**Minutes of the Maiden Erlegh Residents Association Executive Committee held at 8pm on Thursday 8 November 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) | Jonathan Brown (Magazine/Editorial Team) |
| Pamela Roberts (Area 10) | Siyu Smith (Area 2) |
| Barbara Stansfield (Area 8) | Sion Williams (ACER) |
| Jean Hackett (Earley Community Orchard) |  |

**Apologies received**

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| Pamela Tames (Treasurer) | Patricia Brown (Magazine/Editorial Team) |
| Jean Beck (Area 12) | Anne Booth (Area 9) |
| Judy Clark (Area 5) | Rosemary Cook (Area 11) |
| Celia Smith (Area 6) | Elaine Spratling (Area 4) |
| Peter Soul (EASI) | Mary Bather (ACER) |

**MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING HELD ON 11 OCTOBER 2018**

The minutes of the meeting held on 11 October 2018 were accepted as a correct record.

**MATTERS ARISING**

**Silverdale Road/Beech Lane bus services**

The Secretary reported that the Traffic Commissioners had approved the timetable changes that would assist in relieving the overcrowded 7.40am bus journey from Beech Lane. The 8.03am Silverdale Road service into Reading had now been moved back by ten minutes and now left Silverdale Road shops at 7.53am, enabling school children to use the 19c service instead. Other minor timetable changes had also been introduced.

Unfortunately, it had been noted from reports on Facebook that there were still passengers being turned away from the 19b on this journey at Beech Lane, and so clearly there was a need to continue to press Reading Buses to resolve the problem, possibly by the use of double deckers for this journey, although this would require Reading Borough Council to carry out work on the trees along part of the route. Jean Hackett made the point that there were also some trees along Beech Lane that may require work to allow a double decker to negotiate the route. The Secretary advised that he would communicate again with the company on this issue.

**Lakeside subsidence**

The Chairman reported that no response had yet been received in respect of the subsidence of part of the road in Lakeside. The Secretary would continue to press for a reply from Wokingham Borough Council.

**Tesco**

The Chairman stated that there had been no further reports received regarding Tesco vehicles using Sevenoaks Road in breach of their planning consent, but this would continue to be monitored.

The Chairman advised the Committee that an article had been written regarding the litter issue throughout the Maiden Erlegh area in the hope that this would increase awareness of the problem and start to change behaviour. As reported previously, the Head Teacher of Maiden Erlegh School had also promised to impress upon the pupils the need to contribute towards keeping the estate tidy.

**Street lamps and wi-fi**

The meeting was informed that the Secretary had asked Abattis to ensure its customers were notified that the interference from the street lamps on burglar alarms had now been resolved and that if there were any further problems, they should notify the company, who would liaise with the council.

The Secretary stated that once he was satisfied that there were no further issues, he would draft an item for the MERA Magazine to advise residents of the position.

**Parking across driveways**

The Chairman reported that the Secretary had arrived at the Loddon Primary School entrance for the site meeting with the police on 17 October but the police were diverted to another call. Subsequently, rather than arrange a further meeting, the Secretary requested their views on what additional measures they would like to see implemented if the London legislation were to be extended to the rest of the country. There had not been a response to this request to date, but the Parking Enforcement manager had stated that towaway powers would be useful.

The Committee agreed that the proposed letter to John Redwood MP should be sent, incorporating the request for towaway powers and any other measures that the police might put forward in the meantime.

**AGREED:** The Secretary to write to the police again for their views and a letter incorporating MERA’s request for extended legislation on parking together with any comments received from the police and parking enforcement be sent to John Redwood MP before the next meeting.

**Mass Rapid Transport system**

The Secretary drew attention to the public reaction to Cllr Tony Page’s comments that the area around Horseshoe Bridge was ‘shoddy and neglected’ and ‘blighted by drug use and anti-social behaviour’. According to the local and social media, these comments had not been well received, with the public response that these remarks were not true. Jean Hackett stated that the consultation in respect of the new plans expired on 19 November 2018.

**NORA – ‘A New Deal for Social Housing’**

The Chairman advised that details of the NORA communication regarding the Government’s consultation paper ‘A New Deal for Social Housing’ had been circulated to members as promised.

**Earley Community Orchard**

The secretary updated the meeting on the Earley Community Orchard AGM held on 28 October 2018.

In particular, it was noted that there had been no further vandalism since July, but one-third of the trees had been lost. Some of these had been replaced. Fencing and a notice board had been damaged beyond repair. There had been no neighbourhood police patrols due to resources being transferred elsewhere.

There was discussion regarding the Football Club’s desire to have permission for vehicular access along the path by the Interpretation Centre from the bottom of Instow Road to the field behind the playground so that the field opposite the pavilion could be used as overflow parking. However, it was noted that the Town Council appeared to have accepted that the orchard could be located to this field even if it was also to be used as an overflow car park. The exact location for the orchard would need to be discussed because the initial proposal would mean that the trees would be planted in a shaded area, where the trees would not thrive. The secretary agreed to remind the new Town Clerk of Earley Town Council of the need for public consultation on these proposals before proceeding with such plans.

There was interest in the proposal by McDonald’s and Wren Kitchens to provide picnic tables and benches near the pavilion and playground as part of their aim to be involved in community matters.

It was noted that the Green Fair was judged to have outgrown its existing location and that the field was viewed as the most appropriate location for this. The Secretary stated that the committee needed to consider their position on the matter, as it was known that some stallholders were unhappy with this suggestion. The main issue was that the existing location attracted a good footfall from passing pedestrians, whereas in the field it would be largely hidden from public view. It was acknowledged that this objection could be addressed by advertising and better signage. This matter would be debated in more detail at a later meeting.

**REPORTS**

**Chairman’s Report**

The Chairman reported that a planning inspection would be carried out in respect of a structure that had been built on a Silverdale Road property, following complaints he had received from residents.

**Magazine Report**

Jonathan Brown on behalf of the Editorial Team confirmed that the next MERA magazine should be available in the following week.

**CONSULTATIONS**

The Chairman reported that there were no current consultations directly affecting Maiden Erlegh to be reported, but he drew attention to an e-petition submitted by the Liberal Democrats asking for a dedicated full time Parking Enforcement Officer to be allocated ‘exclusively and permanently’ to Earley to help tackle illegal and anti-social parking.

While having some sympathy with the reasons for the request, it was the view of the committee that the allocation of one permanent individual to Earley may not be the most practical means of ensuring better enforcement, and the council would need to ensure sufficient coverage for the whole of the Wokingham Borough. In particular, it was noted that if only one officer was allocated to Earley, there would be no cover when the officer was on holiday or off work for any other reason including sickness.

Members were reminded that they would be able to respond to the petition individually if they wished to agree to the proposal.

It was noted that following representations made by MERA, the Council had now proposed to have double yellow lines painted at the junction of Kenton Road and Silverdale Road to prevent parking too close to the junction.

**AGREED:** The Secretary to write to the Parking Enforcement Manager to support the principle of better enforcement in Earley but acknowledging that a more flexible arrangement relating to the deployment of officers would be necessary to ensure consistent and uniform levels of service throughout the Borough.

**CORRESPONDENCE**

**NORA**

The Secretary reported that two items of correspondence had been received from NORA. The first related to a Government request for views on changes to planning practice guidance on the standard method of assessing local housing need and the second advised that the new advice on procedure for planning appeals had been issued. Further details would be circulated with the minutes.

**NEW ITEMS**

**General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)**

The Chairman stated that as part of the Secretary’s temporary duties as Data Protection Officer, the last AGM was informed that he would bring membership records up to date in line with the consent forms received, advise on data protection issues and draft a new policy for approval at the 2019 AGM.

This work was almost completed now, and all Area Representatives had received completed spreadsheets containing this information, which was password protected. Area Representatives should ensure that any additional information they were keeping on their members was destroyed.

A new policy and privacy notice had been circulated to members. These would be discussed at the next meeting, and once agreed by the committee, they would be submitted for endorsement at the next AGM.

**ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

**NAG Meeting: 15 October 2018**

The Chairman summarised the matters discussed at the last meeting of NAG held on 15 October 2018. Once again, the amount of damage and violence in Earley was of concern, although several families had been identified as perpetrating some of these incidents. NAG was advised by the police that if youths in balaclavas were spotted, the police should be called using the 999 facility.

There had been a ‘Have Your Say’ event at Asda on 4 November, and the Town Clerk had been invited to attend. Arrangements had been made for the police to be represented by Julie Suzel.

The Chairman of the Football Club stated they were prepared to provide funding for a gate into the gap at the entrance to the Laurel Park field opposite the pavilion, which he confirmed he wished to have used as an overflow car park. It was agreed that the orchard relocation could be accommodated and would not be compromised by the proposed car parking arrangements.

The Silverdale Road parking problems outside Loddon Primary School were also debated but no solution to this was put forward. There was interest expressed outside the meeting regarding MERA’s suggestion that the field opposite Brookside Close could be used for parking.

The e-petition for one of seven parking enforcement officers to be allocated to Earley was announced.

The new constitution for the Neighbourhood Action Group was approved.

**Community & Youth Sub-Committee**

The Secretary reported that MERA’s views on the way in which the Community & Youth Sub- Committee operated at Earley Town Council had been requested. ACER had already submitted their views, including the overlapping of matters raised at NAG and Earley Town Council meetings in relation to public safety. ACER and MERA appeared to agree that there was no representation on behalf of the youth of the community, and this was an issue.

The view of the committee was that it was valuable for community groups to be able to raise issues with Earley and Wokingham councillors at these meetings, although more freedom was needed to raise more than one issue at a time. It was also agreed that more groups should be involved at meetings of the sub-committee, such as the university and the schools.

The Secretary confirmed that he would write to the council to respond to this consultation in line with the committee’s views.

**Maiden Place Post Office**

Barbara Stansfield reported that the Maiden Place Post Office was operational from the afternoon of 9 November.

**Squirrels Way parking**

Barbara Stansfield reported that she had received a complaint from a Loxwood resident regarding vehicles which were parked too close to the junction with Beech Lane. The Secretary responded that he would raise this with the Parking Enforcement Manager.

**Next meeting**

The Chairman reminded the committee that the next meeting was the last meeting before Christmas and that as usual he would bring some wine and fruit juices as refreshments. Siyu Smith kindly agreed to bring some ‘nibbles’ such as sausage rolls, which was welcomed by the committee.

There being no further business, the meeting was closed at 9.00pm.

**DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING**

Thursday 13 December 2018 at 8pm.