

Friars Cliff Residents Association Open meeting

1st June 2023

At Highcliffe Sailing Club, Mudeford

Committee Attendees	
Steve Alves, Chair	SA
Paul De Jonghe, Vice-Chair & Forum Editor	PDJ
Louise Heybourne, Secretary & Environmental Rep	LH
Meg Ward, Membership Secretary	MW
Sara Luder, Social Secretary	SL
Kevan Ward, Web Master	KW
Councillor Lesley Dedman, Chairman BCP Council	LD
Councillor Paul Hilliard, Vice Chair Planning	PH
Councillor Stuart Perry, Friars Cliff Ward	SP

Guest Speaker	
Graham Farrant, Chief Executive, Bournemouth Christchurch Pool Council	GF BCP

Apologies	
Peter Skeggs, Treasurer	PS
Sarah Webb, Head Road Warden	SW

Chairman's Welcome

SA

Review of previous open meeting actions

- FCRA shelter – BCP surveyor report still not shared, but events have moved on – Closed. SA
- NCI station – Working group set up and meetings held, WG now managing - Closed
- Lifesaving equipment – Both FCRA and BHOA donated – Plan to do a “photo op”

Action list update - Forum magazine has points listed for residents to review.

SA

Police brief

PDJ

East Christchurch Neighbourhood Policing Team are:

Inspector Helen Deakin, Police Constable Faris Siwadi and Rebecca Walker-Date, PCSO's

Liane Haddock (full-time) and Anna Lillywhite (part-time) – an hour before meet called away

Patrols are incident led, so residents need to report issues. Important all residents submit anti-social behaviour (ASB) reports to police, contact details in the forum.

PC's work shifts including Sundays

PCSO's work Mon to Sat with early/late shifts

ASB - 2nd March - group of youths following woman who filmed them, reported to police (no follow up)

ASB - 4th March – boy assaulted, unsure if reported

Both discussed with Inspector Deakin by Cllr Hilliard

Police data - The number of crimes discussed for the period March 2022 – March 2023 in the FCRA area. The crime details for March 2023 were reviewed in the area south side of The Runway and Bure Lane, 10 in total. There is a pattern, summer months much higher and more concentration in crime around green area, car parks and on the sea front. Compared to East Christchurch which 2 PCSOs responsible for, its higher in certain other parts. FCRA would like to see improved PCO presence in the evening during summer.

Property developments

1. Small plots of infill land being sold off piecemeal. Latest is De Havilland for £5k – private developer who did the estate 30 years ago now selling at auction but TPOs are on trees. SA
2. Large block of 23 flats in Wharncliffe Rd, Highcliffe – higher and bigger developments into where 2 houses previously. Lot of objections. Developer is Hoburne under different name. Dangerous precedent being set if approved.
3. Roeshot Grange - first 42 units within the 875 planned for this project – No additional infrastructure, as proceeds will keep residents updated.

New BCP policy - can only “call in” to Committee if live within 1 mile of any planning application, all objections considered.

Penny Farthing putting a new application into the MCA site.

NCI station/Shelter

FCRA and NCI working with BCP’s Seafront services.
Seafront Services still working on integrated plans to site NCI station and relocate a replacement for the 1952 Queen’s Coronation shelter.
Working group ready but no news as yet. SA

Lifesaving grant

- AGM decision for FCRA to grant £1000 to lifesaving club.
- Beach Hut owners also donated £500 to lifesaving club.
- Equipment now received and ready for training and photos displayed of training in progress with new equipment. SA

Heritage memorials

- Thank BCP for funding the Heritage Memorial project, Nuala Clarke proposing 3 x large “totem” style steel columns at Steamer Point and additional signage and explanation of what the very old buildings were for inside the nature reserve and a woodland trail. FCRA has been campaigning for this for quite some time. There will be notice boards and QR codes for further information. Still a work in progress and hoping to have grand opening with special guests. PDJ
- Additional signage on existing wooden boards.
- Sculptures inside nature reserve.

Finances

	2023 figures as of 15 May (not all subs in yet)	2022
Balance	£21,071	£19,056
Total Receipts	£4,393	£5,711
Total Payments	£2,201	£5,887

PHJ

Social Events – ideas for additional events requested, refer to Sara Luder. SL

- 16 June Historical at 6 pm walkaround along Steamer Point, please register interest on new Facebook page, all events will be posted here as well as on FCRA website and members emails.
- 21 June Summer solstice picnic on the green, weather permitting, informal and bring your own refreshments.
- Steamer point history walk – new date TBA

Councillor update

Big news and thank you for your support with elections, 8 out of 10 Christchurch Independents Councillors gives us a voice at the table, 8 Christchurch Independents have gone in alliance with 28 Liberals, 3 Bournemouth & 5 Poole Peoples Independents and formed the 3 Towns Alliance. PH
LD
SP

Andy Martin, Highcliffe Councillor is now a BCP Portfolio holder, we felt that customer service and communication is one of the key things residents have been let down on and also culture (leisure, arts), we will focus on from feedback. The Planning committee will be reviewed, split East, West and scrutinise the drawing up of local plan. A Governance review re structure and openness and generally, bin collection – focusing on basics, cleanliness and other areas.

Lesley appointment the Chairman of BCP Council. Today, Paul elected as Vice Chairman of planning Committee.

The Town Council, Lesley stepped down from Christchurch Town Council to focus on Highcliffe and Walkford Parish Council.

In Friars Cliff Ward, Stuart Perry put his name forward, was uncontested and is a local lad on our Town Council and familiar with local area. Grew up in Friars Cliff, his father built 1 & 1a Friars Road in the grounds of the Gables. He went onto Christchurch Grammar School and studied electronics at Southampton University and ended up in SRDE at Steamer Point developing night vision equipment. Looking at the building at Steamer Point Site that he used to have a workshop in, Site 20, very saddened now it has been vandalised. Lot of interest in the Friars Cliff area.

Lesley Dedman wanted thank everyone for vote of confidence and to mention Heritage Site and Pauls fantastic input, put all pictures together and been to a lot of places, thank you.

Roeshot Grange being built on green belt and the school for the huge site is going to be Somerford, not much room at the school. Residents need to keep on pushing for infrastructure. Resident Question: what is happening to Pylons? They were going to go underground, we will have to wait and see.

SA thanked counsellors for their continued support and congratulations on their appointments.

Guest Speaker - Mr G Farrant, Chief Executive Bournemouth, Christchurch & Poole Council GF

Ward Councillors will be opening Heritage Site. The person that will welcome Royal visitors into the borough will be the Chairman of the Council, first citizen in the area, Lesley Dedman, really important post. GF requested his colleague, Emma make a note re Pylons.

SA requested correction on BCP one mile rule. GF - A rule that the public can request an application to go before the planning committee rather than to be decided by the planning officers and that rule was 20 people writing in. BCP had interesting feedback from people on their website that BCP didn't think were necessarily residents or local people affected by the applications all asking for something to go to planning committee and so once you get to 20 or 21 they could be from anywhere, which was the old rule. BCP have introduced a one mile rule for a request to go to planning committee, every comment they get is considered by the officers, it is only for the rule of 20 that the one mile applies.

The new administration is about openness and transparency, needs to be at the heart of what BCP do. Most other councils are predominantly national parties in control, Conservatives, Labour, Lib Dems, Green and we have some local parties, 3 Towns Alliance, balance on the council will be different. BCP council is now 400,000 population, it is the 10th largest urban authority and 13th largest unitary council in the country. Four weeks into the new councillors and a week and a half into the new administration and in process of filling the posts. The Overview and scrutiny feels very different to previous administration. Interesting mix and will see greater stability, delivery and focus will be on local areas. Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole – 19 local high streets, a place made up of small neighbourhoods.

Advanced Questions:

Maintenance of Sea Front and Christchurch being at the bottom of the pile for improvements. BCP needed a strategy for the whole of the seafront, decide what the different areas of the sea front are for and are now putting in place the individual projects to support that. What is this part of the beach for, what is Branksome for, what is Bournemouth for and make sure we provide the right services to those, not that clarity in the past. GF does not think we are at the bottom of the pile for services, thinks we have struggled in past for County Council services in 1974 we were back end of Hampshire, from 1974 we were the back end of Dorset, now we are an integral part of Bournemouth, Christchurch & Poole, so we are going to see more resources coming into some of the services. BCP need to decide what this area is for and how we want to maintain it and how do we want to support the activities that are going on. So can't answer at the moment. Working on the flood and coastal defences and have a good plan.

Hot showers – can't afford to put in hot showers and run them free of charge, virtually no chance, unless BCP got specific grant funding to do that and BCP had a way of funding the ongoing revenue consequences, too expensive to provide that sort of facility.

Council's finances are not great. BCP spend £320 million annually (approx. £1 million a day). 13 years ago these councils would have got about £110 million more from government than they are getting this year, a third of our spend would have been subsidised by the government. This year we are getting £5-6 million, last year it was about £2-3 million. This council is almost entirely funded from council tax and business rates. BCP are cutting services as inflation is running at 10%, official figure. In many areas it is running much higher than that, BCP have put the council tax up by 5% and there is a gap of 5%. Five per cent of £320 million is £15million, so instantly have to cut £15million off the services before BCP start. The demand for children's social care is huge, going up 20% per year, about £60/70 million of the budget, so add higher inflation figures and BCP have to cut the other services even more because there is only a 5% increase in council tax. Demand for adult social care is increasing. Would we want a 10% increase to match Inflation some would say we need to maintain services and 10% is not a lot, others would say don't give the council any money because it's inefficient and wastes money that we do give it, mixed views. When council tax is not put up to match inflation BCP have to stop services because they can't stop inflation. Business rates have gone up but not enough to balance the books given the demand.

Tendering on Mundeford Quay (Shore Sports) – BCP went through tendering exercise, there is a view we need to restart it, we have and assurance been given. GF will sit down with the team and look at the brief, where are BCP with the sailing club and long term future and make sure that they can commit to still providing the services. An example is the outdoor activity centre Hengistbury Head being run by Brockenhurst College. The building was dilapidated and not being invested in, the college pulled out, nowhere to go, the building then closes. BCP allowed some clubs to use it to store stuff but now had to close that down due to Health & Safety, nobody looking after the building. BCP need to find some long-term solutions for some of those activities and it simply isn't suitable for us to say that we'll just add the funding in, we don't have the funding to do that. BCP can work with partners and outside agencies to do what they can to support but the financial position is such that BCP can't afford to subsidise those activities.

Potholes, particularly around Bure Lane. GF been to Birmingham and London and their roads are dreadful. On average GF feels our roads are not as bad as many areas just outside of Dorset and that's not to say they are good enough. There is a government fund £800,000 per year, BCP know they need to increase the servicing of that. The real answer in many of the areas is to resurface the roads and that's the problem the council investment to do that. BCP are lobbying government hard because if you look at the infrastructure, just patching the potholes just means you get another one a few months later and is not a good enough solution. BCP need to have a look at that. Need more investment.

Roads and Congestion A bypass does not hit the government target or councils' in terms of transport investment. GF can see the problem with congestion but doesn't know what the answer is, too many of us drive less than 2 mile journeys that people in other towns and cities walk or cycle and use public transport. Our public infrastructure is not great, network of railway stations but nowhere near centre of towns. BCP do need to look at how to encourage people to use public transport. Looking at single ticket for bus, train, etc. Estimates for care usage are going up and we don't have the space. Difficult, would have to be government funding, new town and new structures could get something, no scale in BCP for that type of development.

Q: X1 & X2 service bus cut - Mudeford residents no longer have direct route to their doctors. Cllr Paul negotiating re Buses services. They have retained one an hour.
GF - Briefing re Beryl Bike Scheme, some residents will use but not the answer is you go shopping, we need to use that form of transport.

Q: On BCP website active travel schemes for BCP council area have today been awarded £3.78 million grant award – goes on to say how to be distributed, £500,000 Wallisdown Road, West Howe, White Cliff, Baiter, £1.1 million, £1.3 million improvements to shared cycling/walking path to Bournemouth Gardens, nothing going to Christchurch. That quite often happens. GF will look into.

Q: Steamer Point, Avon Run Road third party contractor not locking car park at 9:30 at night – PH let him know.

Local Plan Development – back out to consultation later this year. Where development might take place, about to come out with draft local structural plan, being led by Margaret Phipps, Christchurch representative. Get in place over next 18 months. Takes 3-4 years. Housing is more expensive here. BCP would like to apply a second council tax to second homes, law doesn't allow them to do enough about that and BCP have a lot of people in temporary accommodation. Pressure for getting homes for the homeless. Demand has increased and council housing shrunk and all BCP house are those most in need. Need £150,000 grant per property and BCP could afford social rented housing. National right to buy policy has resulted in councils selling off houses. Government sets the law and some things BCP can't opt out of. Current housing stock and our homes on average need to last 750 years as the Council are not demolishing or rebuilding either. At the current rate of demolition of the housing stock it will be 1500 years before BCP demolish the last one. Housing supply is a real policy issue nationally and locally.

Tricuro and care: BCP are aware that the needs of this community are slightly greater than others, as the average age of the community is older. As a whole in BCP has 50% more over the age of 65y as people come to the area to retire, which puts pressure on the care system and the issue is the rising cost of care. There are 157 care homes in the BCP area and an average population of 400,00 would normally have about 100. 50% of BCP budget goes on adult social care. 30% goes on children. Care costs increase so pressures on budgets increases. Day care is another challenge, is this providing value for money, is this providing the service that we want and how is this supporting people and keeping them out of longer term care costs? BCP will undertake a review and can't give us assurance about that but no decision has been made about Highcliffe Day Centre.

Results of election – what is going to change? BCP has an interesting council, we will see a difference, more focus on local and BCP wide, less focus on big iconic investments and more on what do we need to do for these communities.

Q: City Fibre – they have a license to get on and do stuff, they have to notify BCP – have some control but not control BCP would like. They are a National infrastructure provider, CF have completed Bournemouth and doing Poole at the moment. Commitment from CF to provide fibre to every home in the borough. BCP pushing very hard to get that. CF are an independent organisation.

Resident mentioned Highcliffe pavements being dug up and thrown back down. BCP have control on the standards and will get people to look at that and report back. Cllr PH informed residents to report a problem or fault on BCP website, for example an uneven pavement and road and say City Fibre issue. There is a 3 year agreement for these. Shortly will have app on phone to upload to the BCP website.

Q: What plans do BCP have to get people back to the office and not working from home, which will increase efficiency and productivity within the conurbation? Interesting challenge and GF has a slightly different view, thinks you can do hybrid working, efficient and beneficial. Working really well. If you work a local route but don't need to be at the office every day. If you phone a contact centre and the person is walking round their house, probably better in a central location. The Councillors have to go in to take a vote unless they are present in the room, electronic presence does not count. GF does not believe that people working from home shirk all day. There is a danger they don't switch off. We have to have ways of measuring productivity and checking quality. Planners working at home are not as good, they struggled with it, they didn't have the size of screens and correct equipment, finding it more effective to be in the office. Other professions it's a real mix. A council in South Cambridgeshire tried 4 day week and only work 30 hours, reckoned that productivity has increased, GF needs to see the numbers.

Q: Have BCP sold our local industrial estate? Who bought it and are there conditions not to put the rent up? GF - BCP sold individual plots and have a record who owns them but doesn't know the conditions. Suspect no conditions about rent as would not want to constrain the value. The position last year was BCP had the potential to sell the beach huts in the rules at the time but high risk and the government then changed the rules. As a result BCP found themselves with a £20 million hole to fill and the answer was to sell 2 large assets, one of which was Christchurch Industrial Estate.

Q: Planning officers working at home – what training has been put in place as seeing inconsistencies all the time. Resident would like to see a schematic of who's in charge. GF asked resident to write in and he will pass to Sam Fox, Director of Planning and Head of Development. BCP have a planning improvement board, which GF chairs once a month. There is a Planning Framework and planners are difficult to recruit into local government and there is a national shortage. Give details to Emma for GF.

AOB

1. Development at Penny Farthing is it time to board site up? PH will pick up.
2. Parking – introduced a strategy, which covers car park and not road – 8 years of trying to get parking situation. SA recommend residents to go onto Have Your Say Points on BCP website. BCP are trying to harmonise car parks, may want to have hourly charges throughout the night for town centre car park but might not fit for rural type car parks.
3. Why do BCP want to harmonise car parks? GF – BCP looked at car parking price across the board, no reason why similar places not charging same amount. Trying to grade into similar car parks. One area BCP need to set some principles across the conurbation but make sure they work locally.
4. Compliment Steve and Traffic Team re yellow lines. What about people enforcing traffic regulations for example traffic wardens? GF has met traffic enforcement team and believes it is a responsive service.

Meeting Closed: 20:51