



**Earley Neighbourhood Action Group Community Forum Meeting Minutes  
Monday 15th January 2024**

**Present**

Phil Marsh	Chair & Resident, Marefield
Tim Marsh	Chairman of ACER, The Whitegates Residents Association
Colin Mair	MERA & Resident, Lakeside
Alan Jutson	Woodley & Earley Lions
Melanie D’Jong	ETC Councillor
Linden Morgan	Resident, Elm Lane
Molli Cleaver	Community Relations Manager, University of Reading
Hazel Bell	Resident, Sibson
Helen King	Resident, Marefield
Toni D’Amaro	Neighbourhood Officer, Thames Valley Police
Rose Kayani	Resident, Ramsbury Drive
Karen Collins	Thames Valley Police

**Apologies**

David Hare	WBC Councillor
Simon Botham	Neighbourhood Sergeant, Thames Valley Police
Tahir Maher	ETC and Resident, Lowestoft Close
Uzma Saeed	Wokingham IAG & Resident, Toseland Way
Elena Ispas	Police Community Support Officer, Thames Valley Police

**NB:** These minutes are a record of what happened in the meeting, what was said, what was discussed, and what action would be taken where appropriate. Some items remain as ongoing from meeting to meeting so that they can be monitored at every meeting. Please be advised that no laptops will be allowed to be used in the Council Chamber and mobile phones will only be allowed to be used by the Police in emergencies.

## Points from the Agenda:

### 1. Apologies for absence:

Phil welcomed the attendees to the Zoom Webinar meeting and advised them it was being recorded. The apologies are listed above.

### 2. Minutes from previous Meeting on 13<sup>th</sup> November 2023:

The minutes were reviewed and proposed for approval by Tim Marsh and seconded by Colin Mair.

### 3. Matters arising: AOB (proposals for consideration from attendees).

There were no matters arising and no AOB proposals for consideration from attendees.

### 4. Update from the Neighbourhood Policing Team: Police Priorities a) Burglary; b) Anti-social behaviour; c) County Lines issues; and d) Road Safety / Speeding

Toni provided an update on the crimes reported from 14<sup>th</sup> November 2023 to 15<sup>th</sup> January 2024.

#### a) Burglary

1 x Residential Burglary – Mildenhall Close. A caller reported their house had been broken into while on holiday. Our local Criminal Investigation Department (CID) team have made 3 arrests in relation to an organised criminal cross border group and the number of burglaries in the area have tailed off.

#### b) Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB)

3 reports of ASB – Maiden Place, Wokingham Road and Toseland Way. All of which were low level and have not caused any further concerns.

6 reports of Criminal Damage – Whiteknights Road, Egremont Drive, Rushey Way, Stockbury Close, Faygate Way and Mawbray Close. A few reports were domestic related and a male had damaged windows near the University. There are no emerging patterns at this time.

3 x Shopliftings - Church Road. This is an ongoing issue where offenders are removing a high value of goods. The value involved has now crossed the threshold for the shop to engage a security guard on site.

5 x Thefts from Motor Vehicles – Felstead Close, Fordham Way, Falstaff Avenue, Gregory Close and Nutmeg Close.

The above reports include the theft of tools from a van, thefts of number plates and a catalytic converter. There is ongoing investigative work around this issue.

2 x Thefts of Motor Vehicles – Elm Road and Wokingham Road. One stolen vehicle was a digger.

There were no reported thefts of Pedal Cycles.

#### c) County Lines issues

There is a dedicated Tasking Team who use covert and overt tactics to disrupt county drug lines. Their main focus is on protecting vulnerable victims from exploitation.

#### d) Road Safety & Speeding

If you have any roads or areas you would like to nominate for a session, please add them into the comments box on the NAG's website <https://earleynag.org/entries/general/community-speedwatch-uk>

### 5. Speedwatch (Lower Earley Scheme) – Proposal for a local awareness event linked with NHW (Phil)

Phil advised he and Simon had a conversation following the previous NAG meeting and were thinking of having an event with a Speedwatch and Neighbourhood Watch information desk in ASDA on a weekend. Please let Phil know if you are interested in volunteering to help support this important initiative. Phil is still planning to contact the Speedwatch Co-ordinator regarding how to recruit volunteers for the summer period. This is going to be a medium to long term initiative.

### 6. MERA – local update

Colin advised the only item which has come up recently was a complaint about smoking outside the barbers in the Silverdale Road shopping parade. Individuals have been dropping cigarette butts and Colin asked whether these were considered litter and whether it was a crime to drop them. Toni advised that to the fine letter of the law, it

would constitute an offence and is an issue which can generally be dealt with by a low level disposal such as a ticket. Colin is welcome to advise the individuals involved that he has been in touch with the local neighbourhood policing team and they will look at following this up by having local PCSOs pop down and have a word with the individuals involved.

**7 ACER – a) follow up on parking and subsequent 13 & 14 Bus diversion – b) local traffic issues, speeding with damage to parked vehicles, solutions?**

a) Tim advised the increased traffic warden activity has had a positive effect on cars not parking where they shouldn't, but there are still traffic jams on Fridays which appear to be caused by the large number of people trying to get in and out of the area while blocking the junction. Normally, there is someone from the Mosque there on Fridays, but not lately. There needs to be a solution, perhaps installing a box junction there would help. Phil read out an update from Uzma Saeed who was not able to attend this evening. She advised she had made enquiries into the parking issues around the mosque. They offer 3 different times for Friday prayers to stagger and lighten the parking and traffic rush. They also have many people in high vis jackets sorting out the parking, forbidding people to park in illegal places and ensuring the parking slots are filled properly. They have meetings to talk about residents' complaints and to factor in ways of resolving further issues. In short, they believe they are doing all they can. In response to the complaint regarding the bus stop, is this a one off or it is still carrying on? Tim confirmed the bus was still a problem when he was there as he saw it go past. As a recommendation, Phil suggested the mosque could consider inviting residents and groups such as ACER and perhaps local councillors to broaden the discussions at their complaint meetings and find a solution together. Tim mentioned he had witnessed a young lad being bullied into opening the gate to the mosque's parking area by a driver. Phil asked Tim if he would speak to the councillors he knows about attending meetings and advised he will speak to the local councillor he knows regarding this issue.

b) Milton Road update. There was no further update regarding this issue.

**8 Allotment Association – access to Culver Lane allotment – vehicle obstructing entrance – solution?**

Phil advised he had spoken to the Allotment Association and they were happy with the response from the council and the police. This item will be closed as the obstruction has been removed.

**9 Laurel Park: - a) Saturday Traffic issues are on hold until the WBC Leisure Playing Pitch Strategy is published in the Local Plan Update [LPU]. Is there a revised date for the LPU to be published, as the November publication date (section 4.5) was not met? – b) Residents report ongoing traffic violations. What are the solutions? – Update on post-meeting requests for (I) CPE Officer enforcement of Marefield TRO, (II) proposed 20 MPH speed limit and (III) PCSO presence to advise drivers attending Saturday events not to obstruct pedestrian access.**

a) Saturday Traffic issues are on hold until the WBC Playing Pitch Strategy (PPS) is published in the Local Plan Update (LPU) Phil advised discussions are parked until the PPS is published so members can see WBC's plans for the Playing Pitches and whether such plans will resolve the current Traffic safety concerns. Melanie offered to send a reminder to Tahir regarding obtaining an update.

**The below update was received from David Hare after the meeting:-**

**The PPS is a support document to the Local Plan Update and will be published alongside the LPU.**

The statement on the MERA website is:

"The long-awaited playing pitch strategy has now been received from the consultants appointed by Wokingham Council to assess the needs of the Borough. Councillors will be reviewing the recommendations over the coming months and plan to consider the way forward and consult on their plans later in the year."

I don't see how that translates as "has been published to councillors". In the broadest sense, "**councillors will be reviewing the recommendations**", but alongside the LPU.

**At present, a limited number of officers have seen the recommendations.**

**I hope that makes it clear, it will come out with the Local Plan and is not in the public arena as yet.**

**b) Ongoing traffic violations 14th October**

At the November meeting, a number of traffic issues were raised, which are covered by the existing TRO managed by WBC. In addition, the police set out their position on the obstruction. Post-meeting, residents asked for a PCSO to attend some Saturday football matches to advise drivers not to obstruct pedestrian access.

Also, for background information. Poor weather and the Christmas vacation break have meant that football was only played on a few Saturdays in the months of November, December and January. Toni advised the police are planning to attend on the 10<sup>th</sup> of February to monitor the area and issue advice and tickets if necessary, they have resources available from 8am to noon.

- 10 Street lighting – follow up on last meeting’s action on Salvation Army’s faulty lighting. Has this been rectified?**  
Lyndon’s advised the faulty streetlights at the Salvation Army were finally resolved at the beginning of the year after taking ages. There is an issue with the lighting at ASDA on the Chalfont Way side and there are concerns over a faulty light which should illuminate the steps which come down from the road to the parking lot. Linden suggested it could be moved on to a different circuit. Phil suggested this was a health and safety issue. Melanie suggested raising this issue with Tahir as there is a liability issue here. Melanie advised she will mention it to Tahir.
- 11 Neighbourhood Watch – Co-ordinators from Local Schemes to have their say -- (Paul/Phil) --**  
[Link to Neighbourhood Watch](#)  
Phil advised he will invite the Co-ordinators to the proposed Speedwatch event.
- 12 University of Reading – community update – (Molli)**  
Molli advised their Community Festival will return on Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> May and they are hoping to get as many local organisations as possible involved. An expression of interest form has been launched and Molli will send a link with information to Phil. Their Spring Community newsletter will be released tomorrow. Alan mentioned the Woodley and Earley Lions may be interested in attending this event. He advised they are running a charity walk around Dinton Pastures on Saturday April 27<sup>th</sup> and it is being organised so that participants can walk for their own charities. Molli asked him to send the details to her directly and she will advertise it to the students.
- 13 Fireworks – Laurel Park FC Youths Sports Foundation (Charity # 1183357) – Mike provided an update at the last meeting, and the proposal is to park this item until the meeting on 8<sup>th</sup> July 2024**  
Phil proposed parking this item until July 2024 to allow time for debriefing of last year’s event and the start of planning for this year’s one. Alan asked to feed back his thanks to Simon for the police attendance at the Fireworks event in November which was very much appreciated.

The meeting closed at 8:20pm.

1009B	<b>NAG website</b> is up & running. Constitution has been posted along with our terms of reference. In addition the mission statement of the NAG has been inserted. <a href="http://www.earleynag.org">www.earleynag.org</a>	Facebook Page link for posts: <a href="https://www.facebook.com/EarleyNAG">https://www.facebook.com/EarleyNAG</a>	All minutes are now available for viewing online.
0909C	<b>Date, Time &amp; Location of next meeting:</b> Meetings will be held bi-monthly on a Monday at 7.30 – 9.00 pm at the Earley Town Council Offices.  The following dates have been booked. 11 March 2024 13 May 2024 8 July 2024 9 September 2024 18 November 2024	Please note the meetings dates, times and location  Agenda issued a week before the meeting if you would like to add a discussion point please email to <a href="mailto:chairperson@earleynag.org">chairperson@earleynag.org</a>	NB: It is imperative that if you are concerned about an Issue, i.e. litter or pot holes etc please call Wokingham Borough Council on 0118 9746000 where they will be happy to help. If you are suspicious or a crime has already been committed

			<p>call <b>101</b> or report online.</p> <p>In an emergency or if a crime is in progress, dial <b>999</b>.</p> <p>If in doubt report it.</p>
1704A	<p><b>Reading University Community Events</b></p> <p>Events will be advised in due course.</p> <p>The University are very welcoming and it is a good opportunity to look around the University and ask any questions or raise concerns with senior staff i.e. parking</p>	<p>Molli Cleaver - Community Relations Manager</p> <p><a href="mailto:community@reading.ac.uk">community@reading.ac.uk</a></p>	<p>The NAG continues to welcome the support of the University of Reading and would be pleased to see students litter picking around the boundary of the University.</p>
0310F	<p>If any members have problems with rubbish or fly tipping, potholes etc, there is a page on the WBC website entitled Roadworks and outdoor maintenance:</p> <p><a href="https://www.wokingham.gov.uk/roadworks-and-outdoor-maintenance/">https://www.wokingham.gov.uk/roadworks-and-outdoor-maintenance/</a></p> <p>Use this to report the problem or see if already reported.</p>	<p>This service is highly effective and efficient and should be used at every opportunity.</p>	