



**Earley Neighbourhood Action Group Community Forum Meeting Minutes
Monday 4th September 2023**

Present

Phil Marsh	Chair & Resident, Marefield
Tim Marsh	Chairman of ACER, The Whitegates Residents Association
Colin Mair	MERA & Resident, Lakeside
Linden Morgan	Resident, Elm Lane
Helen Elderfield	Resident, Marefield
Hazel Bell	Resident, Sibson
Alan Jutson	Woodley & Earley Lions
Uzma Saeed	Wokingham IAG & Resident, Toseland Way
Paul Adkins	Chair, Thames Valley Neighbourhood Watch Association
Simon Botham	Neighbourhood Sergeant, Thames Valley Police
Karen Collins	Thames Valley Police

Apologies

David Hare	WBC Councillor
Mike Smith	ETC Councillor
Molli Cleaver	Community Relations Manager, University of Reading
Ian Jobson	Laurel Park Football Club & Resident Trusthorpe Road
Jason Collins-Webb	Resident
Toni D'Amato	Neighbourhood Officer, Thames Valley Police
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 meeting and asked everyone to introduce themselves. The apologies are listed above.

2. Minutes from previous Meeting on 10th July 2023:

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

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

There were no matters arising. With regards to AOB, the management of fixed speed cameras had been proposed prior to the meeting by Jason Collins-Webb, anti-social behaviour was proposed by Tim from ACER and Colin from Mera proposed litter around the shops near Maiden Erlegh school.

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

Simon provided an update on the crimes reported since the previous NAG meeting.

a) Burglary

1 x Business Burglary – Church Road

3 x Residential Burglaries – Wokingham Road, Maiden Erlegh Drive and Beech Lane. These are not believed to be linked to any series at this time.

b) Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB)

6 reports of ASB – Paddick Drive, Southwold Close, Kensington Close, Fexistowe Close, Chalfont Way and Selsey Way. Several reports involved mini scramblers and e-bikes.

5 reports of Criminal Damage – Rushey Way x 2, Larks Meade, Fordham Way and Chalfont Way. One was reported damage to a custody cell at Loddon Valley Station.

3 x Thefts from Motor Vehicles – Ramsbury Drive, Felixstowe Close and Hartsbourne Road

2 x Thefts of Motor Vehicles – Kelton Close and Mint Close. Simon reported an emerging trend involving a backpack worn on the front with cables and teams of 3-5 perpetrators operating in the early hours of the morning.

No reported Thefts of Pedal Cycles

1 report of Wildlife Crime with use of an air rifle to shoot wildlife

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>

Karen shared a response from the Team Leader of Safety Camera Operators at the Joint Operations Unit - Roads Policing, in response to the AOB proposed by Jason regarding the "State of repair and operability of fixed speed enforcement cameras in Earley":-

All fixed camera housings act as deterrent and slow vehicles down making our communities safer. Therefore, for operational reasons and effective speed management and to maintain compliance and keep our roads safe, details of sites and number of operational cameras is not usually disclosed. TVP considers that disclosing this information may allow individuals to assess and undermine our intelligence approach to speed enforcement. This would affect the relevant local communities as it may lead to an increase in accidents and will undermine our law enforcement activities in the area.

In response to Tim's AOB relating to ASB from noisy vehicles, Simon advised the Wokingham ASB Team - despite being new - has been cooperating well with the police around the ASB issues caused by car meets, where they can issue fixed penalty notices and gather footage for follow-ups. Simon also advised that vehicles causing ASB by driving with excessively loud exhausts can be issued with a Section 59 which puts

a warning against the driver and vehicle and the police have the power to seize the vehicle if caught again. Simon highlighted an increase in the use of drones and the importance of drone footage at car meets. Tim raised concerns about a speeding accident involving a young driver and the police's apparent lack of further interest in the incident. Simon explained that such incidents are usually reported and prosecuted using a TA 1 booklet, which records all aspects of the conditions and any interviews or tests done at the scene. This is then used for further investigation and prosecution should that be pursued. Tim also raised concerns around regular traffic obstructions on London Road, with buses being forced to use the main road instead. Simon advised TVP have worked with the community to try and solve this problem. Simon will check whether there is an application for a TRO in place and explore ways to assist in managing the traffic issue.

5 Speedwatch (Lower Earley Scheme) -- (Phil)

The NAG still requires volunteers to join their Speedwatch scheme. Please let Phil know if you are able to support this important initiative. Phil is going to contact the Speedwatch Co-ordinator regarding how to proceed.

Phil also expressed an interest in organizing a meeting or event with local residents around Community Speedwatch.

6 Vehicles Parked too close to junctions, from Squirrels Way, Sevenoaks Road and Radnor Road residents. The Highway Code specifies not closer than 10 metres. If a resident sees a parked car closer than 10 metres, what should they do? Updates on inconsiderate parking - (Colin – MERA)

Colin advised this is not an issue that NORA can take forward. Phil proposed closing down this agenda item.

With regard to Colin's AOB concerns around the volume of litter at the Parade on Silverdale Road, he asked WBC whether it was possible to install additional or larger bins to address the issue with the potential that MERA could identify some funding for this. Norman Jorgenson spoke to Richard Bissett who advised he believes part of the problem is due to pizza boxes being placed in the bins. The installation of additional or larger bins will be fed into the current consultation on bins. Also, the ASB team will speak to the Pizza shop and ask them to put a bin outside for their boxes. Phil and Alan voiced concerns about WBC's proposed removal of waste bins, arguing that it would increase work for volunteers and potentially create health hazards. He also highlighted the financial implications of certain decisions and issues with the distribution of bins and mentioned that some were efficiently managed while others were not due to their ownership falling under different departments. He also raised a problem with reporting full and overflowing bins, particularly ones located outside and inside sports fields which do not appear on the reporting tool due to their ownership. Phil promised to send some information regarding this issue to the NAG members.

7 Laurel Park: Saturday Traffic issues on hold until WBC Leisure report published

This is due to be discussed by the Council in an Executive meeting on 28th September.

Please see below reply from council officers received by Alastair Neal on 19th October:-

"The Council has now completed the Borough Playing Pitch Strategy (PPS) and intends to formally adopt the document in due course. Being a borough-wide report, looking at future playing field provision in all towns and parishes, it is a supporting document to the Local Plan Update (LPU) and as such will be considered by the Council alongside LPU towards the end of this year. It is not envisaged that the PPS Action Plan is set in stone, and we will be required to regularly review the document in order to ensure that that we continue to have a deliverable approach to meeting the identified needs. i.e. once the LPU is published, the supporting documents, including the PPS, can also be published."

8 Street lighting – follow up on last meeting's actions.

Lyndon reported that the street light on the Salvation Army drive was out. Phil asked Lyndon to send him the details and he would speak with Mike regarding how to report it. Lyndon advised there were no improvements with the overgrown vegetation issues at the Thames Water Reservoir and Phil said he would chase this up. Lyndon will try and report some overgrown trees which are obstructing lights on the cycle path on Elm Lane.

9 Online fault reporting system challenges. Errors in faults marked resolved when not repaired.

Mike Smith had reported the faulty beacon on the roundabout at the junction of Chalfont Way and Chalfont Close and received a response back stating it did not need fixing. He is now looking into this. Lyndon advised it had been fixed about a week ago and was still operating.

10 Neighbourhood Watch – Co-ordinators from Local Schemes to have their say -- (Paul/Phil)

Paul provided an update on the Thames Valley Police open day where Neighbourhood Watch shared a stand with the neighbourhood policing team. They had made contact with potential new recruits and spoken to members who wanted to rejuvenate their Neighbourhood Watch schemes. He was impressed with the new chief constable, Jason Hogg, and his handling of questions around e-Scooters and the online reporting tool. Tim advised there seems to be challenges with finding enough volunteers for neighbourhood watch groups. Paul advised he hoped to encourage more people to volunteer for Neighbourhood Watch and Phil hopes that the NAG can be used as a local issues forum.

11 University of Reading – community update – (Molli)

The University is still having their summer break. Colin advised that a volunteer from MERA will be joining the UOR Community Engagement Steering Group.

12 Fireworks – Laurel Park FC Youths Sports Foundation (Charity # 1183357) - Ian

Phil advised the only question that was raised by NHW scheme members is *exit safety* in respect of up to 6,000 attendees spilling out of the Rushey Way exit and the potential crush in the underpass under Rushey Way (the drains are currently blocked by mud and the approach is slippery). Alan advised the team had agreed to close the road at 5pm and would open up access to the area in case of an emergency. They expect around 4,000 people to attend the event, but it could go up to 6,000 with traders on the top field this year along with local businesses and organizations like sports clubs, youth clubs, and gymnastic clubs.

The meeting closed at 8:25pm.

1009B	NAG website is up & running. Constitution has been posted along with our terms of reference. In addition the mission statement of the NAG has been inserted. www.earleynag.org	Facebook Page link for posts: https://www.facebook.com/EarleyNAG	All minutes are now available for viewing online.
0909C	Date, Time & Location of next meeting: 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. 13th November 2023	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 chairperson@earleynag.org	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 call 101 or report online.

			In an emergency or if a crime is in progress, dial 999 . If in doubt report it.
1704A	<p>Reading University Community Events</p> <p>Events will be advised in due course. 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>community@reading.ac.uk</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.
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>https://www.wokingham.gov.uk/roadworks-and-outdoor-maintenance/</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>	