**Minutes of the Maiden Erlegh Residents’ Association Executive Committee (online) held at 8pm on Thursday 10 June 2021**

**Present**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Colin Mair (Chairman/Area 3) | Ryan Yao-Smith (Treasurer) |
| Steve Feltham (Secretary) | Jonathan Brown (Editor) |
| Anne Booth (Area 9) | Rosemary Cook (Area 11) |
| John Saunders (Area 13) | Elaine Spratling (Area 4) |

**In the Chair: Colin Mair**

**Apologies received**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Peter Woodward (Vice Chairman/Area 1) | Edwin Trout (Editorial Team) |
| Judy Clark (Area 5) | Pamela Roberts (Area 10) |
| Celia Smith (Area 6) | Barbara Stansfield (Area 8) |
| Tim Marsh (ACER) |  |

**MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on 13 May 2021 were agreed as a correct record.

**MATTERS ARISING**

**Borough Planning and Design Guide**

The Chairman advised that the proposal for the planting of trees on grass verges had been considered by Earley Town Council and that the Town Clerk had offered a letter of support for the idea. The Lead Member for Climate Change and officers of Wokingham Borough Council would now be contacted to establish whether the matter could be taken further. The committee was informed that there was no reason why the proposal could not be extended to the whole of Maiden Erlegh where grass verges existed.

John Saunders stated that The Crescent could also be included in this scheme if the Borough Council approved the idea.

The Committee was reminded that any further ideas for environmental improvements should be submitted to the Secretary.

**Cycle rack at Tesco**

The Secretary suggested that a brief item be prepared for the MERA Magazine on Tesco’s offer to permit customers to have their bicycles locked in the warehouse until the cycle rack was installed. Rosemary Cook observed that the provision of a cycle rack was a requirement of the planning permission.

**Bulmershe allotments**

The Committee was advised that John Saunders had provided the information requested by Earley Town Council in relation to the Bulmershe allotments. Further information had been requested and the Secretary would liaise with John Saunders on the matter.

**Water leakage at a Lakeside property**

The Committee was advised that the Town Clerk had expressed concerns regarding the proposal to discharge the leaking water into the lake, and an alternative proposal to direct the water to a drain was suggested. Concern was also expressed about reports that there were chemicals present in the water, and permission for discharge into the lake would not be granted if this were to be the case.

An update had been requested from the Borough Council’s drainage engineer.

**Tesco lorries using Sevenoaks Road**

The Secretary stated that he had provided a letter to be sent to the resident in her area who had complained about Tesco lorries using Sevenoaks Road. The letter explained that information including the date and time of such sightings, and if possible the name on the side of the lorry and number plate, should be recorded so that such issues could be investigated. A form was provided for the purpose of such recording for the future.

**Wokingham Veteran Tree Association**

The Secretary reported that Rosemary Cook had provided a link to the website that identified the location of trees that had Tree Preservation Orders attached to them. This was circulated to all committee members following the last meeting.

**REPORTS**

**Chairman’s Report**

The Chairman advised that he had nothing to report on this occasion.

**Treasurer’s Report**

The Treasurer confirmed that MERA’s finances remained strong and that the reserve account was growing slowly with interest. The main account was steady and all but one advertisers had paid for the advertisements which appeared in the last edition of the magazine.

**Editorial Report**

The Magazine Editor reminded the committee that the copy date for items for the next edition of the magazine was 20 June.

**CONSULTATIONS**

There were no additional consultations to draw to the committee’s attention.

**CORRESPONDENCE**

**NORA**

The latest correspondence from NORA had been circulated to the committee for information.

**Proposed legislation on 5G masts and equipment**

The Chairman advised the committee that a resident had drawn attention to a consultation document that proposed to amend the rules relating to applications to deploy radio masts and equipment up to specified limits without the need to seek planning permission.

The Chairman was of the view that this was not an issue for MERA as local residents did not appear to be particularly concerned with such matters, pointing to the recent Sol Joel proposal which did not generate any interest locally. He stated that this was better regarded as a matter for individuals to provide their views.

**NEW ITEMS**

**Reading University**

The Secretary advised that an update on the easing of restrictions and the impact on Reading University had been received. The Secretary would provide members with copies of this information if requested.

**On-street parking**

The committee was advised that Tim Marsh had submitted a paper on behalf of ACER to Wokingham Borough Council relating to on-street parking and he had kindly offered to permit MERA to use the work they had done for an item in the next MERA magazine.

**Hedge on Lakeside**

The Secretary reported that Brian Hackett had written to him to observe that the hedge between the lake and the road at Lakeside was very overgrown and needed to be cut back. The committee was advised that MERA had pointed out this fact to the Park Ranger in previous years, but the response was that the hedge would not be cut back until all the nesting birds had left. However, just before the meeting, it was noted that work had commenced on the hedge, and this would be monitored.

**ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

**Planning notices**

Rosemary Cook reported that she was concerned that applications for planning permission were not being displayed at properties in some cases. Although Wokingham Borough Council should be sending postcards to the occupiers of neighbouring properties of adjoining buildings, this was not always happening. In a survey of 40 cases, only 4 were found to have been properly notified. Applications in respect of homes of multiple occupation were of particular concern. Members were asked if Area Representatives could check on whether householders were being notified of planning applications in relation to neighbouring properties. Any information should be sent to Rosemary Cook or alternatively, Earley Town Council.

**Former MERA Area Representative**

Anne Booth raised a question about a former Area Representative who had been ill and whose house had now been sold. The Secretary stated that he would see if he could establish the position. Elaine Spratling thought that the former member was now a resident of a care home.

**DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING**

8 July 2021. The Chairman confirmed that if all remaining pandemic restrictions were lifted on 21 June 2021, it should be possible to convene the July meeting at the Kenton Road Day Centre. Further information would be circulated by the Secretary.

There being no further business, the meeting was closed at 8.30pm.