

**Minutes of the Tanworth-in-Arden Parish Council Meeting
held on Tuesday 16th June 2020 at 7.30pm via Zoom**

Public Forum

There were approximately 40 members of the public present at the meeting.

The Chairman welcomed everyone and then handed over to Councillor O'Brien to outline the remit for the proposed working party.

Remit for joint working party of the Parish Council and Earlswood and Forshaw Heath Residents' Association (EFRHA):

The Parish Council is in agreement with working with EFHRA to try to come to a resolution of the varied issues identified affecting Malthouse Lane and The Lakes. It is important that the views of all residents in the identified area are considered when making recommendations for action and not just those of any particular pressure group.

To this end, the first stage of the process will be to engage with interested parties via discussion and a survey carried out by an independent, external agency. Based on the findings of this process the working party will put forward possible solutions to the issues. These suggestions will be put forward to residents for their approval or otherwise.

The issues identified are:

- Malthouse Lane – Parking and speeding
- The causeway – Parking, Anti-social behaviour (ASB) and drug dealing
- Malthouse Park – Parking, ASB, drug dealing
- The Lakes – ASB, drug dealing, night fishing
- Wood Lane car park – ASB, drugs, time of parking

Based on the outcome of this review the Parish Council and Residents' Association will have a mandate to petition from a position of strength the various bodies that have a statutory responsibility for the lakes, roads and the prevention of anti-social behaviour.

If you wish to make any constructive comments to help inform this process, please contact the working party at chair@earlswood-forshawheath.org.uk

Comments already expressed to both the Parish Council and E&FHRA will be passed on to the working party so there is no need to resend them.

In the first instance we will acknowledge your communication and may refer back to you for clarification if needed.

The Chairman then invited Mr James Lines who is a resident of Malthouse Lane to address the Parish Council.

Mr Lines read out the following statement:

Good Evening everyone. The Parish Council, Residents' Association, Canal & Rivers Trust and Alcester Police have, in my opinion, failed in their combined duty to stop anti-social behaviour in Earlswood, over a number of years. There is overwhelming evidence catalogued by residents in multiple locations, coupled with a 101-call

log that extends to dozens of calls every month, which irrefutably proves there is a major problem. In one Earlswood location alone, the residents have catalogued 364 separate incidents of anti-social behaviour over the last three and a half years. On a newly created Earlswood anti-social behaviour blog, residents recorded 22 incidents for the week ending Sunday 14th June alone, including a car accelerating off the causeway, crossing the pavement and crashing into two vehicles parked on a resident's drive. 364 incidents at one location in three and a half years, 22 incidents in one week, dozens of 101 calls raised every month and 1 major accident last week. These are just some of the facts regarding anti-social behaviour in Earlswood and they must not be ignored. The anti-social behaviour web log will be maintained every week, to expose and publicise the problems that a vocal minority of residents seek to normalise, deflect from or even deny take place. Every day, residents are coming forward to a community Facebook group, to provide evidence of anti-social behaviour, or to vent their frustration at the wholly inadequate response provided by the local agencies, who are designated to protect this area. This group is not a handful of residents at the bottom of Malthouse Lane – it has representation from residents near the park, by Earlswood station, The Common, Wood Lane, Lady Lane and other locations. The new group has gained 136 members in 15 days.

- 1) Earlswood has become a playground for those intent on speeding, dangerous driving and car cruising.
- 2) Earlswood has become a playground for those involved with the supply, purchase and consumption of cannabis and nitrous oxide.
- 3) Earlswood has become a playground for night-time anti-social behaviour
- 4) Parking, although a serious problem should not carry similar weight to these other issues.

The first step in moving forward and I do welcome the formation of a working party, is for the Residents' Association and Parish Council to acknowledge the extent of the problem. Only then, can there be a discussion about how to rectify the myriad of issues which are complex, multi-faceted and often interlinked. Residents have formed a new committee called EASE, which stands for Earlswood Area Safer Environment. EASE will initially work to crowdfund the purchase of ANPR-capable CCTV cameras at anti-social hotspots. EASE will seek to mount the cameras on private land and be fully compliant with data protection law. Similar schemes that are supported by Alcester Police have yielded excellent results in Claverdon and Barston. We hope the Parish Council will support EASE and its objectives. We ask that residents who are frustrated with the lack of progress in tackling Anti-social behaviour, join our new Earlswood Community Facebook group or go to www.earlswoodcommunity.co.uk to find out more about EASE and how it intends to utilise ANPR cameras. We stand united and determined to stop anti-social behaviour in Earlswood. Thank you for your time.

Mrs Cotterill then addressed the Parish Council and read out the following statement:

Good Evening Parish Council. My name is Caroline Cotterill I do not live in Malthouse Lane however my elderly Mother-in Law does. She is currently fairly well shielded from the current concerns regarding Malthouse Lane due to the current COVID 19 circumstances. I don't pretend to speak on behalf of my Mother-in-Law, however the one thing I do know over the last few years is her concern about careless parking in Malthouse Lane. My husband and I still live in the Parish and we obviously have reason to drive down Malthouse Lane.

With reference to the current concerns I am well aware this meeting is to form a working party with full delegated powers consisting of 3 members of the Parish Council and 3 members of the Earlswood and Forshaw Heath Residents' Association to investigate ASB and traffic issues causing distress to residents in the vicinity of The Lakes and Malthouse Lane. I would like assurance from the Working Group once formed that:

1. They do not go ahead with Cameras and then decide to close the Causeway
2. That they seek observations from residents that could be directly/indirectly affected by any suggested change.

3. That everything is transparent and available for review or comment.
4. That a long term solution is sought and not a short term, please a few sticky plaster solutions.
5. Fact driven and not subjective. I would like to pass comment and thank the Parish Council for having a virtual meeting and going live via Zoom. I hope this is something you will consider continuing to do for those that can't physically be at future meetings. A brilliant step forward. Thank You!

The Chairman then invited questions from the floor:

District Councillor Dixon asked James Lines about the 101 statistics that he quoted. Cllr Dixon said that in the past when the Police have been contacted they have stated that there have been insufficient calls to 101 to warrant further significant actions on their part. Where is the statistic extracted from – is it Police records?

Mr Lines confirmed that the statistics for last week were recorded by residents. The 364 incidents mentioned were provided by residents living near to the park who keep a log of incidents. The Clerk confirmed that the Parish Council received this incident log and the most recent one was received earlier in the month and had been forwarded to all Councillors upon receipt. With regard to the 101 calls logged, Mr Lines suggested that the Parish Council contacts Alcester Police SNT for statistics from residents. There would need to be averaging out of the calls

A Lady Lane resident said that they are experiencing all of the ASB that others have mentioned and he asked that the safety of pedestrians and residents are taken in to account. He mentioned the crossroads of Wood Lane, Lady Lane and Norton Lane and reported that there have been a number of accidents at this junction over the years including some fatalities. The resident asked that the scope is widened from just ASB to include safety issues and he offered to submit a report which he has sent to Solihull Council which indicates some of the issues over the last few years.

The Chairman closed the Public Forum

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held on Thursday 16th June via Zoom**

Present: Councillor Willmott (Chair), Councillor Brougham, Councillor Burgess, Councillor Chaudry, Councillor Jones, Councillor Oakley, Councillor Ebbutt, Councillor O'Brien, Councillor Ross, Councillor Saunders and Councillor Doidge

In attendance: Julie White, Parish Clerk

20/21/001 - Apologies for absence – Councillor Adams

20/21/002

- **To receive declarations of interest from Councillors on items on the agenda-** None
- **To receive written request for dispensations for disclosable pecuniary interests (if any)-** None
- **To consider any requests for dispensations as appropriate-** None

20/21/003-

Proposal to form a working party with full delegated powers consisting of 3 members of the Parish Council and 3 members of the Earlswood and Forshaw Heath Residents' Association to investigate Anti-social behaviour and traffic issues causing distress to residents in the vicinity of The Lakes and Malthouse Lane

Prior to the meeting, an information report had been circulated asking for volunteers stating what would be required from them if they were to join the working party. Three councillors had volunteered prior to the meeting, namely Councillors O'Brien, Burgess and Adams. The Parish Council had also been made aware prior to the meeting that the working party would most likely conduct a survey of residents which could cost up to £1500 plus VAT but more than likely would be less than this. The Parish Council were asked to fund this survey.

Councillor Willmott proposed that the joint working party with Earlswood and Forshaw Heath Residents' Association is formed with full delegated powers. All Councillors were in agreement with the proposal. Therefore it was RESOLVED that the joint working party is formed with Councillors O'Brien, Burgess and Adams joining on behalf of the Parish Council.

Councillor Saunders asked for a Terms of Reference and timetable. Councillor O'Brien said that they understood the urgency and would act as quickly as possible and the Terms of Reference would be finalised once the working party had met but it would be along the lines of the remit that Councillor O'Brien had read out at the start of the meeting. Councillor Burgess said that once the working party meets, they will be able to get a timetable sorted. The Chairman asked that the working party could circulate their aims and objectives within 2 weeks. Councillor Burgess urged everyone to send their views in to the working party so that they had an overall picture.

Councillor Ross said that he didn't live in Earlswood, but a lot of the issues were common and he will be supportive of the working party.

The Chairman thanked everyone for making the effort to log in to the first virtual meeting and closed the meeting.

Signed _____ Date _____