RADFORD SEMELE PARISH COUNCIL

2026/6

DRAFT UNAPPROVED MINUTES

A meeting of the Parish Council was held on Monday 28th October 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 I Metcalfe, Cllr Ms K Minhas-Gill, Cllr R Munn, Cllr Mrs J Sanderson and Cllr Ms K Treadwell

In attendance: WCC Cllr Ben Edwards, Mr David Leigh-Hunt (Clerk) and Mr Paul McArthur from Severn Trent Water (for part of the meeting)

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 Mrs Sanderson.

2. Address from Severn Trent Water

The expected speaker, Rachel Woodward was unable to attend but her assistant, Paul McArthur, gave a short resume on the work of Severn Trent and invited questions from Cllrs. The questions broadly focussed on the following matters:

a) Cllr Mrs Sanderson emphasied the serious flood problems in The Valley as better drainage is required as the topography of the land around The Valley causes flow of water down into the roadside.
b) Cllr Carter made the point that if the planning application by Taylor Wimpey for a large site on the south side of the A425 goes through this development will cause a significant flow of water down the hill in the direction of the Village and, in particular, The Valley. He was also concerned that additional development would overload the foul sewage system which serves the village and asked for more information on the capacity of the system to be provided.
c) Cllr Carter made the point that the existing drainage from Crownhill Gardens has still not been resolved. He asked for confirmation of the status of the sewerage system serving Crown Hill Gardens and whether its capacity was sufficient.
d) Cllr Carter highlighted the difficulty demonstrated by the Bellway planning application to discharge water into the Whitnash Brook which had a limited capacity to absorb fresh water, let alone sewage.
e) Cllr Mrs Treadwell highlighted the continuing difficulties with drainage at the bottom of School Lane where it joins the A425 – the underlying theme is that better drainage should be installed at this point to deal with fresh water and with sewage. The Clerk observed that, in his time in post this had been a perennial problem which had not yet been resolved.

Mr McArthur said he would take these matters back and it was suggested that an article on behalf of Severn Trent Water is written up for the next edition of the Newsletter, particularly with reference to School Lane. It was agreed that Cllr Munn woould continue to be the point of contact with SWT as regards these issues.

3. Apologies for Absence and Declarations of Interest

There were no Declarations of interest.

The Clerk highlighted the issue of the process to be adopted for apologies for absence; this followed his enquiries with WALC on the continued absence of one councillor of this Council. The advice received from WALC, and our Internal Auditor confirmed the rule that the reason for an apology should be noted in the Minutes and a note as to whether Council approved that reason. If a particular councillor failed to give a reason which was approved and this was a continuing state of affairs after a period of six months, the councillor would cease to be a member of the Council.

It was AGREED that the apology for absence from Cllr Friar should be recorded (holidays) and an apology for absence was received from WDC Cllr Ms Davidson due to illness. This was followed by a general discussion concerning repeated absences of Cllr Owain Lloyd-Davies. The Clerk read out a letter received from him with his apologies for absence for this meeting; in it he explained that he had been tied up heavily with work on a specific project (understood to be in preparation of an IT project for the Metropolitan Police). One Cllr commented that this reason had been put forward for many months; the Council were aware that, at previous meetings in recent

DRAFT UNAPPROVED MINUTES

months, no apology had been received. The Clerk said he had written to the Cllr to ask him to consider his position, hence receipt of the letter today. Cllrs expressed their concern with the situation and instructed the Clerk to write in terms to Cllr Lloyd-Davies to advise their views.

4. Approval of the Minutes of the Council meeting on 28th September 2026

The Minutes of the Council meeting on 28th September 2026 were approved, proposed by Cllr Mrs Sanderson and seconded by Cllr Metcalfe.

5. Matters arising from the Minutes of the Council meeting on 28th September 2026

There were no matters arising from the Minutes of the last meeting.

6. Report on SpeedWatch

Cllr Munn spoke in detail arising from his tabled report. He said that it was taking some time with the new Road Safety Officer, Simon Skipp, to bed down in the post. A really thorny issue for their discussion is the enforcement of 20mph speed limit. Cllr Munn is firmly in support of enforcement action but it appears that Officer Skipp is reluctant. It was pointed out that there may be a fatality before enforcement is taken seriously – currently there is an overall policy not to undertake enforcement. He said things could change with a change of the speed limit on the A425 occasioned by Taylor Wimpey's successful planning application and their new development as this will relate to a 30mph limit; the 20mph limits within the Village remain unresolved. Cllr Mrs Malin strongly made the point that ignoring the speed limit on Lewis Road is a serious hazard for users of the road – householders, school children, shoppers etc.

7. Warwickshire County Council – update

WCC Cllr Edwards spoke briefly to the following matters:

a. School Lane traffic improvement is progressing – the installation of dropped kerbs and bollards. The effect of this will reduce the traffic to one lane of traffic which hopefully will inhibit speed.
b. The School are proposing to install traffic mirrors to aid parents dropping and collecting children; he is not sure whether these are legal but the School proposes to proceed.
c. The Taylor Wimpey planning application is still pending; earlier Highways Dept put in a strong objection on the basis of road safety but further review with a suggestion of conditions being imposed on Taylor Wimpey, mean that the planning application may be approved if Highways Dept take a more relaxed attitude.
d. He said that, regretfully, the bridge over the River Leam at Offchurch will be out of action on 18th November 2026 due to road works. There may also be a continuing element if the work overruns.
e. Thought is being given to enforcement of the 20mph in Lewis Road because of its major impact on movement in the Village.

8. Warwick District Council – update

WDC Cllr Ms Davidson sent in an email to be read in her absence and items highlighted by her were:

a. The planting of saplings at the land adjacent to The Cricketers should proceed towards the end of November.
b. The Book of Portraits group asked her to pursue their application for support from the Parish Council; she reported that Rev Martin Green at St Nicholas Church had given his support and granted to the group the use of the Church for the event on 14th March 2027.
c. She referred to items in the press about a suggestion from the Labour Party on power sharing agreements which directly affects WDC; currently there is no further information whether the national Labour Party will remove their power sharing with the Green Party and the effect that this will have on the administration of WDC.

The Clerk said it was appropriate at this stage to review the request from the Book of Portraits group in the absence of WDC Cllr Davidson. The impression he had got at the last Council meeting was that Cllrs would like to consider the proposals further before coming to a conclusion. It is currently proposed to hold an event in the Community Hall on Sunday 22nd November 2026 and an event in the Playing Field on Sunday 14th March 2027. Following discussion, Council affirmed they would like to support the Book of Portraits group with these events Cllr Dempsey said he had entered a booking for the event on Playing Field on 14th March 2027. Cllr Mrs Malin said the event in the Community Hall had been noted. It was AGREED that Cllr Mrs Treadwell would be the liaison person for the Council to deal with the Book of Portraits group.

DRAFT UNAPPROVED MINUTES

9. Financial Matters

1) The Clerk highlighted that the second part of the Precept had been received just after the last Council meeting. This was reflected in the bank reconciliation statement; he had transferred £15,000 from the Community Account to the investment account to earn interest. The balance on the investment account was approximately £91,400 and the balance on the community account was approximately £3,700; the big change in the balances was occasioned by receipt of the second part of the Precept.
2) The Clerk said three payments had been made since the last Council meeting; Cllr Friar considered that the invoice for the Newsletter should be paid promptly because of the quality of the publication and its impact on the community. He and the Clerk felt that the final invoice for Mr Wagstaff should be settled promptly as it was good of him to undertake the final cut. Cllr Friar had ordered a new dog waste bin for The Valley from Wybone and that required payment in advance. Four invoices were entered by Paul Rawlings for miscellaneous work commissioned by Cllr Dempsey; he confirmed that the figures were all correct and corresponded to quotes given by Mr Rawlings several months earlier. The Clerk raised the issue of an invoice which PC King was surprised to receive from the Community Hall; the Clerk's impression was that the Community Hall were going to host PC King's event on 7th November free of cost. Following discussion, the Council agreed to pay the invoice. The payments were approved, proposed by Cllr Munn and seconded by Cllr Ms Minhas-Gill.
3) Cllr Friar had circulated a report comprising an initial proposal for the Budget for 2027/8 to be considered by Council in his absence. Summarised, he proposed that the new Budget should show an increase of 4% on the previous year; this was a figure arrived at a recent meeting of the Finance Committee and Clerk. The Council confirmed their agreement to this; it will be reviewed further when Cllr Friar has completed the Budget paperwork following publication by WDC of the tax base at the end of November.

10. Items of current relevance for review

An outline of the matters follows:

a. Following a report of the damage to the bus shelter, the Clerk had approached a local person to undertake repairs but had not had a response. Cllr Mrs Sanderson suggested the name of someone else whom she will approach
b. Following the order for the dog waste bin in The Valley, the Clerk noted, in Cllr Friar's absence, the bin would be delivered to the Clerk's home.
c. the householder at 61 School Lane had contacted the Clerk. She was concerned that unsavoury activity had been carried on at 63 School Lane and, although not exactly a matter for this Council, it was agreed that the Clerk should ask PC Ed King to take the matter on board.
d. The Clerk referred to his report at the last Council meeting on an email from Gary Fisher at WDC about changes in planning application procedures. This follows the Government's new regulation that planning officers should deal with many applications without referring them to the Planning Committee. He understood that this new procedure is to come into force on 1st November 2026 but to date no further communication has been received by the Clerk as to its implementation.
e. The Clerk had received a memorandum from WDC reporting that its review of off street parking charges is underway (the implication being the charges would increase) but no decision has yet been formulated.

11. Current Planning Matters

Cllr Carter spoke briefly to his detailed tabled report:

A. Applications

1. W/25/1716 Taylor Wimpey proposed site – this application for 125 dwellings is still pending. Although Highways Dept originally objected to the access arrangements, the WDC Planning Policy team have no basic objection Reports have been submitted on transport and sewage which suggest that Highways Dept's concerns can be met. The response from Severn Trent Water indicates they are content with the potential drainage of surface water.

2. W/25/0130 Land at the rear of 38-44 Offchurch Lane; this application is ongoing.

3. Update on Bellway Homes application – the issue regarding the Whitnash brook remains uncertain. They resubmitted their application for consent and it was agreed that the Council should submit a further objection.

4. W/26/1240 – 6 Gillingham Way – this has been granted.

DRAFT UNAPPROVED MINUTES

5. W/26/1093 - Dunbar House, Southam Road – an application has been filed to build a large extension but due to the location of the property, he can see no reason to object.

6. W/26/1327 – Leasowe House, Southam Road – an application has now been filed regarding the basement of the property to install a swimming pool. Arguably there are no grounds to object as it will not be visible.

B. Update on the South Warwickshire Local Plan - currently no input is required from this Council on the content of the South Warwickshire Local Plan which is being considered by the relevant District Councils.

12. Playing Field Report

Cllr Dempsey spoke briefly to his tabled report.

a. RoSPA have now produced their two part report following their annual inspection with a number of items which need attention. The report has been circulated around the Council.
b. He is working on finding a new mowing contractor to succeed Mr Wagstaff. He received a quotation from Paul Rawlings (tabled with the Clerk) but Cllr Dempsey wishes to compare this with other quotations (say, two or three) which he is in the process of obtaining. He calculates from records that 12/13 cuts a year will be necessary.
c. He indicated that work is underway to install a new 5 a side playing area with the assistance of Steve Hitchcox.

13. Update on Community Hall

In the absence of a tabled report, Cllr Mrs Malin spoke very briefly that events at the Hall were going successfully. The husband of her assistant, Debbie Gulliver, has now retired and he has been commissioned to paint the Hall as he has the time to do it.

14. Update on Sports & Social Club

Cllr Mrs Malin, in the absence of a tabled report, said there was no concerted details to report concerning the Club. Cllr Friar in his capacity as Treasurer of the Community Hall works very hard in liaison with the Treasurer of the Club but their finances continue to be poor.

15. Report on Environmental Matters

Cllr Mrs Sanderson spoke briefly to her tabled report. The main issue is a project to create a plug plant section of the wildflower meadow on the Playing Field with the assistance of Warwickshire Wildlife Trust. She had undertaken various projects with them in the past successfully; the cost of the work will be potentially funded by a grant which WWT have received. Somewhat disconcertingly, WWT have sent a draft written agreement to her with a request that it be signed on behalf of this Council. She had referred the draft agreement to Cllr Friar and the Clerk. So far she has not had a comment from Cllr Friar but has received a detailed legal analysis from the Clerk. He has made a number of points which she proposes to put tactfully to WWT. The Clerk said he thought the content of the agreement was AI produced and had not been given much thought. Cllr Mrs Sanderson said she was considering whether to proceed with WWT or whether this Council should undertake the work on its own.

16. Any other business

The Clerk, with the concurrence of Cllr Carter, raised the current issue of opening up the pathway on the Viaduct over the canal for public use; an email had been received from Judy Steele on behalf of FoRGE It appears that Historic Railways England which owns the Viaduct have requested that a body takes a licence to manage the path over the Viaduct which would then be opened to the public. This does not involve being responsible for the structure of the Viaduct which will remain with Historic Railways England. She expressed the view that FoRGE is not a suitable organisation to take the licence as their constitution does not cover such responsibility and that the Parish Council could be a most suitable body to do this.
In conjunction with the Clerk, Cllr Carter said it was a complex issue and needed a lot of thought. Cllr Friar had already raised a couple of points on it; Cllr Carter said it could well be a suitable case for WCC to take over the management of the pathway as they have the staff and facilities to manage highways, pathways and other places of public access. WCC Cllr Edwards said he would look into the question and make enquiries as to whether it was feasible.

DRAFT UNAPPROVED MINUTES

It was AGREED that Cllr Carter, in conjunction with the Clerk and Cllr Friar, would review the matter and report back. In the interim, the Clerk will advise Mrs Steele of the position.

17. Date of next Council meeting

The date of the next meeting is 30th November 2026; this meeting closed at 9.35pm.

Signed……. Date …… November 2026
Chairman of the Council Meeting

Counter signed……. Date …… November 2026
Clerk

DRAFT UNAPPROVED MINUTES