

Semer Parish Council

Minutes of Parish Council meeting held at Semer Village Hall on Wednesday 19th May 2021.
(Includes the Annual Parish Meeting)

Councillors attending:

Richard Keens (Chairman), James Pitcher, Trevor Mitchell (Retiring Clerk), Sancha Keens (Acting Clerk)

Apologies received from Jackie Barraclough, Robert Thorogood and John Lawrence who has agreed to join the Council with effect from the 16th June.

Also attending in response to the letter delivered to Whatfield and Semer Residents along the route of the proposed Quiet Lanes were three Whatfield Residents who wished to discuss the Quiet Lanes initiative.

1. Chairman Welcome.
2. Minutes of the meeting of 13th January 2021 were read and approved
3. The Annual Accounts were approved. The Clerk has submitted the Certificate of Exemption to the Auditors PFK Littlejohn and placed copies of the accounts on the website.
4. Quiet Lanes Update - Three members from Whatfield Parish attended the meeting to discuss and find out more about the proposed Quiet Lanes. The Clerk had also received a number of e-mails from residents all of which were very enthusiastic about the project. It was discussed whether the route was to include Semer Road, Whatfield as the map provided was unclear. Trevor verified that this road was included. Questions were asked into the legalities of the Quiet Lanes and if / how they would be enforced. Trevor advised the meeting that the lanes are governed by the Highway Code Rule 218 and although there are no speed restrictions motorists should drive slowly and with care and respect for other users. There will be a publicity campaign to raise awareness. A question was asked on the positioning of the signs and it was agreed that in Whatfield the signage should be erected after the 30mph speed limit signs. *(The Clerk has now written to the QLS Team to confirm this)* The cost of the project was also discussed. Trevor suggested that everyone look at the website – www.quietlanessuffolk.co.uk he will continue to manage the Quiet Lanes initiative until it is completed. Both Whatfield and Semer Parish Councils fully support the designation of the proposed Quiet Lanes.
5. Planning:
 - Chapel Meadow House, Cookes Hill - Erection of two storey rear extension.
(Babergh Planning advised that Semer Parish Council have no objections - approved 31.03.21)

- Dove House, Ash Street - Erection of a two-storey front porch and first floor extension to create access to first floor rooms. *(Babergh Planning advised that Semer Parish Council have no objections. The original application was withdrawn but has been resubmitted with some minor alterations)*
 - Hollow Trees Farm Shop - Minor amendments to New Farm Trail Kiosk etc. *(This planning application has now been approved)*
 - The Hollies, Ash Street - First floor extension to the existing single storey building, demolition of existing garage and erection of a new two bay garage with accommodation above. *(Babergh Planning advised the Semer Parish Council object to this application in its current format. The plans show floor to ceiling windows in the gable ends of the proposed first floor and a large first floor roof terrace both these features overlook neighbouring properties. The Council have concerns regarding neighbour's privacy and sound carrying across the area from the roof terrace. The design is also not in keeping with existing properties in Ash Street. (This application has now been withdrawn)*
6. Speed Limit of 40mph on Union Hill - Suffolk Highways have sent a plan of the proposed road markings and signage to slow the traffic, and after resident's comments SCC have now agreed to add additional 'slow' road markings and signs at the top of Union Hill. This is a welcomed step towards slowing the traffic.
 7. Heavy Goods Sign at bottom of Watson's Hill - Richard has looked at the sign to check for its condition and has deemed it to be acceptable.
 8. Repairs to the Village Sign - the repairs have been completed and the sign has been reinstated with the consensus that the sign looks fantastic. Many thanks so Richard and Sally Keens.
 9. Bench Seat on the Church Meadow - the bench has been secured in place and is being enjoyed by many.
 10. The Church Meadow Bank Account - Richard has transferred the remaining balance in the account to The Parish Council Bank Account leaving a few pounds in the account. Everyone is in agreement with this in view of the recent difficulties when the bank closes the account due to it being inactive. The bank account is registered with the Charity Commission.
 11. Cutting of Hedges at the Church Meadow - this was carried out for the parish by Dairy Farm. The Clerk has written to the to thank them.
 12. Semer Village Recorders Research - Michael Thorogood's research on the history of Semer is currently kept by him. It was discussed whether someone within the village would be prepared to take on the Recorders role and maintain the archive of information it was thought that Sandy Davies might be interested or possibly Robert Thorogood would be prepared to maintain the archive. To be followed up.

13. New 'Semer Village Sign' at the bottom of Union Hill - there were discussions into the most suitable sign, a wooden gate style with a 'welcome to Semer' sign attached is one idea. Trevor will speak to Trident Marketing about price and style as at a meeting a few months ago they said that they had a contact who made road signage. It was mentioned whether any of the other village signs need replacing. Richard will look at the two other locations as space at each of these is limited.
14. Dates for meetings in the coming year:
- Wednesday 16th June 2021
 - Wednesday 15th September 2021
 - Wednesday 15th December 2021
 - Wednesday 16th March 2022
15. Tractor and Tractor ride - Dairy Farm will be holding their yearly farm tour on Tuesday 6th July at 6.30pm from Dairy Farm. Sancha will organise.
16. Sudbury Cycle Club - Watsons Hill will be closed for the cycle clubs annual hill climb on 10 October 2021. A notice has been put on the village noticeboard to inform residents.
17. Trevor Mitchell retirement - Trevor is retiring as Clerk to Semer Parish Council. Sancha Keens has agreed to take on the role until a permanent candidate can be found.

The next meeting will be held on 16th June 2021 at 7pm at the Village Hall.

The meeting closed at 8pm.

Signed

Dated