

Friars Cliff Residents Association (FCRA) Quarterly Meeting Minutes
06/12/2023 at 19:30 - Highcliffe Sailing Club (HSC)

Present: Steve Alves Chairman (SA)
Paul De Jonghe Vice Chair & Forum Editor (PDJ)
Peter Skeggs Treasurer (PS)
Meg Ward, Membership Secretary (MW)
Kevan Ward, Web Master (KW)
Louise Heybourne, Environment Officer & Secretary (LH)

Guests: Cllr Paul Hilliard (PH)
Cllr Stuart Perry (SP)
Cllr Lesley Dedman (LD)
Christchurch Mayor, Cllr Vivienne Charrett
Sir Chris Chope MP and Lady Christine Chope
Alan Cook Chair of Beach Hut Owners Association
Robert Lofthouse, Pennyfarthing Homes

Apologies: Sarah Webb, Head Road Representative (SW)
Sara Luder, Social Secretary (SL)

Chairman Introduction

Introduced the committee and confirmed the website is being updated at present, thanking Kevan Ward for successfully re-hosting and updating it.

Also thanked our road representatives for their continued support and Sara Luder for an outstanding job as social secretary this year.

Current Issues:

- **BCP Budget** awaiting decisions.
- **Seafront Strategy** there was a levelling up payment from central government, not much allocated to Christchurch, majority went to Bournemouth. (*Budget impact*)
- **Toilet block** was partly refurbished.
- **Beach Zoning** – another attempt to try to get zones from dangerous use of kite surfers, jet skis to make ensure safety for swimmers from watercraft, aerofoils, we will keep exploring.
- **Bus Service** – service loss will not be addressed as it is a commercial decision. The Draft Local Plan has identified lack of transport for local services.
- **Heritage Signs** – delayed but signed off and hope early 2024 will be erected and plan an opening ceremony with Christchurch & Bournemouth Council.
- **Car Park Harmonisation** – charges and times differing, coastal car parks need to be same but town centre could be different but no update on this at present. (*Budget impact*)
- **Winter Car Parks** – Penny Way and Southcliffe Road, we continue to work on persuading BCP to open all year, but zero engagement. (*Budget impact*)

- **NCI Station** (satellite cabin next to toilet block) NCI waiting for BCP responses - has not progressed. (*Budget impact*)
- **Flood & Coastal Erosion Strategy** – a 100yr plan, the long groyne is being replaced. Wider strategy continuing. (*FCRA Stakeholder*)
- **Tree planting** - again stalled due to BCP budget, FCRA seeking local involvement and sourcing of trees under our (proposed) community group scheme. (*Budget impact*)
- **Noisy Lobster Sauna** – Salt Water Sauna Company initial position was withdrawn, a new application for 6 huts to be removed and replaced with a sauna building. Drawings look nice, likely to be approved but we remain concerned over the commercialisation of the site. We have contacted Noel Oliver (BCP commercial contracts) suggesting rent could be increased at next review so that BCP income increases.
- **MCA Site** – after 10 years going to erect 10 detached houses, largely based over existing derelict buildings, with the bulk and mass not such an issue as previous applications. FCRA committee and the action group are in support. Robert Lofthouse from Pennyfarthing made himself available for questions at the end of the meeting.

Water Quality / Sewage

Recently BCP discussed phosphates in water with regards to developers, who can either use the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) or not to mitigate in developments.

- Decision by BCP on option not to use CIL funds to mitigate effect on water quality, may lead to developers waiting for Levelling-Up bill currently going through Parliament.
- Concerns raised over “credits” to allow development – two fish farms being closed down on the Avon so potentially allow developers to buy those credits to enable them to build a housing development.
- Local water quality has not only changed colour but taste has also deteriorated.

BCP Local Plan

What is it? One plan for the whole of BCP replacing all the numerous previous policies into less than a 100 standardised policies across the conurbation, 352 pages long.

BCP Timelines –Review by Overview and Scrutiny Board met 4th December, review by Cabinet meeting 13th December, Full council meeting for sign off 9th January. Public consultation January to March, Draft plans are submitted for examination by Planning Inspectorate, April to May the Inspector examines the draft plans with public hearings April to May, Plan adopted by BCP May. FCRA will keep us updated.

Housing Numbers – 1,430 homes in Mundeford, Stanpit, West Highcliffe. 934 have planning permission including Roeshot Hill, 165 allocated on other sites, 350 in future opportunities over 15 years.

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) – Friars Cliff is in the highest band. If a developer wants to build less than 10 homes, £630 per home to the Council. If they build 10 or more, it is

£350. All of this is draft and probably won't be adopted until May and has to be in place within 5 years otherwise the government takes over and puts a plan in place.

BCP Corporate Plan: (PDJ)

With new authority at BCP they have to produce a new Corporate Plan which Cllr Vikki Slade, Leader of the Council has been working on. FCRA were invited to represent our community attended by Mayor Vivienne Charrett and others to discuss the Corporate Plan in advance of going out to public consultation. Sets the strategy and actions BCP will take for all the coming years that the authority runs. Within the plan they proposed various objectives, which we weren't completely happy with. In other areas the objectives didn't properly represent the diversity of cultures across the BCP area, i.e. Friars Cliff is a different entity to the middle of Poole. We felt very strongly that more needs to be done about that. Public consultation closed a few weeks ago. Next the plan comes forward and we find out what is in it. We are looking at cultural identity. The budget gets announced in February. More detailed brief in our Friars Forum just issued and on our website where Cllr Stuart Perry has produced a useful guide.

Police Resource & Crime: (PDJ)

We are not happy with level of policing across our area, which has deteriorated quite substantially over the years. SA has tried to engage with the authorities who police our area and we have not had any favourable response back from that. As a result we joined forces with Highcliffe Residents Association and requested a meeting with David Sidwick, Police & Crime Commissioner (P&CC) and new Chief Superintendent Heather Dixey where we were able to explain our concerns. Useful meeting last week and they took away points raised but it is always difficult to see anything translate into meaningful improvement. We have another meeting booked with Heather Dixey in January to see if there has been quantifiable improvement. Our area, Christchurch East, has a certain number of PCs and PCSOs allocated and it is not very many at all. The point we made is that in relation to Christchurch West and further across into Bournemouth our policing level is quite dramatically lower but the actual reported crime rate is not dissimilar, so ratio wise we are not doing particularly well. Heather Dixey responded with big improvements coming up next year, where they are going to join all the groups together, all become one and we should see a big improvement. FCRA are sceptical on this.

David Sidwick has been in post for 2 years as P&CC, distributing a leaflet stating achievements. Dorset has 6th lowest crime rate across England and Wales, with a vision to make Dorset the safest County. Three of his priorities are applicable to us. Crime & anti-social behaviour: Beach-side security in the summer and patrol regularity, profiles and timing: Foot patrols of PCSO's at peak time. The next meeting will provide updates.

Treasurer Update: (PS)

01.01.2023 Start of year £18,880 in the bank

Revenue £3,295 in advertising

£2,388 in subscriptions – slightly down in number of members 580 to 487. 2022 was artificially high because in 2022 we received a lot of subs, which were for 2021, so 2022 was over valued and 2021 was undervalued. Overall total receipts are just down by £29. Magazine costs so far £3,450, shown as 2 of 4 should say 3 of 4, as we still have one quarter still to pay for.

Other expenditure £1,552

Total payments £5,002, £885 down on last year but this will go up.

By end of December predict balance at the bank will be around £18,250 quite a bit down on last year, this is going to be a continuing trend unless we can increase some of our revenues.

We increased our minimum subscriptions this year but that hasn't had the desired effect.

We still have one quarter of cost to pay for the magazine and predict this will show a loss of £1,500 at the end of the year and that is the main contributor to our financial situation.

No small grants have been given out. £1000 donated to Life Saving Club.

Social Events:

1. Kings Charles Coronation Street Parties in the area, and a fly-past by Andy Morris on his Microlight aircraft.
2. Two local history walks around Steamer Point looking at WW2 history.
3. Summer Solstice on The Green.
4. Chilli Night at The Beach Hut
5. Mary Parsa (a RR) organised a tour for us around Highcliffe Castle
6. Carol Singing on 16th December at 2 p.m. at The Beach Hut Café, come along

Councillor Updates:

Cllr Lesley Dedman – BCP councillor for our ward, also Chairman for Highcliffe & Walkford Parish Council.

1. Water Quality – objects to this as loaded onto small business they have to pay, why on earth not the Water Company – I ask our MP?
2. Local Plan – led by our local Christchurch Independent Cllr and hoping they have done a lot for Christchurch area in it.
3. Police & Crime Commissioner after met with FCRA came to Highcliffe & Walkford Parish Council and gave very good presentation, heart in right place but policeman not on the ground.
4. Beach Zoning – Christchurch Borough Council had beach zones, so need to get on to that, supportive of that.
5. Southcliffe Road Care Park, think there is a covenant on that for not using in the winter.
6. Supportive of efforts to keep shelter going.
7. Tree Planting – found Council plants trees but doesn't water them. Hope we get volunteers to water them and keep them going.
8. Sauna got withdrawn and moved as Cllrs PH & LD objected and hope where it is going to be it won't be so objectionable.

9. BCP another consultation out about Adult Care Support, all on the website about developing new strategies for day opportunities which is complicated, very important as day centres closing. A new way of looking after elderly people who need some sort of care & support outside of their home.
10. Consultation on a greener BCP, public consultation on urban forest strategy, maximise and enhance all the benefits trees and woodlands provide to our environment and to communities. BCP vision for the future of trees and woodlands.

CLlr Paul Hilliard - BCP Councillor and Christchurch Town Councillor

1. Got knocked off my bike, reported the crime - will help resourcing so keep reporting crime however small you think it is.
2. Corporate Strategy public consultation August to October, 1875 people responded out of 400,000 so pretty low, big proportion from Christchurch & Highcliffe. Document going to cabinet next week setting out what peoples priorities are. Budget Consultation had £44M deficit for next year got that down to £12M. The government autumn statement last week and living wage increased the deficit by another £6M, we managed to plug the original £12M and links in with public consultation what peoples priorities are.
3. Noisy Lobster have permission to change entrance and balcony and don't expect to do that work towards the end of this year. The Sauna, if they do get permission won't be until autumn and they would install a cold water shower on the beach which will be open to anyone when the toilets are open.
4. Consultation Mudeford Wood has grant funding from a central charity to add a couple of benches, re-work some of the pathways. On website public consultation.

CLlr Stuart Perry – Christchurch Town Council putting 2024/25 budget together, current and future. Meeting Monday to look at bigger picture, suggest we might like to think would be really beneficial to Friars Cliff, i.e. trees in road and signage on the beach front. Pass on to Stuart to feed into process.

Guest Speaker: Sir Christopher Chope OBE MP

Congratulated FCRA for being a good strong residents association and ensuring voice of Friars Cliff is heard.

Phosphates Issue – when going to develop town site and start work on sites where planning permission has already been granted, out of blue came an order from Natural England that the Council could not grant any further planning permissions and not allow granted planning permissions to be implemented. In our area we have the town centre site (Aster Housing Association developer). Had meeting with Churchills on gas works site, cannot make any progress at moment. Talking about the money BCP needs in order to sustain itself over the next year or two and it's relying upon getting a capital receipt from the Civic Offices, it is not going to be possible to sell the Civic Offices for a worthwhile sum if there is doubt about whether or not you can get planning permission on those sites. Trying to engage with the

government trying to understand why NE are demanding something unreasonable. We are talking about lower Avon which is tidal and nobody knows how much phosphates there are and any additional housing is going to make a miniscule difference there.

The Levelling-Up Bill is now an Act of Parliament, it went to the House of Lords, rejected by their Lordships and the bill was not enacted. We then heard rumours on the Kings speech that there was a specific bill dealing with the phosphates issue in the end there was no such bill. In a situation now where there is an impasse, unless you have the ability to be able to buy some credits at an enormous cost. Even the Taylor Wimpey site at Roeshot Hill is now frozen. A top priority is to get the phosphate rules sorted in the UK which aligns with EU regulations.

Avon Valley Footpath – situation where Environment Agency and Natural England are saying they can't maintain footpath from Burton to Christchurch as ground is slipping into the river and they won't allow reinforcement and use as a right of way. Complete farce, corresponding with BCP Council and saying BCP need to take a robust line with the Environment Agency and Natural England.

Discussed his post bag and currently full of XL Bully dog correspondence.

Thanked the residents and committee for maintaining Christchurch and Friars Cliff as a very special place.

Q&A

Lord Camerons return was the Prime Ministers' decision.

A new local Police Station in Boscombe created, to help a move to get more police back on the beat. In summer months with influx of tourists and ASB best mitigated by police walking the beat. We don't feel there is enough presence for that. Sir CC felt this does work and very important. It would be desirable to have some sort of routine patrolling. He hasn't spoken to retailers in Christchurch but has in Ferndown where shoplifting is becoming a scourge. Need to get tough on low level crime. PCC has increased professionals on the beat but there is a reduction in the number of police officers who are now doing support work. Discussed with the Policing Minister the civilian posts are being reduced and being backfilled by officers who should be out on the beat, therefore local constabulary don't have enough officers to support the beat. The Minister has taken the issue on board and recognised it could become a bit of a scandal if more was known about it.

When last spoke to Vikki Slade there will be 2 planning committees, East & West, this will allow more local knowledge.

Phosphates issue was at the very top of the government and has the attention of Michael Gove, Secretary of State. If law were changed there would be more flexibility. **Sir Christopher Chope will raise again.**

Any Other Business:

We have asked Seafront Services what the Beach Wardens do with no response as yet. Ask one of our Councillors to take that on.

Christchurch Harbour Patrol hasn't been running locally, it used to patrol the coast line. It does run between Christchurch Quay and Bournemouth Pier. **Cllr PH will chase.**
NCI gave out incorrect speed limits in our area, it is confusing and one set of rules is required.

Public Spaces Protection Order - not really happy BCP are not including camping on the beach. **SA will raise at cabinet level.**

Community Support Group – can we get a group together? John Wiffen has been cutting verges down East Cliff Way. Any interest from residents let us know. Would council take away the rubbish if we did it? Cllr PH said the Council will.

Steamers point entrance leading to nature reserve every time it rains there is a large impassable puddle before you walk into the nature reserve. **Cllr PH will look at.**

Guest: Mayor Vivienne Charrett - Ward Councillor for Jumpers & St Catherines
Trustee of Clingan's Trust, set up 300y ago set up by John Clingan. Gives grants to families in need for free school meals, uniform and for school trips. We may know of people who will benefit so spread the word.

Charities

1. Soldiers, Sailors Airmen's Families Association (SSAFA) – supporting families in Christchurch.
2. The Waterlily Project a Café – supporting people who are vulnerable or experience abuse.

Fund raising Concert at The Priory on February 9th with the Christchurch District Band booking tickets on the Priory Website.

Next Meeting: FCRA AGM is in March – New Committee members always welcome.

Meeting close: 21:00