**Minutes of the Pipers Area Residents Association Meeting held 10.2.14 at 7.30pm in the Wheatsheaf, Newport Street.**

1. **Apologies:** Cllr Bluh, Daphne Hardwick, Bea Menier, Tracy Scott, PC Tim North

**Present:** Chris Hawkins, Carole Bent, Cllr Mattock, Susanne Webb, Malathy Sitaram, Duncan Cunningham, Judith Randell-Sly, Kareen Boyd, Colin Doubleday, Claire Bouverie-Brine, Cllr Watts, Linda Kasmaty

**Guest:** Jane Milner-Barry

1. **Minutes of the Last Meeting**: Proposed by Kareen, seconded by Duncan
2. **Matters arising**: None
3. **Police Update:** Tim was not able to attend the meeting but sent this comprehensive list:

**Criminal Damage/Graffiti**

 A 22 year old male from Stratton was arrested at 02.20am on 29th January as he commenced spraying the telephone kiosk in Devizes Road, he’d only managed  “DR” when the patrol caught him but was found to have 5 full cans of spray paint. Clearly a timely arrest that prevented a huge number of properties being blighted.

**Burglaries** have occurred as follows;

18/01/14 Marlborough Road (Lawns end)

21/01/14 Quarry Road – rear conservatory entered but nothing stolen and no entry to actual house made

21/01/14 St Margarets Road – rear window smashed

24/01/14 Fitzroy Road – rear door glass smashed, key left in lock so door opened

28/01/14 Guildord Avenue – rear door forced

02/02/14 Orpen Close – cycle store entered and 2 wheels stolen

In relation to the burglaries but with exception to the last one listed we have made an arrest of a male in Gloucester. Some property has been recovered that connects him to the Guildford Avenue and Marlborough Road offences and we are obviously looking at him and his associates for each of the above.

**Theft**

31/01/14 Croft Road – an old washing machine stolen from driveway, almost certainly picked up by one of the scrap dealers that go around without the permission of the owner.

**Fraud**

None have been reported in the area this month but there have been further reports elsewhere of the Met Police scam continuing and this is how it works;

A telephone call will be received and the caller will state that they are a Met Police officer investigating fraudulent use of the persons bank cards and that persons have been arrested.

The ‘officer’ will provide an officers name and number with contact details which will be a police station in London

The ‘officer’ will then seek to obtain bank card details to ‘confirm’ that the cards they have seized are cloned.

Arrangements will then be made for a courier to attend the victims address to collect their bank cards and they will be asked to provide a secret password that the courier can use so the victim know it’s the genuine courier.

The victim will be told to place each bank card into an envelope together with the pin number for that card

A courier attends the victims address, gives the password and takes possession of the victims bank cards & pin numbers

Cash withdrawals are quickly made using the cards.

**Violence**

19/01/14 Marlborough Road - taxi driver kicked when intervening in a street domestic argument, no injury

26/01/14 Marriott Hotel – domestic between a mother and daughter who received cut lip – mother arrested

**Operation Harness**

Widely reported on in local press. 400 officers together with other agencies executed warrants at addresses throughout Swindon and in London in relation to organised crime groups and drug supply following a 12 month undercover operation. Over 50 offenders were sort and have been arrested with evidence existing that would enable them to be charged with offences relating to supply of Class A drugs in Swindon. 45 arrests were made on the day of the warrants and others have followed.

**Night Time Economy**

02/02/14 male ejected from Suju, allegations from him of assault by doorstaff and from doorstaff of assault on them by the male.

09/02/14 2 males issued Penalty Notices for being drunk & disorderly in High St & Wood St

09/02/14 theft of mobile phone in Mackenzies.

1. **Councillor’s Update**

Cllr Mattock reminded us about the South Swindon Localities meeting being held in Liddington at 7pm on 11.2.14, and that Newport Street would be closed for 5 days from 17.2.14.

Cllr Watts said Foxhill Way is now open, so it is possible to travel from Croft Road to Rushey Platt, ie. East –west, but not north-south. Mill Lane is due to open at the end of February. Waitrose is due to open on Thursday 10th of April. Cllr Watts attended the Mela AGM and said they were appealing for more people to join the project team to help shape the events this summer. Commonweal School 6th form building programme is on track.

Cllr Bluh was not able to be present but gave the link for the disclaimer to enable graffiti to be removed. Linda agreed to put forms through doors of those people affected by it, and then the graffiti could be removed in one council visit.

The link for the disclaimer is <http://www.swindon.gov.uk/ts/ts-streetcareandcleaning/Pages/ts-streetcareandcleaning-graffiti.aspx>

1. **Tracy Scott funding**

Next meeting

1. **Leisure Centre Consultation and 99 year leases**

Jane Milner-Barry has done a considerable amount of research into how other local authorities have dealt with drawing up management contracts to lease out leisure centres, and found that many companies are happy to invest with 7-15 year leases. Councils don’t lose ownership and continue to keep them as leisure centres. She wondered why SBC isn’t doing this. The information has been presented to the Swindon Advertiser as an article rather than a letter because it exceeds the 500 word letter limit.

Cllr Watts had already responded to Jane’s questions by email which was circulated after the meeting to the committee. Cllr Mattock did not know the detail of the arrangements but knew tenders had to be in by 8.2.14. He said there will be transparency in the process. The blue consultation forms to enable the public to make their views on leasing out the leisure centres and golf courses have to be completed before 2.3.14. It was suggested that consultation of the public should happen at the formative stage of the process and that this was too late and indicated it was already a ‘done deal’. Cllr Mattock rejected this.

Questions were then asked about the leases, it was felt there was no protection of amenity, if the Croft becomes private, it is then no longer under council jurisdiction. There were concerns over who was managing the process to prevent a free for all. Cllr Mattock replied that saving had to be made over the next 2 years and things had to be done differently to fund the escalating costs of social care.

Concern was expressed about the changing status of Marlborough Lane, it was nothing to do with the site when the school was being built, and is now going to be in the Croft lease. PaRa committee requested that they see the lease on the Croft before it is signed. To preserve our leisure amenities, we do not want leases at all, we want management contracts.

**Action:** Cllr Mattock agreed to put our concerns to Cllr Williams and give us feedback.

1. **WHF proposal to open Croft School to all years in 2015 update**

Engagement with the WHF about their consultation to open the Croft School to all year groups in 2015 (3 years ahead of schedule) has been a disappointment. Despite ongoing statements from the WHF about relations with the community, and several meetings instigated by PaRa we see little evidence of action from the WHF in relation to the Croft School. Indeed the Croft School article 10/2/2014 is not supported by the facts. <http://www.swindonadvertiser.co.uk/news/school_focus/10999097.CROFT_PRIMARY_SCHOOL__Small_but_perfectly_formed/>

With regards to the WHF consultation we awaited a response to the actions suggested by Mr Cooke ( Chair of governors/directors) but as none was forthcoming we had no option but to raise our concerns to the Schools Adjudicator ( Government body responsible for authorising opening, expanding, reducing  and closing schools). Mr Buckland MP has also written (letter attached).  The role and responsibilities in terms of school place planning and relationships with Federations and SBC is unclear( *email correspondence already underway, initiated by B Mattock* ).

1. **Road Traffic Consultation**

The SBC Croft Area Access Consultation planning process in which Carole and Kareen ( on behalf of PaRa) have participated was in ignorance of the WHF's plan to open the school in all years ahead of any clear understanding of the traffic status and any proposals to be considered as a consequence.  As this consultation is about the safety and amenity of all who live in or use the area it would be surprising if the WHF did not wish to consider the safety of current or potential pupils prior to considering early opening. At this point Claire Cornelius of SBC is working on the planned consultation dates and will confirm these to PaRa asap.

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1. **Play Area Consultation**

The link to the plans is not on the council website because Sal Bridges has been ill. 50 people attended the consultation which was thought to be a good number.

1. **Parking restrictions in lay by**

This forms part of the road traffic consultation. It was agreed Francis Maples did an excellent job with finding alternative accommodation for the lay by resident.

1. **Newsletter**

Will be printed by 18.2.14, and ready for distribution after then.

1. **AGM on 17.5.14 at Croft Sports Centre 10-12noon**

The running order will be the same as last year.

1. **Traffic Survey**

On next agenda

1. **Closure of Newport Street**

Signage boards poor and mostly blown over, could important information like this be displayed on the illuminated gantry on Croft Road?

1. **AOB**

Recycling instructions were unclear.

There is a good street cleaner at the back of Henrietta Court.

Marlborough Road doctor’s surgery is closing at the end of March, 2200 patients will need to find another GP.

**Action:** Cllr Watts agreed to send a link to Linda listing GPs.

**Date of next Meeting: Monday 10th of March at 7.30pm in the Wheatsheaf**