

Minutes of Semilong Community Forum meeting

May 14th 2008

Present: Daphne Barritt, Ann Timpson, Caroline Humphries, Robert and Mrs A Briggs, Caroline Humphries, Tess Scott (Cllr), Stephen Welyczko, Brian Crutchley, Robert Chadwick, Jen and Mike Kenny, Mrs Thompson, Ray (PCSO) Andy Langton (NHW), Marie Cocker (PCSO), Tony Clarke (Cllr), Zoë Martin, Ally Dunn

Apologies: Michelle Aveyard, Steven Richards, Jack Thompson, Stephen Welyczko, Ruth Potts-Negrene, Andy Langton,

Abbreviations Used:

SCF - Semilong Community Forum

NBC - Northampton Borough Council

NCC - Northampton County Council

AGYCC - Alliston gardens Youth and Community Centre

MUGA - Multi Use Games Area

WNDC - West Northamptonshire Development Corporation

PCSO - Police Community Support Officer

FOR - Friends of the Racecourse

NHW - Neighbourhood Warden

JAG - Joint Action Group

HMO - Houses of Multi Occupation

The meeting opened at 7:38pm and was chaired by Zoe Martin

The minutes of the last meeting were agreed.

Matters arising from the last meeting

Actions

TS spoke to planning department as there was an issue over a fire escape from the property in the rear garden. It will be 4, not 5 units. NBC planning can stop people from building in their garden. TC had complaints about the plans. He objected under the density of the plans. The planning officer conceded that density was an issue in Semilong and that the plans should be rejected again but applicant is re-applying

In addition to the issue over planning TC said that he objected to the application being for 4.

There had been an application in 2002 for 6 units which was approved but this was for the sites of no6 and no7 Hester Street. The application for 28 Hester Street for 6 units had been refused and TC felt that NBC Planning were now stipulating that homes of that size would not be split up into more than 3 units. This should reduce the number of inappropriate planning applications.

Neighbourhood Warden

AL was not present

Finance

No change - account stands at £489.73

AGYCC

No Update

Urban

RC spoke on the objection of plans for St George's St. The planning committee meets on 20th May and the plans are looking like they are to be approved. If anyone wants to object they still can before 20th

Action - Ally to circulate the link for objections to be sent to.

TC said that the original application was for 90/100 units. The new application is likely to be approved as it was for a reduced number and there was a need for housing on brown field sites in the town.

Section 106 money could be used to pay for the barrier wanted by residents for St George's St but so far the council has failed to apply for any money

St George's School update. a stage 1 complaint was lodged to the council by TC and over 100 individuals connected to the school. They were unsatisfied with the council's response so they asked for the complaint to go to stage 2. TC received an email today 14th May from NCC saying that they did not feel that they could resolve the matter satisfactorily so asked them to take their complaint to the ombudsman. TC stated that this was unprecedented as the council should endeavour to resolve the complaint by firstly exhausting their own complaints procedure before going to the ombudsman. TC has replied asking them to stick with their complaints procedure first.

Ray asked if there was not a health and Safety question over the current state of affairs with the traffic at the school. he has heard of businesses in Quorn way getting their own H&S assessment done and could this same assessment be done for the school to back up their case for a barrier and tighter traffic controls.

AD asked where the money would come from to pay for the assessment.

Ray suggested CASPAR+ or community chest monies might be available.

Action - Ray to find possible company to carry out assessment

Semilong Census

Action - ZM and RC to finalise the blank format for the census

Dispersal Order

TS stated that the dispersal order for Ash Street was now to include the sorting office. It came into effect from last Tuesday 6th May and would be for 6 months

Environment Green

BC asked if anyone wanted to do more bulb planting as he might be able to secure some for no charge. Some could be used for AGYCC and the Memorial garden.

Steve Summers of FOTRC had passed to the Forum the master plan for the Racecourse redevelopment, which was circulated.

AD said that objections had been ignored and that there had been no consultation over the new concrete seating which was also a sub-project of the FOTRC and would the new plans be pushed through in the same way?

Several members of the Forum also stated their objections to the new seating.

TS suggested that everyone wrote their objections to the proposed plans to the council.

Action - ZM to invite the FOTRC to the next meeting to discuss the plans with the

Forum.

ZM had asked to be included in planning for the art work and had never been contacted.

Action - TS to find out what planning permission was needed to erect seating of that size on the Racecourse

Climate Friendly Communities meeting

ZM reported that she and RC and AD had attended the meeting at Sixfields and although the project was a great idea, it was probably more suitable for rural communities and not easy to apply in an area like Semilong. However, there was the possibility of getting some free energy saving bulbs and an on-line carbon assessment done for Semilong residents. ZM circulated the information from the meeting. The Forum had been invited to apply for a £200 kick start fund which could be used to ascertain if the project could be run in Semilong. ZM asked if anyone wanted to work on the project.

Action - JK, TS, TC and ZM to form a working party for the bid. ZM to approach CFC for more information

TC also stated that a home energy audit was available

Health

MA no present. Flyers for the Health Event on the Racecourse had not been delivered by the company employed with the task.

Communication

BC reported that there had been an article on the Chronicle Newspaper about how good Semilong is. The article was circulated.

ZM reported that although the article was good it had been countered by a negative article about Hester St on 18th April

Crime

Ray had no figures to quote. Sgt Paul Valentine had left Campbell Square and moved to Daventry. Louise Simpson was the new Sergeant for Semilong.

There were 3 Change Course courses booked for June. These courses were for curb crawlers and there would be 10 on each course. There had been some instances of anti-social behaviour at the MUGA so patrols had increased in the area. 3 new priorities had been identified at the last JAG meeting. The main objective locally was to reduce street drinking in St James' area.

The SMART water project was on hold but it would still involve Semilong. The local community was to be involved in dispersing SMART water in the local area. The police were looking for volunteers to take part.

AD asked how volunteers would be vetted and managed for their own protection from accusations and also to protect vulnerable householders.

Action - Ray to take question back to Campbell Square.

RC asked if the Fire service had been invited to take part.

Action - Ray to find out

AOB

Welcome packs. ZM had no update

RC stated that estate agents could be mis-selling the area. Maybe Estate agents

could pass out the Welcome Packs to new residents?

ZM asked if other areas had similar packs

TS said that some villages did

Action - TS to try to get hold of a village Welcome pack

TC stated that Estate Agent welcome packs were quite commercial and there was a charge for being included in the packs. TC suggested the best way to make a pack was by ourselves.

JK suggested starting with a couple of streets to trial the idea first.

ZM suggested approaching the co-op and other local businesses to offer vouchers to new residents in the welcome pack.

Action - BC to draw up a list of local businesses and write to them to ask if they would like to be involved.

Ruth Pott-Negrene (via BC) asked if there were any stories for use in the Chronicle.

Ray reported a concern over the broken fence at the bottom of St Andrew's Road.

The forum was also worried by this as it could pose a Health and Safety problem for children and adults using the path.

Action - the Crime prevention officer to write to the council with their concerns.

Date of Next Meeting

11th June

Meeting closed at 8:55pm