

ACRA

Alliance of Christchurch Residents Associations

Minutes of the meeting on **Tuesday 11th December 2012 at 7.30pm**

1. **Present:** Liz Evans (Christchurch Citizens); Rob Evans (Christchurch Citizens); Ken Clay (Friars Cliff); Brian Smith (Highcliffe); Malcolm Burton-Smith (SAMRA); Debbie Stephens (SAMRA); Mike Collard (SAMRA); Jim Biggin (West Christchurch – Acting Chairman and Secretary); Roger Hamilton (West Christchurch)
2. **Apologies for Absence:** Nigel Cook (Christchurch Citizens); Andy Glaser (Friars Cliff);
3. **Acceptance of Minutes:** the minutes of 11th September 2012 were accepted
4. **Matters Arising:** none that were not covered elsewhere
5. **Treasurer's Report:** ACRA funds amount to £111.93. In response to an enquiry from the Treasurer, WCRA confirmed that the incremental cost of hiring The Hall on the Hill for ACRA meetings was not a significant expense and no contribution would be required from ACRA in 2013
6. **Delegate to Bournemouth Airport:** Brian Smith (Highcliffe) reported that John Mather (Highcliffe) had attended a meeting as ACRA representative and he would ask John to send a copy of the minutes to Jim Biggin as soon as they were to hand.
7. **Druitt Hall:** Liz Evans (Christchurch Citizens) and Rob Evans (Christchurch Citizens) reported more than 150 letters of objection and a petition containing more than 900 signatures had been raised objecting to the closure and demolition of the hall. Powers contained within The Localism Act 2011 related to local assets were being investigated. *It was resolved that* individual members would lobby their local councillors if their own management committees agreed that the hall should be saved.
8. **Navitus Bay Wind Farm:**
 - 8.1. Brian Smith (Highcliffe) reported that: information related to various aspects of the proposal was being gathered; Hengistbury Residents Association (HENRA) is doing a good job and their meeting had been very useful; portfolio holder Councillor Margaret Phipps was working hard and had been very helpful
 - 8.2. In general discussion it was noted that questions related to economics and real overall environmental impact remain unanswered and appear to be unanswerable. It was suggested that Central Government was involved in a certain amount of creative activity in this area of concern
 - 8.3. The next round of public consultation has been deferred until February 2013. There has been a reduction in the planned numbers of turbines from 333 to 218 and a small reduction in their height. Also their proposed distance from the shore has been increased.

9. The Three Applications to Build Supermarkets - update: Jim Biggin reported that:

- 9.1. The ACRA letter to DCC Councillor Spencer Flower about the Dorset Development Partnership and the Old Magistrates Court site had produced interesting and valuable information that had been passed on to the members of the CBC Planning Committee
- 9.2. After several attempts the CBC Planning Committee had passed the Meteor and Bailey Bridge applications but had twice refused the Morrison's Stony Lane application.
- 9.3. CBC Planning Department had referred the Bailey Bridge application to The Secretary of State and his comments were still awaited.
- 9.4. He had discussed the overall performance of the CBC Planning Department with portfolio holder Councillor Margaret Phipps. *It was resolved that* ACRA should take no further action on this front for the time being.

10. Potential Relocation of Civic Offices: Jim Biggin reported that:

- 10.1. His meeting with Councillor Nottage, CBC CEO David McIntosh and Nigel Cook (Christchurch Citizens) had been instructive and informative. A detailed account had been sent to ACRA members. West Christchurch had posted the account to its website www.wcresidents.co.uk and had sent full details out in its November Newsletter e-mailed to more than 1,200 residents
- 10.2. Christchurch Citizens reported that they remain unhappy with various aspects of the CBC investigation and were actively seeking local opinion
- 10.3. In general discussion it was mooted that if CBC moved out of Civic Offices on Bridge Street a huge site (including the defunct gas holders) could be available for redevelopment.

11. CBC Budget 2013-14: the invitation to attend a consultative event on Monday 28th January was welcomed. In the course of a lively discussion it emerged that:

- 11.1. DCC are seen as remote and inefficient. It was suggested that CBC and EDDC should approach New Forest Council to explore the possibility of creating a new Unitary Authority and this idea received majority support
- 11.2. The financial basis to the many statements to the effect that the sovereignty of both CBC and EDDC would be preserved were not understood and some felt that this idea should be abandoned in favour of full amalgamation and thus greater cost savings – others were not so sure
- 11.3. A majority was of the view that for largely historic reasons CBC has too many Councillors and their number could be reduced
- 11.4. The consultative event should broadly follow the format of the previous such event as a brain-storming session with small groups

examining and commenting upon current levels of expenditure and possible cost cutting or revenue raising ideas

- 12. DCC Budget 2013-14:** it was resolved that once the full CBC picture was appreciated and understood we would approach DCC Councillor Spencer Flower to discuss the overall County situation
- 13. Proposed New Parking Charges:** it was felt that the proposal to charge for evening parking in the town centre would adversely affect businesses and holiday trade. It was not clear what the net effect on say The Regent Centre might be. *It was resolved that we would write to the Resources Committee expressing this view.*
- 14. Christchurch Hospital:** the revised plans for redevelopment of the site have not yet been passed to CBC Planning. The stance taken by the local historians was noted but it was felt that the importance of making the buildings fit for medical purpose considerably outweighed any need to preserve the existing facades of the buildings
- 15. Proposed Merger of Bournemouth-Poole Hospital Trusts:** it is not entirely clear quite what state this proposal has reached. It is understood that for financial reasons Poole need to merge as soon as possible whilst Bournemouth's financial situation was declining more slowly. It was not felt that ACRA could usefully do anything at this stage.
- 16. New Police Tsar:** the election of the independent candidate, ex-police chief Martyn Underhill, was welcomed. *It was resolved that we would write to him and introduce ourselves, suggesting a meeting later in 2013 once he had come to terms with his new position*
- 17. Revised Core Strategy:** SAMRA reported they had found the huge "amendments document" very difficult to read and other members concurred. The dropping of the proposed Marsh Lane development in the Avon Valley was universally welcomed. It was felt that the outline plans for the huge Roeshot Hill housing development still did not take sufficient account of the impact upon the town's infrastructure despite various representations that had been previously made by ACRA members
- 18. Wilverley Road Recycling Centre:** WCRA reported that it was still talking to the new Dorset Waste Partnership about making the recycling centre a safer place particularly for elderly residents.
- 19. Next Meeting:** Tuesday 12th March 2013 at The Hall on the Hill, West Christchurch at 7.30pm

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