

Wednesday, 13th June, 2018, 7.30 – 9.30 pm - The Maxwell Room, The Oakwood Centre, Woodley

MINUTES

- 1. Present:** Mary Bather (in the chair), Mike Evans (vice-chair), Sion William (ACER – minute taker), Jenny Lissaman (ACER), Councillor Swaddle (ETC), Councillor Armstrong (ETC), Councillor Barker (WTC), Councillor Dolinski (WTC & WBC), Sgt Mark Smith (Thames Valley Police), Mary Holmes (WTCMI), Tony Lomax (Woodley & Earley Lions), Ian Hills (Woodley & Whitegates Labour Party), Revd Philip Hobday (early St Peter's Church), Cedric Lander (WTC)
Residents – N S Gill, P Lunt, S Jenkman, E Edwards, M Millard, C Lawley,
Apologies: Councillor Baker (WTC, WBC), Councillor Matthews (ETC), Jacques Lherbier (Woodley TCMI), Zofia Frazinski, David Provins (Friends of Woodford Park), Michelle Stone (ACER), Shelagh Flower (WASP)

2. Minutes of the previous meeting (AGM) – 12.04.18 / matters arising

2.1 Cycle survey in Woodley Precinct: Chair reported on the survey of people cycling in Woodley Precinct over the previous 2 weeks (draft report attached) and thanked Jenny Lissaman, Mike and Carol Evans and Shelagh Flower for their help in counting cyclists. At peak times there can be as many as 26 cyclists per hour cycling through the precinct. The recorders observed no accidents but they did observe cyclists travelling at speed and cycling very near to pedestrians. The main points can be summarised as:

- Cyclists include adults, teenagers, primary school aged children and some pre-school children.
- The peak times of the day are 8.30 – 9.30 am and 2.30 – 4.30 pm on school days; 10.30 am – 2.30 pm on school holidays. But there is also a smaller peak at lunchtimes on school days and later in the day (4.30pm onwards) on fine days.
- The numbers are affected by the weather – there are significantly fewer cyclists when it is cold / wet.
- Many adults were seen wheeling their cycles through the precinct so the fact that it is a no cycling zone is obviously fairly widely known. The number of adults wheeling exceeded the number cycling.
- The round no-cycling signs on the lamp posts at all 3 main entrances are very clear. The written messages on the road surface are less clear as they have become worn.
- There were also a significant number of children (and adults) using scooters to ride through the precinct. These were not recorded.

Cyclists in the precinct can be divided into 4 main groups:

- Adults on their own – usually cycling fairly quickly directly from A to B (i.e. straight through the precinct or into the precinct and stopping at a shop). These adults do not usually use the cycle racks.
- Adolescents (usually boys aged between 10 and 16) more than often in small groups cycling at speed round and round the precinct and weaving in between pedestrians, trees, seats etc. They tend to get very close to groups of people and then swerve away. They sometimes congregate on the stage area. They have been seen to leave a lot of litter, doing 'wheelies' and even cycling into Iceland. According to traders it is the same youngsters day after day.
- Primary aged children sometimes accompanied by adults on their way to or from school. Some of these children gather in the precinct before school in the morning and cycle round and round.
- Pre-school age children accompanied by parents.

There was a detailed discussion on the findings. Cllr Dolinski suggested that as it was impossible to enforce the no-cycling rules it would be better to remove them altogether and make the precinct a shared space (as in Reading). However, a number of residents believed strongly that the 'no-cycling' rule should be maintained and attempts made to deal with offenders. It was generally agreed that the most effective way of dealing with inconsiderate cycling was through education.

Sgt Smith explained that dangerous cycling was only an offence when taking place on the road. Cyclists in the precinct could be considered guilty of careless cycling. He believed that the best route to take was education followed by enforcement if necessary.

ACTIONS:

- Sgt Smith to investigate the legality of the 'no-cycling' signs.
- PSCO's to spend an hour (when adult cyclists are most likely to be cycling through) speaking to and warning cyclists.
- The problem of adolescent cyclists who are also acting in an antisocial way to be addressed through the current police work on ASB.
- Police to work with the schools (particularly Beechwood) to educate the primary school children (and their parents) about safe / considerate cycling. As far as the toddlers were concerned it probably only needed a quiet word by the PCSOs to the parents.

2.2 Results of 'Have your say' – The forum handed out 'have your say' papers at the AGM (April 12th) and Burglary and Fraud conference (May 12th) asking residents to indicate which 3 areas were of most concern to them.

Results were:

Fraud etc	16
Burglary	15
ASB	14
Speeding	12
Theft	10
Litter	8
Parking	6
Dog fouling	5
Drugs	2

There was some discussion around the fact that the number of burglaries in the area were in reality small – what there is tends to be from sheds - but that burglary was something residents were particularly concerned about and always had been. It was agreed that while it is necessary to educate the public in general safety it is important not to build a culture of fear which is often fed by social media and the local press. The forum plans to hold another 'have your say' later in the year. It will be interesting to see if the order has changed.

ACTION: Chair and Vice-chair to organise another 'Have your Say'.

2.3 Other actions from the minutes and matters not on the agenda

2.3.1. Scam advice from Burglary and Fraud conference has been summarised and sent to Woodley Herald and ACER Newsletter

2.3.2 Update on Butt's Hill bridge works from Cllr Dolinski - Network Rail have got carte blanche, but they've done nothing so far although pressure has been put on them by Matt Rhodda.

2.3.3 Constitution has been amended – **Chair to circulate (ACTION)**

2.3.4 Speed monitoring in Coppice Road / Hurricane Way. Councillor Swaddle explained that this was mis-minuted and was not an action for her to follow up. Cllr Dolinski said that no residents in these roads had mentioned speeding to him recently.

2.3.6 Thames Valley Alert was being promoting through ACER website and local newsletters. It had been too late to include anything in the Carnival Programme.

3 Update from Neighbourhood Policing Team on recent reported criminal activity in the local area

Sgt Smith reported that there were no particular issues in the area that were not covered in the priorities update below. A resident had raised the issue of drugs use in the Memorial Garden in Woodford Park – particularly at the end of the school day when relatives wishing to visit the garden had been intimidated by youths who were believed

to be involved in drug use. Sgt Smith was not aware of any recent instances in this area but would contact the resident concerned to discuss in more detail. There are problems with drug supply and use in the borough. Sgt Smith explained that TVP's strategy was to target the dealers and thus 'hit them where it hurt'.

4 Local policing priorities update (from Sgt Mark Smith):

4.1 Antisocial behaviour (ASB): ASB figures reported for the 12 months (Year on Year) were: Woodley down 2%, Earley down 8%, Twyford down 12%. However, there is an emerging problem regarding youths on bikes and ASB. Some are from Woodley but there are also some from Earley and New Town / Cemetery Junction. What is particularly concerning is that there are older individuals (18 – 19) mixing with 12 – 13 year olds. It should be noted that this is only a minority group, not all youths in the area are involved in ASB. There was an incident outside The Chequers PH in the town centre involving 20 – 30 people. The report that weapons were involved was false. There had been a rumour that there would be a rematch at the carnival so police visited the parents of known youngsters and most parents came 'on board'. As a result of this nothing happened on the Saturday at the carnival. The police continue to use intelligence, carry out research and visit parents. Knives do not appear to be an issue in Woodley.

4.2 Speeding: Woodley Speed Watch update from Cllr Barker - Woodley has purchased its own roadside speed monitoring equipment which includes a vehicle movement data logger and a radar speed detector with integral video camera for evidence. The former is an anonymous black box device which can be mounted high up on existing roadside poles. This device does not give any feedback to the driver but monitors vehicle movement and speed in both directions. The aim is to monitor vehicle movement in a selected road for a period of a week and then use the downloaded data to determine whether or not there is sufficient evidence of time of day speeding to go to the second stage. The second stage involves deploying a Speedwatch team with a radar detection device which triggers a video camera (showing make + colour of vehicle and registration) if a vehicle is speeding. The registered owner of the speeding vehicle will receive a notification of the speeding details in a letter from TVP. If a vehicle is detected speeding multiple times, TVP will take action against the owner of the vehicle.

Community Speed Watch Update from Sgt Smith – Volunteers are now being trained for the TVP community speed watch for Wokingham. Training should be completed by the end of June. N Earley is included in the area covered by this group. The process will be that any speed complaints from the public will be taken to the Forum for the Forum to prioritise where the Speed Watch equipment is deployed. If it then found that there is not a speeding issue there will be no further action. If there is found to be a slight speeding issue then the Speed Watch will be deployed for further checks and letters will then be sent to the offending drivers. The Speed Watch equipment does not record this on camera. Details are noted at the time by volunteers and then passed to another volunteer who does the vehicle details checks and sends out the relevant letters. If a major speeding issue is identified the NHPT will be notified who will then go out and do some enforcement. Whatever the outcomes they should then be discussed at the next Forum. This is only just getting off the ground and so there are likely to be some changes to the procedures depending upon numbers of volunteers, locations put forward and the extent of the problems identified.

It was agreed that the Forum should provide details of Woodley roads where there are concerns regarding speeding to the Woodley Speed Watch Team and to TVP for Earley. Colemansmoor Road, Coppice Road, Howarth Drive, Loddon Bridge Road and Woodlands Avenue were all mentioned. Of particular concern at the meeting was the speeding along Colemansmoor Road near Oak Drive which meant that it was almost impossible for parents and children to cross to school in the morning. This was noted and the meeting recommended that this be one of the priority roads for the Woodley Speed Watch group.

ACTION: ACER to provide details of roads of concern in N Earley.

4.3 Computer fraud / telephone scamming / Promotion of Thames Valley Alert

Sgt Smith reported that the burglary and fraud events at the Crescent Centre and Oakwood Centre had been well received. Julie Susel and her team had worked hard to make them a success. It was suggested that there should be another one in Woodley in the autumn.

ACTION: Chair to liaise with Julie regarding the organisation of another event.

C Lawley reminded the Forum that the local police are unable to help anyone who has experienced fraud unless there is an actual crime being committed at the time. Fraud has to be reported to Action Fraud. Promotion of Thames Valley Alert is ongoing.

Priorities to remain ASB, Speeding and Promotion of the Thames Valley Alert.

5 Communications

There was some discussion on the need to improve communication so that details of Forum events and Forum messages regarding public safety could reach as many residents as possible in Woodley and N Earley. At present the Forum was using Thames Valley Alert, the ACER newsletter (which covers the Whitegates area of Earley) and the Woodley Herald (which goes to all Woodley residents every few months). There has been less success with the local paper (Wokingham Times). Earley Town Council have agreed to put Forum notices up under the glass on their notice boards in N Earley. Woodley Town Council have new notice boards.

ACTION: Chair to ask WTC clerk if WTC would put Forum notices on their new boards.

The use of on-line forums was discussed. It was agreed that they should be used to get information out to the public but that careful thought should be given to their use for answering questions from residents as this could be very time consuming. The Forum plans to apply for funding to produce and distribute leaflets regarding public safety (particularly aimed at more vulnerable residents) and also to investigate the possibility of setting up a website.

ACTIONS:

- Chair and vice-chair to apply for funding to ETC, WTC and PPF.
- Chair to contact MERA to find out details of the university personnel who helped with their website.

6 AOB

6.1 More help needed – The cycle survey had highlighted the fact that if the Forum were to do more than hold meetings with representatives of local organisations (including TVP) and residents more volunteers were needed to head up specific projects. It was agreed that requests for volunteers should be included in any communications sent out.

6.2 Bells on 13/14 Buses – Cllr Dolinski reported that bells for use of passengers sitting at the back of the upstairs were now being installed on the 13/14 buses.

6.3 Young People. It was agreed that young people should be represented at the Forum Meetings.

ACTION: Cllr Dolinski to ask the Woodley Community Youth Partnership if they would like to send a representative to the next meeting.

7 Date and venue of next meeting – Wednesday, 19th September at the Oakwood Centre.