

# WEST CHRISTCHURCH RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION

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Committee Meeting Minutes

Hall on the Hill: 7<sup>th</sup> October 2015 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; HENRA=Hengistbury Head RA; 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; David Barnett; Sue Fotheringham; Malcolm Green; Steve Roberts;
- 2. Apologies for absence:** Maureen Biggin; Chris Gordon;
- 3. Minutes of last meeting:** The minutes of September 2015 were approved
- 4. Treasurer's Report:** David Barnett reported that to date income now exceeded expenditure by £401.04 whilst assets stood at £8020.92.
- 5. Membership:** In a written report Maureen Biggin confirmed that: Apple Grove; Adelaide Close; Endfield Close; Hurn Road (West); Oak Avenue; Old Barn Road and Closes; Pippin Close; River Way (North); St Catherine's Way; Stourbanks RA; The Grove and Closes; The Maudevilles; have all been collected.
- 6. Collectors:** In a written report Maureen Biggin gave details of collectors who have completed their round and those still to report. A drop in membership from 2014 now looks likely
- 7. The position of Membership Secretary:** Jim Biggin reported that it is increasingly unlikely that Maureen will be able to fulfil this role in 2016. Sue Fotheringham volunteered to take over from her and this was unanimously welcomed. Jim Biggin will organise a training programme
- 8. Reorganisation of Local Government:** the committee discussed at length the surprise developments at the end of September including the announcement in the media that CBC, EDDC, Bournemouth BC and Poole BC were investigating a merger without including DCC. A timetable of completion by March 2019 had been announced without any evidence to support either the sense of the proposal or its feasibility. A position statement was drawn up as follows:

*This is one of those issues where we have to be careful that we represent the views of our members as best we can. We've drawn up the following position statement to guide us:*

- 1. We accept reorganisation is inevitable but are not at this stage committed to any particular solution*
- 2. We believe there are several potential solutions that need to be investigated*
- 3. We believe that each potential solution must be the subject of a full risk, cost and benefit analysis undertaken with all due diligence before any solution becomes the preferred solution*
- 4. We believe it is vital to include within the debate the cost and risks of conversion to any new structure as well as the functioning of that structure and to contrast the*

*overall effect of the proposed new structure with the costs, risks and benefits of maintaining the status quo*

5. *We believe that DCC and all of its subsidiary councils as well as Bournemouth and Poole must be included*
6. *We think it essential that the electorate is fully consulted, including those who are not computer literate, before any solution becomes the preferred solution and we will assist in that to the best of our ability*
7. *We believe that a timetable for reorganisation should only be produced once a preferred solution has been identified*
8. *We do not believe this to be a matter of party politics and therefore believe that Councillors should be allowed a free vote on all decisions related to the strategy*

Jim Biggin was asked to circulate this position statement to ACRA with a view to them also adopting it.

9. **ACRA Blog:** Jim Biggin reported the setting up of the ACRA Blog on Local Government Reorganisation at a cost of \$140 (£93). He indicated that whilst ACRA members had been aware of what he was doing they had not formally sanctioned the expenditure and that he might therefore have to foot the bill himself. David Barnett indicated that in his opinion WCRA should reimburse Jim Biggin and attempt to obtain a pro-rata partial refund from ACRA. This was unanimously agreed by the other committee members. Jim Biggin asked that his personal thanks to the committee be recorded.
10. **ACRA:** David Barnett reported that following an unsatisfactory reply from Hospital Trust Representative Derek Chaffy to their letter, ACRA has now written to NHS England asking for clarification of events related to the Fozard Affair
11. **Hall on the Hill:** Malcolm Green had nothing major to report. He was asked to investigate the failure by Hall management to repair their microphone and was authorised if necessary to purchase a replacement plug-in microphone to be owned by WCRA for use at their public meetings
12. **Planning Issues:** Malcolm Green had nothing major to report.
13. **St Catherine's Hill Management Plan:** no report received. It was noted that the History Day had been well attended
14. **New School at Marsh Lane:** Jim Biggin reported that a progress report from DCC is due to be received in mid-October. Steve Roberts expressed his concern that nothing has been heard about traffic management and that concern was shared by the rest of the committee
15. **Autumn Printed Newsletter:** this has been printed and distributed
16. **Autumn Meeting Poster:** this has been passed to Malcolm Green who will organise distribution
17. **Website Traffic:** Jim Biggin outlined the content of a report received from Eileen Lancaster showing a healthy level of traffic on the WCRA website
18. **Resignation of Auditor:** David Barnett informed the committee that our auditor has resigned as she has been asked to audit a large charity. It was agreed that we will give her an M&S voucher for £25 by way of thanks for her unpaid help
19. **Goalposts in River Way Recreation Ground:** Malcolm Green reported some progress on the project

**20.** The meeting closed at 8.55pm. Next formal committee meeting is on **Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> November 2015 at 7.30pm**, at the Hall on the Hill