**Minutes of the Maiden Erlegh Residents Association Executive Committee held at 8pm on Thursday 10 January 2019 at the Kenton Road Day Centre, Kenton Road, Earley**

**Present**

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| Colin Mair (Chairman/Area 3) | Peter Woodward (Vice Chairman/Area 1) |
| Pamela Tames (Treasurer) | Steve Feltham (Secretary) |
| Jonathan Brown (Magazine/Editorial Team) | Patricia Brown (Magazine/Editorial Team) |
| Jean Beck (Area 12) | Anne Booth (Area 9) |
| Rosemary Cook (Area 11) | Pamela Roberts (Area 10) |
| Celia Smith (Area 6) | Peter Soul (EASI) |
| Ray Jones (resident) | Jenny Lissaman (ACER) |
| Cllr Chopping (Elected member) |  |

**Apologies received**

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| James Barr (Area 13) | Elaine Spratling (Area 4) |
| Siyu Smith (Area 2) | Tim Smith (Area 2) |
| Barbara Stansfield (Area 8) | Brian Hackett (resident) |
| Mary Bather (ACER) |  |

**MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING HELD ON 13 DECEMBER 2018**

The minutes of the meeting held on 13 December 2018 were accepted and signed as a correct record.

**MATTERS ARISING**

**Maiden Erlegh Library**

The Secretary confirmed that he had written to Cllr Grandison to suggest that the proposed consultation in respect of the suggested ‘pop-up’ library be carried out by Wokingham Borough Council through their website.

**Lakeside subsidence**

Peter Soul stated that following work carried out to replace the kerbstones at the dip in the road in Lakeside which was reported to Highways recently, it was now more obvious that there was some pronounced subsidence of the road which may have worsened since the last inspection. The Chairman agreed and stated that the dip was very noticeable when driving over it. He considered this to be quite serious and advised the committee that he had reported the matter to the Highways Department of Wokingham Borough Council.

**Earley Community Orchard**

The Secretary advised that there had been no confirmation to date that the commitment to consult on the use of the field opposite the Pavilion would be honoured by the new Town Clerk once ownership of the land transferred to Earley Town Council. The Secretary advised that he would continue to seek this assurance and report back to the committee once received.

**Community & Youth Sub Committee**

The Secretary reported that the Town Clerk had confirmed that questions would continue to be permitted at the commencement of all meetings, and that a note to this effect now appeared on all agendas. However, it was suggested that it would probably be more appropriate if the questions were related to the theme of the meeting. The Committee was of the view that this being the case, it would be helpful if the theme was announced at the prior meeting of each Community & Youth Sub Committee to enable views to be obtained in relation to the selected theme. The Secretary confirmed that he would raise this at the next Sub Committee meeting.

**NORA**

The Chairman confirmed that the Secretary had circulated the promised information on planning reforms aimed at supporting high streets to meet the demands of the 21st century.

**MERA Constitution**

The Chairman confirmed that the amendments suggested at the last meeting were incorporated within the second draft of the proposed constitution document. Additionally, further suggestions had been received from Peter Soul and Jonathan Brown.

**AGREED:** The amendments be incorporated within the third draft and re-circulated for a final debate at the next meeting.

**NAG meeting: lost property and litter**

The Secretary advised that as Peter Soul had circulated a link to a web site explaining the current national police position on lost property, he had not written to Julie Susel about the matter. The Secretary confirmed that he would circulate the link to all members of the Committee with the minutes. He suggested that this could be a suitable item for the next MERA magazine.

The committee’s attention was drawn to the initiative taken by McDonald’s area manager regarding litter. Peter Soul had clarified that McDonald’s were not seeking a full time litter picker, but a maintenance person who would have litter picking duties included as part of their remit. Peter Soul had offered his assistance in publicising the position.

**Earley Town Council – Readibus**

The Chairman stated that following the concerns expressed regarding Readibus at the last meeting, the Secretary had written to Cllr Chopping to establish whether Wokingham Borough Council would be likely to fund the use of bus passes for Wokingham residents. This query was passed on to Cllr Grandison for a response.

**Speaker for AGM**

The Chairman reminded the Committee that a speaker was required for the next meeting of the AGM in May 2019. Following discussion, it was agreed that the Chief Executive Officer of Reading Buses should be invited, given the degree of interest in the bus services by residents.

**AGREED:** That the Secretary write to the CEO of Reading Buses to establish whether he would be willing to be MERA’s guest speaker at the next AGM. Failing this, an invitation would be sent to the Parking Enforcement Manager of Wokingham Borough Council. Should neither of these invitations be accepted, the Secretary was authorised to liaise with James Barr to arrange for a speaker on beekeeping.

**REPORTS**

**Chairman’s Report**

The Chairman updated the position in relation to a property on Silverdale Road as reported at the last meeting. The Committee noted that a review of the revised decision that the property concerned did not require planning permission was currently being undertaken.

**Treasurer’s Report**

The Treasurer reported that following the collection of subscription monies, she was able to confirm that MERA currently had 875 members. The Treasurer confirmed that she was planning to speak to Don Box to confirm that he was still willing to audit MERA’s accounts in respect of the 2018/19 financial year.

**CONSULTATIONS**

The Chairman reported that there were three further items currently under consultation by Wokingham Borough Council. These related to ways in which the Wokingham Borough News Magazine could be improved; the update to the council’s local plan; and the new arts and culture strategy. Full details would be provided to members with the circulation of the minutes.

There was some discussion relating to the Wokingham Borough News Magazine, as some residents had complained that they had not received their copies. Peter Soul confirmed that he would pass details of the houses not covered from information he had received in the expectation that they would now be given their copies. Anne Booth suggested that copies of the magazine should also be available at libraries.

The Chairman also stated that an e-petition concerning the safety of Market Place, Wokingham, had been lodged on the Wokingham Borough Council web site. The Earley parking petition had closed with only 13 supporters and the wheelie bin petition had collected 237 signatures. Cllr Chopping advised that neither of these petitions would be implemented as the number of signatures collected was insufficient. Cllr Chopping advised that a new company would be taking over the waste contract from April 2019, and that this was when the food waste collection service would begin. Wheelie bins were not likely to be introduced in the foreseeable future because the use of them did not encourage recycling, which was an important consideration for the council.

Pamela Tames was concerned that one of the refuse collectors was known to have been mixing the blue bags with the recycling rubbish when filling the refuse vehicle although she was not sure whether this practice was continuing to this day. She was advised to check whether this was still occurring, and if so, Cllr Chopping was happy to have the matter taken up with the new company to ensure that this did not happen in the future.

Finally, it was pointed out that Balfour Beatty had sent out a pamphlet outlining the major roads that would be built under a new contract issued to them by Wokingham Borough Council. The leaflet contained information on how to contact them for further information.

**CORRESPONDENCE**

**Complaint**

The Secretary advised that a complaint had been received in relation to an article that had appeared in the Autumn edition of the MERA Magazine. He would liaise with the Chairman and the Magazine Editor before responding to the complainant.

**NEW ITEMS**

**Review of parking**

The Secretary stated that a full review of parking in the Borough was to be undertaken by the council this spring and it would be appropriate to discuss the issues that MERA would wish the council to consider. Members were asked to think about this prior to a debate at the next meeting.

**ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

**Woodley and North Earley Community Forum: 5 December 2018**

The Secretary provided a summary of the main items of note from the Woodley and North Earley Community Forum held on 5 December 2018. The minutes of this meeting were available on request from the Secretary.

**ACER**

The Secretary reported that the Chair of ACER, Michelle Stone, had moved away from the area and that Sion Williams had taken over as caretaker Chairman until the next AGM.

**Maiden Erlegh – new polling station**

The Secretary reported that the council had announced that Aldryngton Primary School had been designated as the polling place for the Maiden Erlegh Ward from May 2019. Cllr Chopping stated that this arrangement was intended to cover this year only initially and that ideas for alternative venues would be appreciated.

**Silverdale Centre**

The Secretary drew attention to an item in the ‘Focus’ magazine distributed to all residents. He stated that there was never any intention that the Centre would be closed, and yet the fact confirmation had been received that there was no intention to close it had been developed into a headline. He asked Area Representatives to ensure that residents who were concerned about the future of the Centre were reassured that there never were any plans to close this amenity.

**Beech Lane**

The Secretary advised the committee that Brian Hackett had written to point out a number of issues relating to Beech Lane, which he would be investigating over the weekend.

There being no further business, the meeting was closed at 9.15pm.

**DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING**

Thursday 14 February 2019 at 8pm.