

WEST CHRISTCHURCH RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION

www.wcresidents.co.uk

Committee Meeting Minutes

The Hall on the Hill: 1st February 2012 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; DCC=Dorset County Council; EDDC=East Dorset District Council; FOSCH=Friends of St Catherine's Hill; NE=Natural England; 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; Maureen Biggin; Chris Gordon; Roger Hamilton; John Pendrill; Janet Robson;
2. **Apologies for absence:** Eileen Lancaster
3. **Minutes of last meeting:** The minutes of 4th January 2012 were approved.
4. **Treasurer's Report:** John Pendrill submitted accounts as at 1st February 2012 showing an excess of expenditure over income of £486.42 with cash at bank of £5758.18 (£5750.34 on deposit at HSBC).
5. **Teacher's Building Society Treasurer's Account:** John Pendrill reported that this account meets our level of risk constraints and is currently offering a higher gross interest rate than HSBC. *It was resolved that* The Treasurer may deposit WCRA money in this account on 25 day call *provided that* a minimum of £1,000 remains with HSBC at all times
6. **Delegate to ACRA:** nothing to report
7. **FOSCH:** nothing to report
8. **The Hall on the Hill:** nothing to report
9. **St Catherine's Hill Management Plan:**
 - 9.1. Jim Biggin thanked the committee members for their dedication and hard work in producing the management plan that has been passed by CBC as fit for purpose. Councillors had congratulated all concerned on the overall quality of the plan.
 - 9.2. Congratulations were offered to Eileen Lancaster who has succeeded in building on our website an interactive feed-back form for residents to use, thereby reducing the impact of CBC's failure in this respect.
 - 9.3. Jim Biggin confirmed that the leaflet has been printed and passed to volunteers to distribute. The number of volunteers had exceeded all expectations. Distribution has commenced.
 - 9.4. We will assist in the provision of tea and coffee at the drop-in day 25th February
 - 9.5. The additional drop-in day on Friday 9th March at The Hall on the Hill between 4.00pm and 7.00pm was noted.
 - 9.6. The poster advertising the public consultation and first drop-in day was accepted for immediate display.
 - 9.7. John Pendrill was authorised to produce name badges for every committee member.

- 10. Planning Issues:** Roger Hamilton reported that: an infill development behind 92/94 The Grove has been approved subject to conditions; the Wing Tat is being demolished to make way for a block of flats; plans for Grove View, St Catherine's Hill Lane, have been approved; the retrospective application for California Chicken in Barrack Road has been refused.
- 11. WCRA Web Site:** no report
- 12. The E-Mail Newsletter:** nothing to report
- 13. AGM:**
- 13.1.** Jim Biggin confirmed that Councillor Spencer Flower has confirmed his attendance to deliver the key note address
- 13.2.** The posters to advertise the AGM were approved for display from the 11th February
- 13.3.** We need to provide tea and coffee
- 14. CBC Budget Meeting:** John Pendrill reported a poorly attended meeting. The main facts to emerge were:
- 14.1.** 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
- 14.2.** 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.
- 14.3.** 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.
- 14.4.** CBC 2011-12 budget includes £100,000 towards the provision of superfast broadband locally, something much welcomed by the business community.
- 14.5.** 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.
- 14.6.** 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.
- 14.7.** 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.
- 15. Christchurch Bypass:** it was noted that DCC have resurrected consideration of a bypass
- 16. CBC Lights Out:** it was noted that DCC appear to have made no effort to inform local residents as to the commencement date of this money saving scheme
- 17.** The meeting closed at 8.35pm. Next formal committee meeting is on **Wednesday 7th March 2012 at 7.30pm**, at the Hall on the Hill