

ACRA

Alliance of Christchurch Residents Associations

Minutes of the meeting on **Tuesday 13th March 2012 at 7.30pm**

- 1. Present:** Liz Evans (Christchurch Citizens); Rob Evans (Christchurch Citizens); Ken Clay (Friars Cliff); John Mather (Highcliffe); Mike Collard (SAMRA); Debbie Stephens (SAMRA); John Pendrill (West Christchurch - Chairman); Jim Biggin (West Christchurch - Secretary);
- 2. Apologies for Absence:** Andy Glaser (Friars Cliff);
- 3. Resignation:** the resignation of Malcolm Burton-Smith (SAMRA) for personal family reasons was received with regret
- 4. Acceptance of Minutes:** the minutes of 13th December 2011 were accepted
- 5. Matters Arising:**
 - 5.1. Procedure for mending damaged bus stops:** in future if a bus stop requires repair or replacement The Bournemouth Transport Action Group should be contacted and asked to make such joint representation as is required to secure remedial action
 - 5.2. Future waste collection in Christchurch:** Jim Biggin reported that in response to the guidance notes issued by Cllr Margaret Phipps and distributed to members Cllr Colin Bungey has asked that his concerns be likewise distributed. *It was agreed that Jim Biggin should do that.*
 - 5.3. DCC Cllr Spencer Flower 23rd February 2012 presentation:** a very interesting and illuminating presentation revealed that:
 - 5.3.1.** DCC still has a £15million pa shortfall in revenue
 - 5.3.2.** 500 full time DCC posts have been removed
 - 5.3.3.** A further cut in central grant is anticipated but has not been budgeted for
 - 5.3.4.** However, 75% of DCC revenue is raised by local taxation so this development will not be so serious for DCC as for other local councils where in extreme examples only 25% of revenue comes from local taxation
 - 5.3.5.** The freezing of Council Tax generates a further £5 million shortfall that will eventually have to be made up from taxation or grant
 - 5.3.6.** Cllr Flower believes he has established better control over DCC capital accounts and intends to ensure that any future borrowing does not produce a corresponding increase in servicing revenue
 - 5.3.7.** He does not believe that the Euro can survive in its current form
 - 5.3.8.** He hopes to obtain at least 90p in the £ back on Icelandic funds

- 5.4. Localism Act 2012:** Jim Biggin confirmed the date and time of the meeting with CBC Director Neil Farmer to discuss this topic
- 6. Treasurer's Report:** ACRA funds amount to £111.93
- 7. Chairman for 2012-13:** John Pendrill was asked to continue as Chairman for a further year and accepted the position
- 8. DCC Officers' Salaries:** Jim Biggin confirmed that following the publication of these salaries and job titles in The Echo he had contacted Cllr Spencer Flower regarding: apparently overlapping job functions; the large number of managerial layers in relation to the overall size of the operation; the size of the salaries when related to the salary levels of jobs in the Dorchester area. Cllr Spencer has indicated that he has these matters under review.
- 9. CBC Budget Review 2012-13:** John Pendrill reported a poorly attended meeting. The main facts to emerge were:
- 9.1.** Central Government funding has been reduced by £513,000 over the past two years. The next two years should see further reductions of £140,000. CBC believe that further, additional cuts may be forthcoming
 - 9.2.** The Council Tax for 2012-13 remains frozen for another year. In that year there will be no pay increases although employer's pension contributions will increase by 1%. It is anticipated that Council Tax will rise by 2.5% in 2013-14. CBC believes that 2013-14 and 2015-16 will both be challenging years.
 - 9.3.** Under new legislation any proposed Council Tax increase over 3.5% will force a referendum in that council's area. That is something CBC wishes to avoid.
 - 9.4.** CBC 2011-12 budget includes £100,000 towards the provision of superfast broadband locally, something much welcomed by the business community.
 - 9.5.** Revenue savings in 2011-12 were £358,000 and in 2012-13 will be a further £113,000. CBC's target is total savings of £688,000 over five years, thus leaving £217,000 still to be found. This target is higher than *the current* target set by Central Government.
 - 9.6.** The national change to the way in which business rates are administered should be good news for CBC. However CBC reported that DCC has misunderstood the impact it will have upon them and are re-assessing their already difficult situation.
 - 9.7.** A national reduction of 10% in Council Tax benefits (to be renamed a discount) will come into force in 2012-13. Pensioners, and some other vulnerable groups, will be protected from this development.
- 10. Delegate to Bournemouth Airport:** John Pendrill reported that:
- 10.1.** The parking drop-off fee is to be reviewed in April 2012
 - 10.2.** The Bournemouth Airport Community Fund would be open to an approach from Highcliffe

- 11. Druitt Hall:** following the resignation of Malcolm Burton-Smith it was resolved that Liz Evans (Christchurch Citizens) and Rob Evans (Christchurch Citizens) would represent us
- 12. Druitt Gardens:** as for Druitt Hall
- 13. The Navitus Bay Wind Farm:** Friars Cliff, Highcliffe and SAMRA gave details of this development and drew attention in particular to the fact that CBC had failed to comment on this proposed development despite protests lodged by Lymington PC, Lyndhurst PC and Bournemouth Council. *It was resolved that* Jim Biggin would write to David McIntosh, CEO CBC to ask for clarification of the CBC stance on this issue
- 14. Mundeford Wood Community Centre:** Debbie Stephens (SAMRA) reported that the Community Hall would be taken into local management on 1st April 2012 with a fun day to follow on 28th April 2012 to which all are invited
- 15. St Catherine's' Hill Management Plan:** West Christchurch reported that the draft plan for the Management of St Catherine's Hill is now out for public consultation until 31st March 2012.
- 16. Next Meeting:** Tuesday 12th June 2012 at The Hall on the Hill, West Christchurch at 7.30pm

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