

# WEST CHRISTCHURCH RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION

[www.wcresidents.co.uk](http://www.wcresidents.co.uk)

## Committee Meeting Minutes

St Catherine's Hill: 5<sup>th</sup> April 2017 at 7.30 pm

In these minutes: ACRA=Affiliation of Christchurch Residents Associations; ARC=Amphibian and Reptile Conservation (previously known as HCT=Herpetological Conservation Trust); CBC=Christchurch Borough Council; CED=Christchurch and East Dorset; CQC=Care Quality Commission; DCC=Dorset County Council; DPCC=Dorset Police and Crime Commissioner; DWP=Dorset Waste Partnership; EDDC=East Dorset District Council; FOSCH=Friends of St Catherine's Hill; PC=Parish Council; RA=Residents Association; SBW=Sembcorp Bournemouth Water; SSSI=Site of Special Scientific Interest (Town Common and St Catherine's Hill for example); TPO=Tree Preservation Order; WCRA=West Christchurch RA; WW=Wessex Water

- 1. Present:** Chairman Jim Biggin; David Barnett; Maureen Biggin; Sue Fotheringham; Malcolm Green;
- 2. Apologies:** John Cooper
- 3. Minutes of last meeting:** The minutes of March 2017 were approved
- 4. Treasurer's Report:** David Barnett reported excess expenditure over income of £684.52 at end March 2017 with assets of £7508.52
- 5. Membership:** noted that the non-e-mail spring newsletter has been distributed
- 6. ACRA:** Jim Biggin confirmed that at the March meeting he stood down as both Chairman and Treasurer. He was replaced as Chairman by Sue Bungey of Christchurch Citizens.
- 7. ACRA breach of Constitution:** the committee discussed the actions of Sue Bungey whilst acting as ACRA Chairman, particularly the fact that sending letters under the ACRA name without first showing drafts to all ACRA members is a breach of paragraph 11 of the ACRA Constitution:

***Management by Consensus:*** all subjects considered by the Members must achieve consensus as to any action to be taken

Together with her reply when asked for an explanation:

*I am afraid I do not have the time or inclination to send drafts to everyone asking for their individual comments and will not be doing so in the future.*

The WCRA committee decided that such an attitude is intolerable and is completely unacceptable to WCRA. It was resolved that we will write to Sue Bungey with copies to all ACRA members giving her three options:

1. To immediately confirm in writing that she will change her stance and will revert to obtaining full consensus from all members by sending draft copies of letters to members and obtaining their consent before any future letter is sent or
  2. To resign as Chairman with immediate effect or
  3. WCRA will withdraw its support of ACRA and will publicise what it has done
- 8. Public Meeting – Spring 2017:**
- 8.1.** Malcolm Green will distribute posters
  - 8.2.** Jim Biggin will ascertain if Robin Harley of CBC is sending a deputy
  - 8.3.** Malcolm Green will take the roving microphone

- 9. Hall on the Hill:** Malcolm Green outlined the discussions that had taken place concerning the refund of about £100 to WCRA following the purchase of the defibrillator and its possible use a contribution to a training unit. The committee was far from convinced that such an item was either needed or would be used on a regular basis. Malcolm Green was asked to convey our doubts to the Hall Committee
- 10. Friends of St Catherine's Hill:** there is no news on the possible granting of the Lottery Fund award. Sue Fotheringham broke the news that ex committee member Chris Gordon had been seriously injured when falling out of a tree. It was unanimously agreed that Maureen Biggin would send a suitable message from the committee.
- 11. Reorganisation of Local Government:**
- 11.1.** Jim Biggin confirmed a referendum postal poll lasting two weeks to take place after the Dorset County Council election on 4<sup>th</sup> May. CBC are taking legal advice about whether or not to accept the offer of a £30,000 donation by a Christchurch resident to defray the costs (note: the donation was rejected on legal grounds)
- 11.2.** Noted that our non-e-mail referendum newsletter has been drafted and awaits details of the actual question to be asked. The question to be asked will be drafted using external expertise and discussed at the April CBC full council meeting. It should still be possible to print the newsletter by 26<sup>th</sup> April
- 11.3.** The letter from external auditors Grant Thornton was discussed. It was decided that we could not reasonably pursue this course of action because the external auditor had confirmed that CBC CFO Ian Milner has the power to declare the £60,000 expenditure unlawful but had decided that whilst it was not a sensible use of taxpayer's funds it was not *irrational* as meant in law. This meant that if we pursued the matter we would incur additional audit and legal fees of up to £10,000 for CBC with effectively no chance of success. A referral after the referendum has been held might stand more chance of succeeding but since our objective is to stop the waste of taxpayer's funds this is not much help.
- 11.4.** Jim Biggin confirmed his understanding that CBC will be making some form of submission to the Secretary of State, who has yet to comment upon the full submission made to him at the end of February by DCC, Bournemouth and Poole. The committee considered various explanations as to why the decision is delayed.
- 12.** The meeting closed at 9.15pm. Next meeting Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> May 2017