



Highcliffe Residents Association Community Interest Company

Quarterly Members' Meeting

**Thursday 23 March 2023 at 7.00pm at The Old School, 254
Lymington Road, Highcliffe BH23 5ET**

Present:

Joan Rose – Director and Chair

Anne Bassett – Director and Finance/Membership Secretary

Tina Butcher – HRA Executive Committee Member

BCP Councillors - Andy Martin, Nigel Brooks, Paul Hilliard, Lesley Dedman

Police Representatives – PC 0284 Rebecca Walker-Date, PCSO 7160 Liane Haddock

~ 40 residents/members

1. Welcome and introductions

HRA Chair Joan welcomed everyone and advised that it would be a busy meeting. She particularly welcomed PC 0284 Rebecca Walker-Date, PCSO 7160 Liane Haddock from the Christchurch Neighbourhood Policing Team.

2. Apologies for Absence:

Carol MacBean – Director and Secretary

Ben Lock - Director

Mary Reader – HRA Executive Committee Member

Andy Clayton – HRA Executive Committee Member

Bob Hutchings – Chairman Highcliffe & Walkford Parish Council

John MacBean – Men's Shed

Members – Jerry Russell, Malcolm Eastwood, Judy Burman, Mike Tufnell

3. Minutes of Meeting held on 15 December 2022

The minutes of the last quarterly members meeting were available at the meeting and published on the HRA website. There were no comments on the minutes, and they were agreed as a true record of the meeting.

Following Graham Farrant's (CE of BCP Council) attendance at that meeting Carol MacBean (HRA Secretary) has sent him a 'to do' list relating to all items covered at the meeting, with little response to date despite several follow-ups. A one-line response was received earlier this week promising some information for this meeting but nothing has been received. There will be further follow-up and it is hopeful there will be some answers by the June meeting.

(NB – subsequent to the meeting it was found that a response had been received, but was sent to CM with no copy to any other board member, and so as CM was away at the time of this meeting, no information was available).

4. Dorset Police Neighbourhood Policing Team. Update followed by questions from members.

PC Rebecca apologized for being unable to attend the last meeting due to a decrease in staffing in the team with colleagues moving on to new roles. The Neighbourhood Policing Team is currently staffed by Rebecca (PC), Liane (PCSO), Faris Siwadi (PC) and Anna Lillywhite (PCSO).

It was flagged that the police were recently seeing activity from rogue traders who were cold calling in the Highcliffe and Walkford area and attendees were urged not to engage someone who had approached them. There were good lines of enquiry but attendees were advised to make their relatives/friends aware.

Question from the Public- It was asked what sort of guise the rogue traders were operating under.

A: Garden work, solar panel repairs, roof tiles. The rogue traders would say the work had been carried out and take money when it didn't appear that they had done any work.

PC Rebecca advised that antisocial behaviour such as street drinking and drug use was an issue but that the police weren't seeing the reports of it.

Chair Joan advised she had recently received a report relating to an individual sitting on a wall in Gordon Road worse for wear who then relieved himself against the wall. Joan had asked the individual if they had reported this incident but was advised they hadn't as they didn't wish to get involved.

It was emphasized that if incidents weren't reported then the police didn't know about them and were therefore unable to act. It was highlighted that they could be reported after the event on the Dorset Police website and those reporting incidents could request to remain anonymous. The Community Contact Points were also an opportunity for members to report crime if they had no access to the internet and that all dates were advertised. These sessions are held at Waitrose (Christchurch) and Stewarts Garden Centre. There is one session at each location every month.

Next session will be held on Friday 21st April from 12:00 to 13:00 at Stewarts Garden Centre

Question from the Public- If there could be a session held around Highcliffe at the library or elsewhere.

A: PCSO Anna had held sessions at Tesco Express but was currently off sick. They may look at doing more of these when PCSO Anna is back at work.

Councillor Nigel Brooks mentioned that antisocial behaviour had taken place at the Bransgore Co-Op in addition to areas of New Milton. Businesses had been made aware and together with CCTV it was hoped that issues could be identified quite quickly.

PC Rebecca confirmed that in relation to the Bransgore Co-op incident the offenders had started sentences for other offences. It was also highlighted that there had been issues with bus stops being

damaged by ball bearings which were proving difficult to follow-up as it was not known when the incidents had occurred. However, there was a project looking at CCTV at the moment.

Question from the Public- If anything was being done to cut down speeding as everyone had been using the estate as a cut through (since the road closure by the Cat & Fiddle). Cars were 'hurtling' down the road at 50-60 mph at between 3:45pm and 5pm. The roads mentioned were Pinewood Avenue; Talbot Drive; Braemar Drive; Hinton Wood Avenue.

A: PC Rebecca mentioned that people may not be aware that the roadworks had actually been completed but that they would take that away and look at how to request flashing speed signs.

Councillor Nigel Brooks stated that the question had been asked of Dorset Highways as to why many of the speed signs weren't working and this was to do with the fact that the batteries had been stolen. The speed sign in Hoburne Lane was now working but the one in Ringwood Road was not.

Councillor Lesley Dedman commented that previously solar power had been looked at which would be much better and that Dorset Highways should be looking at this.

Question from the Public- Relating to the holiday season and portable barbecues and what could be done.

A: Councillor Lesley Dedman confirmed that these were restricted this summer and added the council had installed huge electric barbecues in Poole and Bournemouth and that these may also be installed in Christchurch.

Chair Joan **asked** that if graffiti was discovered for it to be reported on the BCP Council Website. If individuals were caught in the act people should call the Police or report it on the website.

A: PC Rebecca reiterated that if people didn't say anything about an incident, then the Police wouldn't know what was going on. She added that an incident had been reported in Walkford and that the offender(s) were caught.

Question from the Public- Relating to action taken against teenagers on electric scooters.

A: PC Rebecca confirmed they would receive an initial warning and then the scooters would be seized. A question would be raised with the Inspector in order to receive direction on whether the police should be seizing them. PC Rebecca shared that the scooters were propelled in the same manner as a motor vehicle and therefore required insurance but that no such insurance existed and as such the scooters could only be used on private land. This was an issue wider than the Neighbourhood Police Team, it was a national issue.

Question from the Public- Relating to cyclists on the pavements coming up behind people and people not hearing them.

A: PC Rebecca confirmed that if they saw a cyclist on the pavement, they would deal with it.

Chair Joan advised that if members needed advice on where to report items to email her and she would either point them in the right direction or pass the information on to PC Rebecca.

5. Financial and Membership Report

Finance Report

The accounts to the end of February have been prepared and after covering all our expenses we are showing a loss of £2101. Our major expenditure to date has been – repairs to the roof (£5944), the new ceiling (£2442), and lighting (£1345) making a total of £9781. We are also again sponsoring the Highcliffe Food and Arts Festival and have made a donation of £600. We forecast that we will finish the financial year with a loss of approximately £900 and this will be after we have spent £700 to have the emergency lighting replaced.

Bank balances of today – CAF Bank £20,947 and NatWest £441.

Membership

The current number of members is 649 which is an increase of 9 new members since our last QMM on 15th December 2022.

6. Update on Current Issues and Recent HRA activities

6.1. Highcliffe Food and Arts Festival (Terry Lester, Chairman and Director)

Terry advised that the Food and Arts Festival would be taking place on 10th & 11th June and that Indian chef Cyrus Todiwala would take the stage together with other chefs such as James Golding from The Pig. The Highcliffe festival was unique as it also had Arts and Crafts and had attracted 30,000 people last year which had been the best to date. It was hopeful that the event would attract similar numbers this year. In terms of the street closure the committee were trying to work with residents when access was needed and would be working together in order to reduce traffic flow.

6.2. Highcliffe Music Festival (Mandy Polkey, HAT)

Mandy introduced herself and explained that she was being assisted by Jane Dean. HAT had been focused on the business community for the past 6 years in terms of supporting the High Street with Christmas Lights, maps and selling merchandise.

Mandy referenced that HAT had received a share of ARG4 (bounce back) funding for the event, and that the first clifftop music festival would be taking place this year. Although the funding had been received last year the team had been working through the BCP Council restrictions and consequently they had to stage the event in 2023.

Mandy highlighted that the music festival would be 1970's themed; would be free; and would take place on the clifftop in Wharnclyffe Road on the green overspill car park. HAT were currently working through the plans but the festival would accommodate up to 5,000 people. The main aim of the festival is to encourage more people and visitors to the area. The festival would take place on one day only (9th September) with the headliner band being Heatwave plus local bands such as We Are Robot. There would be a stage facing the sea, to project the sound out to sea and mitigate noise for the local residents, and there would also be sound fencing erected.

The event will take place from 11am until 7pm. People will be encouraged to travel to the area by bus due to limited parking facilities.

Mandy added that HAT were seeking sponsorship for the event and would be producing a booklet which

would include advertising and sponsorship.

Question from the Public- Relating to where people would park.

A: Mandy advised that there would only be the normal car parks available, nothing more than that and therefore people were encouraged to travel to the event by bus, bike or to walk. A question had been asked of Morebus as to the possibility of a park and ride facility. In terms of traffic flow, HAT were working with BCP at the moment.

Mandy added that the event would be advertised via posters on the village notice boards; the Highcliffe Village website and the Love Highcliffe Facebook page.

6.3. Morebus Route (New Milton to Sainsbury's) – latest update

Councillor Andy Martin stated that after the recent BCP Highcliffe Ward by-election he had received quite a few letters and emails from residents about this bus route. He and Chair Joan had a meeting with Richard Wade (General Manager of Morebus) to discuss Morebus picking up other routes that the Yellow buses used to serve. Councillor Andy had received a call to confirm that the route would be re-instated as from May and that a timetable would be available shortly.

The X1 and X2 routes would divert to Sainsbury's and would then continue on to Bournemouth whilst a separate service would go from Highcliffe to Mudeford and then on to Christchurch. The Parish Council and the HRA would publicise the service in the next few weeks but members were urged to use the service once re-instated.

6.4. Beach Path and Steps

This had been a topic for a few months and thanks to Councillors Andy Martin and Nigel Brooks there had been a successful meeting with BCP officers. Considerable work was being done such as the steps at the Cliffhanger and Councillor Nigel was following up on the outstanding works. It was hoped that the long straight path from the overflow car park will be refurbished.

7. Update from Highcliffe and Walkford Parish Council, followed by questions from Members to Parish Councillors

Councillor Andy Martin addressed the room on behalf of the Chairman Bob Hutchings.

Councillor Andy Martin shared the tragic news of Parish Councillor Jennie Cooper who had passed away at the age of 38. Jennie had been instrumental in the COL (Cost of Living) initiative and had initiated meetings with lots of other groups. Jennie and Councillor Adam Sofianos had distributed the information leaflets.

The next Parish Council meeting would be held next Wednesday (29th March) and there would be a lot on the agenda.

To date, there had been no response from Graham Farrant but Councillors Nigel Brooks and Andy Martin will be able to provide an update on some of the items on the list.

In terms of the transfer of the Recreation Ground and Play Areas to the Parish Council, chairman Bob Hutchings had met with BCP representatives two weeks ago. After a 4 year battle the transfer details had

finally been agreed.

Trish Jamieson (Parish Clerk) who had done an amazing job for the Parish Council was retiring. Councillor Andy Martin publicly thanked Trish for her services and advised that Mr. Tom Brindley would be the new Parish Clerk following Trish's retirement.

The 50 achievements of the Parish Council since its inception were highlighted. Councillor Andy Martin conveyed this had been a tremendous job by councillors who were all volunteering for the love of the community.

Finally, Councillor Andy Martin mentioned the upcoming BCP and Highcliffe and Walkford Parish Council elections and stated that particularly in terms of the Parish Council it would be short on councillor numbers unless more people opted to stand.

There was a thank-you from Pat Brookes who had held a special interest in the recreation ground for the last 2 years in relation to a Royal British Legion remembrance seat.

Chair Joan advised that the Parish Council meetings were very interesting and were open to anyone to come down and to listen to them. If there were specific items a member of the public wished to address there was provision for this at the beginning of the meeting. Chair Joan added "you find out all sorts of things".

Councillor Nigel Brooks showed a professional laser speed gun and advised that Community Speed Watch had been set up a couple of years ago following 2 accidents in Highcliffe (1 on Wharnclyffe Road and the second outside the Old School). Dorset Police had set up Community Speed Watch which consisted of a group of volunteers to monitor speeding traffic and Councillor Nigel was looking for more volunteers. It was highlighted that on Hoburne Lane between 8-8:30am a car was going at 40mph in a 30mph speed limit area. The driver didn't see a car turning into Hoburne Park and an accident occurred. When the police arrived the Community Speed Watch Team had the speed of the vehicle already recorded.

Councillor Nigel Brooks referenced the Great British Spring Clean where ½ million people had signed up to collect litter and made the offer for any members to borrow his kit in coordination with the national campaign. An example was provided of someone who was travelling home to New Milton and had counted 200 pieces of litter along Roeshot Hill. It was however highlighted that litter collection should be restricted to 30mph roads and when it was safe to do so.

Councillor Nigel Brooks referred to the cliff paths and steps which were in a very bad condition. There had also been paths that had been informally made so there needed to be a rationalising of paths and the good ones maintained. The long screed path had been a problem last summer with the dry weather and had crumbled and was very dangerous. The key paths needed to be maintained and corrected and Councillors Andy Martin, Nigel Brooks and Chair Joan were pressing BCP officers to sort them out.

Councillor Nigel Brooks referenced the Zig Zag path and the steep facing retaining walls. Ian Nichols provided huge input into the zigzag path and Ian's wife wished for a plaque as a memorial for him. There is a plaque on this wall from the formal opening and an email has been sent to Graham Farrant and Katie Ingram (Castle Manager) to establish if this wall could be a place to have a plaque for Ian, and potentially other members of the public who wished to remember loved ones. A response is awaited.

8. Update from BCP Councillors, followed by questions from Members

Councillor Andy Martin referenced Jesmond Wood and the fact that on 15th December the planning application had been unanimously refused by the BCP Planning Committee, however, the land owner could appeal this decision. A meeting had taken place with Graham Farrant to establish what the contract says as if the landowner couldn't use his best endeavors was there a possibility of him selling the land back to BCP. Graham Farrant doesn't believe there would be a problem with the purchase of the land but was more concerned with the financial implication of looking after the wood. They were currently waiting to hear from Mr. Bulstrode (the land owner).

There had been traffic and parking issues around Highcliffe School and meetings had taken place with the BCP Traffic Team, Road Safety, the School Executive Head, Head and Deputy Head, as the main concern was around the safety of the pupils. A school Traffic Plan was being worked to help alleviate some of these problems.

The High Street pavements – Councillor Nigel Brooks has carried out a survey of the state of the pavements. There would be a meeting with Gary Powell (BCP Head of Engineering) tomorrow in order to obtain quotes for the required work. There will be a £120K contribution from the Parish Council.

The next item related to contractors parking irresponsibly around the village and getting more on top enforcing where contractors park their vehicles.

A 30mph speed limit between the Chewton Bunny roundabout and Walkford was being looked at by the Highways Team at BCP who were relatively confident that they would be able to implement a 30mph speed limit. This was currently under investigation.

BCP Future Places (wholly owned company) have recommended to push for survey on feasibility for an Hotel to be built on the Civic Offices Site in Christchurch. The survey will cost £969,000. An amendment is being pushed for that the administration shouldn't be spending this money before 4th May and after Future Places has been reviewed.

Councillor Nigel Brooks referenced the Castle café and advised that since it closed under BCP Management a mobile café is being run by the Cliffhanger. Its future potential is being tested with a great number of responses both locally and further afield. The tender papers would be issued in the middle of May with a view to engaging a contractor by September.

Speeding along Ringwood Road and Gore Road. These were both long straight roads and vehicle speed needed to be regulated.

Councillor Lesley Dedman referenced litter by roads and that the council were risk averse here to shut roads off.

In terms of the pavements Councillor Lesley Dedman stated she was really glad to hear Councillor Andy Martin was following this up, following the initial survey by Cllr Brookes and was pleased that something was going to be done.

From the BCP side of things the Highcliffe Day Centre had been closed since Covid and a review of the use of all Day Centres had been completed in the BCP conurbation. Officers were waiting to see what the new administration wanted to do about the report.

It was noted that BCP meetings were on line and members could watch these on their computer.

Councillor Paul Hilliard referenced that Talbot Road and Pinewood Avenue which had been due to be resurfaced had been delayed due to the weather.

There was a consultation ongoing around Mudeford Woods and how people use the woods.

Heritage signs had been erected at Steamer Point in relation to memorial telecommunications.

With the Council Tax letters a leaflet was enclosed explaining that members needed Photo ID at the Polling Stations in May.

Councillors Paul Hilliard and Lesley Dedman would be standing for the wards of West Highcliffe and Mudeford whilst Councillor Andy Martin and David Martin would be standing for Highcliffe and Walkford. All would be standing as Christchurch Independents.

Councilor Nigel Brooks is also standing for re-election as an independent.

Councillor Paul Hilliard made reference to the earlier agenda item around the litter along Roeshot Hill and advised that the Dorset side was clean it was the Hampshire side that was the bad side.

9. AOB

It was raised by a member that the flower beds in the Recreation Ground had not been planted. Councillor Andy Martin agreed to follow up with BCP.

It was highlighted that the High Street would be closed 4 times this year for both the Food and Arts Festival and the Music Festival. In this regard, there was a question whether there would be 2-way traffic down Wharnccliffe Road as it would be difficult for pedestrians crossing the road with the main parking area being on this road. It was agreed that this would be well policed and representatives for both the Food and Arts Festival and the Music Festival have agreed to look into traffic control.

Trees had been cut down below Beacon Drive on the right-hand side by the sea and a question had been asked as to why. Councillor Nigel Brooks advised that BCP officers had approved the works by a private contractor working on behalf of the flats and that this work was undertaken every 5-7 years. Councillor Nigel Brooks added that the cliffs were more stable by not having trees as the roots disrupt the natural drainage and reiterated that this work had been carried out under the authorization of BCP officers.

10. Date and time of next meeting

The next meeting is due to be held on Thursday 22nd June 2023 at 7.00pm at The Old School.