**Minutes of the Maiden Erlegh Residents Association Executive Committee held at 8pm on Thursday 12 September 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) |
| Steve Feltham (Secretary) | Jonathan Brown (Magazine/Editorial Team) |
| Constantina Ainsworth (Area 7) | Anne Booth (Area 9) |
| Paul Medlycott (Area 12) | Pamela Roberts (Area 10) |
| Siyu Smith(Area 2) | Tim Smith (Area 2) |
| Barbara Stansfield (Area 8) | Caroline Smith (Hillside WBC councillor) |
| Tim Marsh (ACER) | David Chopping (Luckmore Residents' Assoc) |
| Ryan Smith (Resident) |  |

**Apologies received**

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| Patricia Brown (Magazine/Editorial Team) | Judy Clark (Area 5) |
| Rosemary Cook (Area 11) | Celia Smith (Area 6) |
| Elaine Spratling (Area 4) |  |

**MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING HELD ON 8 AUGUST 2019**

The minutes of the meeting held on 8 August 2019 were accepted and signed as a correct record.

**MATTERS ARISING**

**Community and Youth Sub Committee**

The Secretary advised that he was awaiting a response from Earley Town Council on whether the authority would view favourably an application for funding from 'Keep Mobile'. The committee was informed that he would raise this at the next Community & Youth Sub Committee meeting.

**Pavement parking**

The Chairman reported that a definitive response from Julie Susel on the issue of placing notices on cars parked on pavements requesting that they cease to do so in future was awaited. The meeting was also informed that Cllr Mickleburgh had asked the council to support his plan to have bollards put in place on the verges of Silverdale Road between Hillside Road and Finch Road to prevent parking on the pavement and verges. It was hoped that the full council would approve this at its next meeting and recommend to Wokingham Borough Council that this work be carried out. Barbara Stansfield pointed out that parking in the Squirrels Way area was continuing to cause concern.

**Maiden Erlegh Drive**

The Secretary reported that the Trust Estates Manager of the Maiden Erlegh Trust had advised that a meeting would be held on 13 September to discuss the way forward in relation to the Maiden Erlegh Drive resurfacing. It was hoped that the work would be carried out at half term this autumn, but nothing had been decided at this stage.

**Membership update**

In response to a request, the Secretary promised to send a copy of the latest letter for prospective new members to Tim and Siyu Smith.

**Climate emergency initiatives**

The Secretary reported that he had not yet received any suggestions in respect of the possible location of where the planting of oak trees should take place. It was suggested that the matter was raised with the Park Ranger, and the Secretary advised that he would seek to raise the matter at the forthcoming Community & Youth Sub Committee.

**Presentation by Pauline Jorgensen: road works co-ordination**

The Secretary commented that Cllr Jorgensen's presentation at the last meeting appeared to cover the points that had been raised by the committee. A correction had been made to the minutes in respect of the additional pothole money received, which was £1.177m (not £l.77m).

**Installation of double yellow lines: Gypsy Lane and Culver Lane**

The Secretary reported that Martin Heath had clarified that the reason for waiting restrictions at Culver Lane was related to issues identified at the junctions with Whitegates Lane, Blackthorn Close and Anderson Avenue. Having provided Jenny Lissaman with the associated map and explanation, she was satisfied about the reasons for this work.

**NORA correspondence**

The Chairman confirmed that the Secretary had circulated the interim report from the Building Better, Building Beautiful Commission with the minutes.

**Responses from local primary and senior schools**

The Secretary reported that he was awaiting a response from Aldryngton Primary School regarding their travel plan and would send a second request if he did not receive a reply within the next two weeks.

**McColls**

The Chairman provided a detailed update on the actions taken since the last meeting. The positive responses received were that there appeared to be considerable interest in the premises and that town and borough councillors had been working to save the Post Office. Having written to the Post Office himself, the Secretary had received an assurance that they wished to continue to serve the area and that they were working hard to identify a solution for the short- and long-term future of Post Office services in Maiden Erlegh.

Cllr David Chopping expressed his concerns about whether a suitable tenant would be found, given the size of the premises, and that it might be better to split the property into two shops. He emphasised the cost of running a shop on the premises and the revenue that had to be earned to ensure viability.

The Secretary advised that W H Smith had been contacted, but they responded that there were no plans to open any new shops in the near future.

Barbara Stanfield stated that she had received information that Brighton's would take over newspaper deliveries following the closure of McColls.

It was acknowledged that MERA and its residents were in the hands of others on this matter, but the Chairman stated that continuing pressure would be applied with a view to concentrating minds on finding a solution to this issue.

**Report for Earley Town Council**

The Secretary reminded the committee that following Jenny Lissaman's concerns that the report submitted to Earley Town Council may adversely impact on North Earley and Woodley if adopted, it was agreed at the last meeting that he would produce a report that looked specifically at that area.

A new appendix had been circulated to the committee to show that any impact of MERA's proposals was likely to be positive rather than negative. The secretary described how the 19a/c service could serve North Earley and Woodley as now and terminate either at Loddon Bridge Road/Coppice Road or at Toseland Way. This would enable an hourly service to run with less subsidy, or alternatively a half hourly service to be established with the current level of subsidy. This assumed that a new Silverdale Road service could be established to operate on a commercial basis.

Tim Marsh, on behalf of ACER, was satisfied that the specific proposals set out by MERA would not impact adversely on North Earley and Woodley residents. Accordingly it was

**RESOLVED:** That

1. Appendix 2 of the report on Secondary Bus Services in Earley be approved.
2. The Secretary be nominated as MERA's representative on the Bus Working Party.

**New website**

The Chairman reported that the new website was ready to go live and it was intended that an item would appear in the next MERA Magazine to publicise the fact. The committee was informed that following discussions, it had been decided that only the names of Area Representatives would appear on the site, but individual telephone numbers and email addresses would not, unless specifically authorised by the officer or area representative concerned. The telephone numbers and email addresses of the Chairman and Secretary, however, would appear on the site.

The Secretary stated that he was working on increasing the size of the logo but invited any other comments on the look and feel of the site as well as the content.

The Committee agreed that the new website was acceptable and that it was now appropriate to publicise it to residents. The trial website that had been uploaded some years ago would be taken down if possible to avoid confusion to residents.

**REPORTS**

**Chairman's Report**

There was nothing to report on this occasion.

**Treasurer's report**

The Treasurer was not present to report on this occasion.

**Editorial Team report**

The Magazine Editor confirmed that the MERA magazine would be printed in full colour when the next edition was available this autumn. The copy date for articles to be submitted was 20 October.

**CONSULTATIONS**

**Thames Valley Police 'Have Your Say' meeting**

The Chairman stated that the Woodley Neighbourhood Policing Team was holding a 'Have Your Say' meeting on 13 September at the Aisha Mosque, London Road, Earley.

**Draft homelessness and rough sleeping strategy**

The Chairman reported that the Borough Council had commenced consultation on its draft new homelessness and rough sleeping strategy. Details were available on the Borough's website and comments were invited by 27 September.

**Public Rights of Way Improvement Plan**

This consultation was due to end on 26 September.

**Heathrow Airport Expansion**

The Chairman reminded the committee that this period of consultation was due to end on 13 September 2019.

**Reading Transport Strategy**

The Chairman reported that comments on Reading Borough Council's Transport Strategy for up to 2036 were invited by 20 September 2019. Details were set out in the 'Have Your Say' section of the council's website.

**Petition: Chalfont Woods**

The Committee was informed that Cllr Mickleburgh had started a petition asking for the protection of Chalfont Woods by legally binding agreements protecting the area from building development and ensuring that it remained as a natural green space for future generations. Details were available on the Wokingham Borough Council website.

**CORRESPONDENCE**

**NORA**

The Secretary advised that NORA had drawn attention to the problems being caused by party houses. This was said to be a growing problem in many areas of England, and NORA is campaigning for planning permission to be required to curb the unrestricted and unregulated conversion of residential properties for this purpose.

NORA had also provided an update on the pavement parking campaign and revealed that the committee inquiry into the issue had received more than 400 submissions.

Finally, NORA had also advised that consultation was being carried out on proposed changes to fire safety regulations for new-build blocks of flats. The Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government was seeking to require better signs and evacuation alert systems to support effective firefighting.

**NEW ITEMS**

There were no new items.

**ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

**Peter Soul**

The Committee was reminded that the late Peter Soul was to be given a posthumous recognition award at the Wokingham Borough Council meeting at 7.30pm on Thursday 19 September. The Chairman requested that if members of the committee wished to attend, they should let the Secretary know as soon as possible.

**Woodley library**

The Chairman reported that Woodley Library would be closed from mid-September for six weeks to allow for refurbishments.

**Local Plan Working Group**

The Secretary reported that a Local Plan Working Group had been set up to discuss Wokingham Borough Council's local transport plan. The meeting would be held at 10.30am on 19 September in the Council Chamber, Earley Town Council offices and representatives from residents' groups were invited to attend. It was agreed that the Secretary would represent MERA at this meeting.

**Reading University Community Meeting**

The Secretary reported that Reading University was holding a community meeting on 26 September. A place was bookable free of charge on the website www.reading.ac.uk. Members were informed that ACER would be represented at this meeting.

There being no further business, the meeting was closed at 8.50pm.

**DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING**

Thursday 10 October 2019 at 8pm.