**Minutes of the Pipers Area Resident’s Association Committee Meeting 11.2.13**

**Held at Linda Kasmaty’s house-52, St. Margaret’s Road**

**Apologies:** Daphne Hardwick, Susanne Webb, Colin Doubleday, Duncan Cunningham, Bea Menier.

**Present:** Cllr Mattock, Cllr Watts, Cllr Bluh, PC. Tim North, Carole Bent, Claire Bouverie-Brine, Kareen Boyd, Linda Kasmaty

**Minutes of the Last Meeting:** were approved by Claire Bouverie-Brine and seconded by Kareen Boyd

**Matters Arising**

Carole Bent chaired the main part of the meeting.

We agreed that if people wanted to observe meetings with a view to joining the committee, this would be fine and they would be welcome to do so.

Marlborough Lane was resurfaced on Monday 11.2.13, residents had been informed that this would be happening by Matt Penman in advance and wanted their thanks relayed back. There was a problem however when Croft Sports Centre padlocked their gate to prevent people leaving the car park by that route, thereby leaving Marlborough Lane residents with no means of exit by car. Road markings will not be added to the road immediately.

It was agreed that there will be a holistic look at the road system, including parking at Lakeside, the intention being that everyone living in the area will be able to express their views. Cllr Mattock said there will have to be a TRO for the whole of Lakeside if we consider one part of it.

**Action:** Cllr Mattock will email LAK about the date of the consultation for residents about the parking issues.

There was a question about the road markings under the Evelyn Street railway bridge.

**Action:** Cllr Mattock will ensure the road markings are laid down.

The signs at the top of the unadopted section of Marlborough Lane for Croft Sport’s Centre, Children’s Centre and School are in the consultation stage, a prototype will be available for inspection within 2-4 weeks.

Carole Bent is our nominated person to look at the sign to approve the design.

More detailed signage will appear further down the road as appropriate.

Cllr Bluh was asked about the weight restriction for parked vehicles in a residential area, but was unable to provide an answer.

**Action:** Cllr Bluh to find out what the weight restriction is in residential areas.

Clarification had been sought on Cllr Heenan’s remarks about registering an interest in green spaces. Cllr. Bluh said there was no need to register an interest in green spaces, the council have a policy to protect green space, but there is no guarantee that a green space will be there forever. If anyone wanted to know the status of any green space, one could ask.

The fencing and shrubbery around the Croft School will be completed when the ground is drier in the spring.

Access from Hesketh Crescent onto the Croft site will be fenced off or access barred by a locked hinged gate; emergency vehicles only would be able to gain entry.

**Action:** Cllr Bluh to find out whether access to the Croft site from Hesketh Crescent will be barred by a fence panel or locked gate and will email LAK with results of enquiry.

**Police Update**

Not much to report because after Christmas, there is generally a lull in criminal activity in January and February. There was one evening when 15 vehicles in the Old Town area were broken into however, the individual(s) appeared to start at the Weavers, into the Planks, down Mill Lane where 2 cars were vandalised, another 2 in Winifred St., and Hesketh Crescent, then they went down Westlecot Road, down Commonweal Road and then home? Nothing really was taken from the cars, and it seems like a one off incident.

Colin Smith is back in court on the 18th of March; details of his ASBO appear in the latest issue of the Police Newsletter, but basically he is not allowed to beg, but can do jobs for people if they agree.

**Old Town Spring Clean**

Before fixing a date for local residents to engage in an Old Town spring clean, quite a bit of research needs to be conducted. Progress has been hampered by Stan Pajak’s failing to turn up to a meeting with Carole Bent and Cllr Watts, and Richard Deacon chair of Old Town Retailers being unwell. Carole will look round Old Town in advance of a meeting with Richard Deacon on the 18th of February to gauge what needs doing, and the level of support from retailers. The situation is complicated by the nature of what needs doing, whether it’s cleaning, painting or maintenance. The Old Town Group are also interested in joining in with this activity which at the moment is going to be litter picking and sign cleaning with a review of street furniture to be considered at a later stage. The date for street cleaning has been delayed until the next meeting.

The Old Town shopping centre is now in Eascott Ward, but it is still our area which we would like to improve.

**Traffic Mitigation Proposals**

The councillors will hold a meeting so that we can discuss traffic mitigation proposals.

Croft School building has now been completed, any further work being done will be that instructed by White Horse Federation such as installing fixtures and fittings.

Fence panels have gone up, but not noise attenuation ones.

Brian Cleighton- Hills will email LAK when all work has been completed.

The school travel plan is not in place; it was also pointed out that despite being a residential area Marlborough lane has every conceivable vehicle travelling down it.

A coach picking up children from the Croft School found difficulty turning round recently; photographs of the coach turning in Hesketh Crescent were handed round the meeting.

Kareen Boyd has been asked to forward questions about the Croft School site from local residents, these appear at the end of the minutes.

**Planning Application for 30 Evelyn Street**

Many questions have been asked about this from the safety of the trees, potential loss of street parking etc. Cllr Bluh was asked how a planning application can be assessed if the traffic mitigation proposals are not yet known and will not necessarily come into play for another 7 years when the school numbers are at their maximum. He replied that although money has been set aside for traffic mitigation, but the nature of traffic mitigation is not known yet; planning will consider whether there are traffic implications if the development were passed.

**Feedback from Localities Meeting held 31.1.13 at 6.30pm at the Arts Centre**

The meeting was well attended and there was some interest in our organisation expressed by people who visited our stand. A point was made that more people may have attended if it had been more widely advertised, local businesses in Old Town like Blaylocks were not informed about the meeting. This was because it was a southern locality meeting, and old town shops are now in central ward as is the Arts Centre. We agreed local businesses are an essential part of Old Town and we need to involve them.

PARA gained funding to help run the organisation.

Localities funding is being cut back because of the cuts in budgets. Cllr Bluh stated that he thinks locality working is vital if we are to work as ‘One Swindon’. Funding at the moment is critical and decisions are having to be made quickly while preserving the integrity of what the council set out to deliver. A meeting was being held on 12.2.13 to discuss budget cuts and the way forward, the public will be informed by the end of February.

Shadowing councillors and their officers as a means of sharing experiences was suggested by PARA members, Cllr Bluh agreed in principle, with reservations when there are confidential meetings.

**Action:** Members of PARA to say who they would like to shadow by next meeting.

AOB

1. Meeting with Croft School- there has been a tree planting day organised by PARA but nothing else.

Action: Cllr Watts will contact the school to see what ideas they have for meeting so that we can build a positive relationship and they can become part of the community.

1. The 23rd of March is WWF lights out for an hour to save electricity, a link appears on the website and here: http://earthhour.wwf.org.uk/
2. There was further discussion on the fact that Old Town is now part of the Central Area of Swindon, this focuses investment in Old as well as New Town. Open and green space assessment is banded by wards; if a secondary school was needed for the town centre, it would not be built there because the central area is a master plan issue in terms of regeneration and secondary school children have to travel further to school than primary school ones.
3. The Local Plan was voted through by councillors although they are not responsible for independent parts of it. The planning officers put together the plan which can be defended in terms of planning policy. Striking the right balance between employment land and housing land is difficult, the Local Plan aims to be flexible to enable us to have jobs and prosperity for Swindon.
4. The Local Plan covers the period from now until 2026 by which time 20000 new houses will have been built; this number has been scaled down by central government from the 37000 originally planned for the town. The Local Plan mentions a Rapid Transit system to cope with the additional traffic; in 2008 a transport study revealed that an investment of 370million would be needed to keep the status quo. Whether a Rapid Transit system or a circular route were implemented, it would be extremely expensive.
5. A discussion about the reorientating the seating at planning meetings followed to enable planning committee to face the public. Holding planning meetings in Committee Room 6 was mentioned as a possible solution. Cllr Bluh was asked if we could trial the use of Room 6.

**Action:** Cllr Bluh will say something about this at our next meeting.

1. Concern was expressed about taggers, Cllr Mattock reminded us of a very successful campaign in 2007 when 18 arrests were made by photographing the tags and getting them published by the Swindon Advertiser. Wipes will clean tags off utility boxes and the public need to sign disclaimers to enable the council to remove tags on their property. Swindon is one of the least graffitied towns apparently.

Date of next Meeting: 11th of March at 7.15pm for 7.30pm

Venue to be announced

**PaRa 11/2/2013 Questions from residents regarding the condition of the complete Croft School site**

         **When will the work be finished ?**

         **The playgrounds are closer to homes than the plans had led us to expect.**

         **When is the 3 sided 2.4m noise attenuation fence to be fitted around the tarmacked playground?**

         **There is no noise attenuation on the multi-stepped wooden/grass play area. Noise will be carried to Hesketh Crescent. When will a noise attenuation fence be fitted around this area?**

         **Who controls the access to the Croft Site from Hesketh Crescent on the additional entrance which SBC/SCS have built but was not on the plan?**

         **When will the car park be finished? The base is already washing away and failure to complete this could result in additional parking in Hesketh Crescent?**

         **A bus travelled down Hesketh Crescent last week to pick up School Children. It had to use the pavement, It is not safe and Hesketh Crescent cannot cope with this.**

         **The School Travel plan should have been completed 12 weeks after opening. It is now the 6th month after opening. This was a planning condition. Can Cllrs ensure this is now made available for residents review and feedback?**

         **Where is the rest of the shrubbery to mitigate the site, the car park and electricity substation ( already described by an estate agent as akin to a oublic toilet) and to deaden the noise from the playground and the car park for the amenity of local residents?**

         **There are still gaps in the fencing along Hesketh Crescent and fencing has not been securly fastened along Hesketh, when will this be complete?**

         **Mitigations: when will the ‘holistic’ consultation be held regarding the remainder of Marlborough Lane and parking in the overall area , including Lakeside?**

         **Mitigations: when are the roadmarkings under the railway bridge going to be redone?**