**Minutes of the Maiden Erlegh Residents Association Executive Committee held at 8pm on Thursday 12 July 2018 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) |
| Steve Feltham (Secretary) | Pamela Tames (Treasurer) |
| Jonathan Brown (Magazine/Editorial Team) | Anne Booth (Area 9) |
| Judy Clark (Area 5) | Pamela Roberts (Area 10) |
| Celia Smith (Area 6) | Ray Jones |
| Jennifer Lissaman (ACER) |  |

**Apologies received**

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| Patricia Brown (Magazine/Editorial Team) | James Barr (Area 13) |
| Jean Beck (Area 12) | Rosemary Cook (Area 11) |
| Siyu and Tim Smith (Area 2) | Barbara Stansfield (Area 8) |
| Brian Hackett | Peter Soul (EASI) |
| Mary Bather (ACER) |  |

**MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING HELD ON 14 JUNE 2018**

The minutes of the meeting held on 14 June 2018 were accepted as a correct record.

**MATTERS ARISING**

**Silverdale Road bus service consultation**

The Secretary confirmed that the Woodley/Earley bus service tender had resulted in a new contract being awarded to Reading Buses. The 19a/c service for Silverdale Road would return under these arrangements, and the route formerly in place would be reinstated. Rush hour services would be provided, albeit at only hourly intervals, and the bizarre gaps in the afternoon timetable on Mondays to Fridays would not appear in the new timetable, which was already available. The Secretary stated that Wokingham Borough Council had clearly listened to the complaints received from residents.

However, this welcome news was tempered by the fact that the Brookside Close bus stop would remain unserved and there would be no link to Hatch Farm Way, Sainsbury’s and Wokingham. Additionally, although new vehicles would be allocated to the route, these would be the Alexander Dennis Enviro 200 models. There had been complaints received from residents about the suitability of these vehicles, but the new buses had been described as ‘low floor single deck vehicles’ with a seating capacity of 30 and fully wheelchair accessible. This appeared to indicate that the steps that had to be negotiated to walk to the main seating area would not be present in the new vehicles.

The Secretary also revealed that Reading Buses had announced the previous evening that the Lower Earley section of the service 22 route would be withdrawn, as advised by Brian Hackett at the previous meeting and subsequently denied by Reading Buses. This section of route would be replaced by the 19b, with the route as far as Asda previously in place on this service restored. The vehicles used would be the same type as for the 19a/c.

The new routes 19a/b/c would be introduced on 3 September 2018.

**Graffiti**

The meeting was advised that Peter Baveystock had been requested to follow up the complaint regarding graffiti on the Virgin Media telecommunications box on the cycleway between Lakeside and Beech Lane.

**Consultation**

The Secretary advised that two separate public meetings had been arranged by Wokingham Borough Council for the presentation of their proposed Minerals and Waste Plan. The meetings would be held between 7pm and 9pm on 18 July at Arborfield Green Leisure Centre and the same time on 24 July at Knowl Hill Village Hall. The associated public consultation would take place between August and October 2018.

**Pedestrian hazard at Tesco entrance and exit points**

The Secretary advised that he had written to Wokingham Borough Council regarding the safety issues in Silverdale Road and a response was awaited. He thanked Cllr Chopping for his assistance in dealing with this matter.

**Maiden Erlegh library**

The Committee was informed that Wokingham Council’s Executive Member for Environment, Leisure and Libraries announced at the Executive Meeting on 28 June 2018 that the closure of Maiden Erlegh Library would have only a small impact on residents’ ability to access library services due to the proximity of alternative libraries that were open for substantially longer hours per week.

It became clear that only six pensioners used Maiden Erlegh Library exclusively, and the library staff were concentrating on those people to assess whether they were still able to access services. It was also stated by the Executive Member that the vast majority of people who currently used the library were school pupils and their immediate families, and therefore this was largely a school issue.

In view of this announcement, it now appeared that no money would be made available to establish a replacement library in Maiden Erlegh. Tesco had not responded to MERA’s proposal that the upstairs of their store could be used for this purpose.

The Secretary stated that he would raise the issue at the next meeting of the Community and Youth Sub Committee of Earley Town Council at its meeting on 18 July 2018.

**New data protection legislation**

The Secretary requested that any outstanding forms be returned to him when they were received, having first ensured that the information provided matched their records.

**Retirement of Town Clerk**

The meeting was advised that the retirement card and cheque for Philip Truppin would be delivered to the Earley Town Council after the meeting on the following day.

**Lakeside subsidence**

The Secretary confirmed that he had written to Wokingham Borough Council about the possible subsidence issue in Lakeside and an inspector had been assigned to investigate this.

**Involvement of councillors on MERA Executive Committee**

The Chairman drew attention to a point raised by Brian Hackett that part of the Maiden Erlegh area beyond the lake towards Instow Road was not represented by Maiden Erlegh councillors as this was part of Hillside Ward. Consequently, it was proposed that the invitation for those elected members to attend MERA’s Executive Committee should be extended to them.

Some concern was expressed that MERA’s meetings could become dominated by elected members and that it might be better if one elected member represented all those members serving the Maiden Erlegh area. The importance of MERA being able to conduct its business in an unfettered way was stressed.

The Secretary emphasised that the sensitivity of elected members attending residents’ association meetings was understood by Cllr Chopping himself, and that politics would not be brought into MERA’s meetings. There were benefits to having elected members attend meetings because not only was MERA able to raise concerns of residents directly and perhaps have these matters dealt with more expeditiously, there were benefits to both sides in receiving advance notification of developments. MERA’s ability to contribute more effectively to council decision making would be enhanced by having elected members present. The Secretary confirmed that he would suggest to Cllr Chopping that he would represent all the elected representatives of the area, with the ability to put forward substitutes when he was not available.

The meeting was informed that Cllr Chopping had hoped to attend the meeting on this occasion, but there was a conflict with another meeting being held at the council offices.

**Tesco**

The Secretary confirmed that the first two decisions of the last meeting had been actioned. Following his complaint to the council regarding lorries turning out of the Tesco exit and destroying the grass verge opposite, the suggestion made by James Barr to erect bollards or posts to prevent the lorries mounting the kerb had been agreed and wooden posts had been put in place where suggested.

In response to a complaint made by a resident in the Chairman’s area that school pupils were blocking the entrance to Tesco, failing to move out of the way when customers arrived and stealing from the shop, the Secretary had written to both Tesco and the Head Teacher at Maiden Erlegh School.

A response from the Executive Headteacher, Miss Davies, had been received. The letter received stated that the school had arranged to have staff on duty outside the school at the end of the day and they monitored students as the exited the school. There was an arrangement in place that Tesco would supervise the door and car park area at peak times.

The school was very concerned about the reports of thefts from the store, but it was pointed out that there had been no complaints received about thefts by schoolchildren from Tesco. In fact, there was CCTV in place, and a stock audit had not indicated any lost merchandise.

The school was working with Tesco to investigate whether there was anything further the school could do to support the store, but Miss Davies insisted that Maiden Erlegh students generally did not drop litter, and it was pointed out that those few students who do were not the only youngsters or members of the public who used Tesco. She did, however, accept that there was an increase in litter during term time.

The school was taking further action including having a senior colleague review duties to increase the monitoring of students to ensure good behaviour. However, MERA was asked for assistance in educating residents not to push and swear at children, which had also been a problem.

There was some concern expressed by the committee that the extent of the problem relating to Maiden Erlegh School children dropping litter had not been appreciated by the school and the view was expressed that this should feature within the Citizenship lessons on the curriculum.

The Secretary stated that he would respond to the letter after the meeting.

**Street lamps and wi-fi**

The Secretary confirmed that he had written to Peter Baveystock regarding the interference caused by the street lamps using the same wi-fi frequency as burglar alarms. He had promised to look into the matter.

**EDITORIAL REPORT**

Jonathan Brown reported that the MERA Magazine would be sent for printing on 13 July.

**CORRESPONDENCE**

*None*

**NEW ITEMS**

*None*

**ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

**MRT**

The Chairman advised that Wokingham Borough Council had refused Reading Borough Council’s application for planning permission relating to the Mass Rapid Transport scheme to be constructed from the new Park & Ride near Thames Valley Park to Vastern Road in Reading. Reading Borough Council have stated they will be submitting a revised planning application.

**The Orchard**

The Committee discussed the ongoing problem of vandalism at The Orchard at Laurel Park. Trees had been damaged and fenceposts had been sawn off in what appeared to be a determined effort to damage the Orchard. The police had been made aware of the problem.

The Secretary stated that he would be happy to write to Earley Town Council on the matter and he would raise this at the next meeting of the Community and Youth Sub Committee.

There being no further business, the meeting was closed at 8.55pm.

**DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING**

Thursday 9 August 2018 at 8pm.