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

**Present**

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| Colin Mair (Chairman/Area 3) | Peter Woodward (Vice Chairman/Area 1) |
| Steve Feltham (Secretary) | Jonathan Brown (Magazine Editor) |
| Constantina Ainsworth (Area 7) | Anne Booth (Area 9) |
| Rosemary Cook (Area 11) | Pamela Roberts (Area 10) |
| John Saunders (Area 13) | Celia Smith (Area 6) |
| Tim Marsh (ACER) |  |

**Apologies received**

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| Ryan Yao-Smith (Treasurer) | Judy Clark (Area 5) |
| Paul Medlycott (Area 12) | Siyu & Tim Smith (Area 2) |
| Elaine Spratling (Area 4) | Barbara Stansfield (Area 8) |

**In the Chair: Colin Mair**

**MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on 11 March 2021 were agreed as a correct record.

**MATTERS ARISING**

**Tackling fraudulent activity**

The Secretary reported that the final version of his paper on tackling fraud had been uploaded to the website.

**Borough Planning and Design Guide**

The Chairman advised the Committee that the Deputy Town Clerk had acknowledged his proposal regarding tree planting on grass verges and would update him when the committee had considered the proposal.

The Committee was advised that a Lakeside member had suggested that more areas could be selected for wildflowers to be planted, and that grass verges were possible areas that could be earmarked for this purpose. This would avoid problems with tree roots and falling leaves. However, it was also noted that this would not address the problem of vehicles parking on the verges, although this could be resolved with posts being put in strategic places to prevent this problem. Given that the council has not reacted favourably in the past to the suggestion that more posts be put in place, it might be preferable to identify more suitable areas for additional wildflower space to be provided where they would be less likely to be damaged by vehicles.

Rosemary Cook suggested that a competition could be run on the most attractive front garden to encourage residents to make the estate visually more attractive. The Secretary called for additional ideas to be considered over the coming meetings so that a package of proposals could be put forward which together would enhance the appearance of Maiden Erlegh.

**Swallows Meadow**

The Secretary reported that there had been no further news received in relation to the Town Council’s request that Swallows Meadow be included as Designated Green Space. The Secretary advised that he would write to the Borough Council in an effort to establish what had happened to this request.

**Earley Town Council**

The Secretary presented his suggested response to the request for comments on the Town Plan in a list of proposals that he would forward to the Town Clerk.

John Saunders commented that the suggestion of painting yellow lines on one side of the road was not necessarily the ideal solution and pointed to the example of Radnor Road, which simply encouraged drivers to park further along the road. The Secretary responded that this was not always going to be a practical solution, but it was one of a limited number of options that would be available to the council. The new legislation on parking was likely to provide a blanket ban on parking on pavements, but exceptions could be made by local authorities in relation to narrow streets where appropriate.

Anne Booth suggested that Earley Town Council request that Wokingham Borough Council inform them of planning applications which had implications for TPO trees. Rosemary Cook explained that on the Town Council website, there was a list of all planning applications that would include the tree work required. Additionally, the Borough Council had now brought out new maps with various layers so that a search could identify where trees were located, including TPO trees.

Members were asked to submit any further comments they wished to put forward, following which the Secretary would advise the Town Clerk of MERA’S views.

**REPORTS**

**Chairman’s Report**

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

**Treasurer’s Report**

The Treasurer reported that the invoices for the latest edition of the MERA Magazine had been despatched. In response to the query regarding cashless subscriptions, he outlined a potential solution involving card readers or a Paypal account. However, the Committee was not of the view that either of these solutions were particularly attractive. It was decided to defer this matter for the time being while further possible solutions were investigated.

In the meantime, suggestions were put forward about advance notification of magazine delivery to request members to have their cash ready in anticipation. The possibility of having a reminder in the summer magazine in future years indicating that a representative would be calling within a few weeks for the subscription money might also assist.

**Editorial Report**

The Magazine Editor advised that following the distribution of the spring edition of the magazine, there was nothing further to report on this occasion.

**CONSULTATIONS**

**Greenways route B (closing date 19 April 2021)**

**Electrical Vehicle Charging Points (closing date 30 April 2021)**

**Covid business impacts (closing date 30 April 2021)**

**Local walking and cycling infrastructure (18 April 2021)**

**Care and support for adults (13 April 2021)**

The Chairman drew attention to the current consultations being carried out by Wokingham Borough Council, details of which could be found on the council’s website. The Secretary reminded the committee that MERA had already conveyed its concerns about the need to install many more electrical charging points in the Borough to encourage more people to invest in electric cars.

**CORRESPONDENCE**

**NORA**

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

**NEW ITEMS**

There were no new items to discuss.

**ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

**Cycle rack at Tesco**

John Saunders drew attention to the disappearance of cycle racks at the Maiden Erlegh Tesco Express store. The Secretary agreed to write to Tesco to request that the racks be replaced to discourage vehicle use and encourage people to exercise.

**Litter bins at Kenton Road**

It was reported that Celia Smith had written to the Secretary to report that the Kenton Road litter bin opposite Repton Road continued to overflow at times. The Secretary advised that Cllr Mickleburgh was currently liaising with the Borough Council in an effort to have the problem resolved.

**Bulmershe allotments**

John Saunders drew attention to a consultation document issued by Reading Borough Council to allotment holders inviting a management committee to take over some of the duties associated with the management of Bulmershe Allotments, and in return, the council would lease it back at a peppercorn rent. However, the allotment holders were not willing to take on this responsibility, and the Committee was asked whether MERA would be prepared to be involved.

The Secretary advised that Bulmershe was located outside MERA’s area, but it could become a matter of interest if some of MERA’s residents held allotments there. John Saunders confirmed that 6 MERA members had allotments at Bulmershe. Tim Marsh commented that the Mays Lane allotment were in a similar situation recently. Rosemary Cook suggested that Cllr Gregor Murray was keen to encourage allotments and suggested that he could be approached in relation to his responsibilities for the climate emergency.

The Secretary advised that he would take the matter forward and report back to the Committee.

**Water leakage at 63 Lakeside**

The Chairman reported that a Lakeside resident had drawn attention to the continuing water leakage from a property in Lakeside. It was claimed that Thames Water had inspected the site and observed the presence of chemicals. The Secretary confirmed that he had written to the Localities Team at Wokingham Borough Council as Thames Water claimed that the leakage was not their responsibility. He went on to state that it was likely to be the property owner’s responsibility to deal with the problem and he expected the council to write to them regarding the leak as it was causing some flooding and damage to the road.

**Kenton Road signs**

Celia Smith had contacted the Secretary to report that a road sign opposite the junction of Radnor Road and Kenton Road bore the incorrect name of ‘Hinton Close’. The Secretary confirmed that he had reported this to the council.

**New shop to commence business in The Parade**

The Secretary reported that a notice had appeared in the former ‘Wicked Beauty’ shop in the Parade which indicated that a ‘top class Turkish barber’ would be opening soon on the premises. This was good news as it ensured that all the properties in The Parade would continue to be occupied.

**DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING**

13 May 2021.

There being no further business, the meeting was closed at 8.35pm.