him to enable a programme to be undertaken by him.

15. Preparation for AGM on 18th May 2026

Cllr Carter said that Cllrs must prepare various reports for the AGM; the Clerk pointed out that the same reports could be used for the ordinary Council Meeting on that date (18th May) as well as presented at the AGM. These are reports on Planning, Playing Field, Finance, Website and SpeedWatch. WDC Cllr Ms Davidson gave her apologies for absence at the AGM.

16. Any other business

There was no other business.

17. Date of next Council meeting

The date of the next meeting is 18th May 2026 at 7.30pm followed by the AGM at 8.30pm. This meeting closed at 9 pm.

Signed.....

Chairman of the Council Meeting

Date May 2026

Counter signed.....

Clerk

Date May 2026

