

# **BRANKSOME PARK AND CANFORD CLIFFS**

## **RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION**

### **MINUTES OF THE AGM HELD SATURDAY, MAY 14, 2022**

The Chairman opened the meeting by welcoming those present, including our guest speakers, Sir Robert Syms MP, and Drew Mellor, Leader of BCP. A Welcome also for Cllr May Haines, Ward Councillor for our area.

**Apologies** were received from Jackie Heap, Hon. Treasurer of BPCORA, Bob and Julie Reid, Mr and Mrs.G.Jones, Charles and Wendy Wiltshire, and Hazel and Alan Clifton.

#### **Minutes of the last AGM, May 11, 2019.**

These minutes were approved.

#### **Chairmans' Report**

As Acting Chairman, Dugald Eadie presented his report.

The last three years have been difficult. Several events over the last three years have been identified.

**Planning:** Wilderton Road, Lindsay Road and Burton Road have all had ongoing issues. There have been several controversial decisions over the years. We have to remember that we are all living in houses which have been built on original heathland over the years.

**Anti-Social Behaviour:** Community Speedwatch has been successful. There has been a lot of cycling in the Chines, destroying the land in the Chines.

**Rough Sleepers and Travellers:** The system for dealing with this has been improved over the last three years.

**Peak usage of the Beach:** There have been problems associated with this – car parking for example. This was exacerbated during Covid when people were free to move around but couldn't travel overseas to holiday. The huge numbers of visitors caused stress for our Residents living near the beaches.

**Empty Shops in Canford Cliffs.** We are still in exactly the same position as we were 3 years ago.

**Pinecliff Sunken Garden:** There has been considerable progress with the garden, thanks to Roger Allen and his group of volunteers who look after the garden.

Council Merger: There has been the amalgamation of our three Councils, Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole into BCP. This is not yet complete.

CIL There has been a change to the CIL (Community Infrastructure Levy) In theory 15% of the CIL money collected in our area should be spent in our area. Some has already been allocated to Canford Cliffs Library.

There are three items ongoing - Beach Road Carpark, Beach Huts SPV (Special Purpose Vehicle) and Branksome Beach Café.

## **TREASURER'S REPORT**

The Income and Expenditure Account for the Year Ended December 2021 is printed on the back of the Agenda. Our balance of income over expenditure has increased over the last couple of years as we have not been expending as much on meetings and activities for example. We have been successful in collecting revenue. The advertising revenue has been very successful due to the Magazine Advertising Manager, Roger Allen, who unfortunately has now retired. However, he still looks after the Sunken Pinecliff Garden. Paul Fearnley asked what the Donation listed under Income was. It was explained that this had been given by a grateful resident of the area who was impressed by the work that had been done at the garden. This money is being spent on plants etc.

## **APPOINTMENT OF SCHOFIELDS**

Schofields have agreed to continue to audit the accounts free of charge. The Chairman asked for a show of hands to approve this. Schofields were duly approved.

## **ELECTION OF OFFICERS**

The Chairman asked for the approval from the floor to appoint the existing officers en bloc. There was unanimous approval of this. It is hoped that there will be nominations for the vacant positions on the committee.

## **GUEST SPEAKER – SIR ROBERT SYMS MP**

The Chairman then handed over to the first guest speaker, Sir Robert Syms MP.

Sir Robert began by saying it seemed a long time since our last AGM. Since then there had been good results for the Conservatives at the General Election, but bad results recently locally.

There is no doubt that at the moment it is going to be a bumpy ride because of the increases in the cost of living. Although Gas prices have risen, Britain has the cheapest gas in Europe. The Government are currently reviewing the cost of living crisis. He hopes that things will be easier by the New Year.

The recent Queen's Speech contained some interesting proposals from the Government. With regard to Planning, empty shops is something the Government is looking at and he hopes the local Councils will be given more powers in this respect and the situation of the empty shops in Canford Cliffs Village will improve.

Our unemployment figures continue to fall.

The Government will hopefully take steps to improve our immigration problem.

The Government are bringing proposals to give the police more power to prevent eco protesters carrying out the thoughtless things they have been doing recently, and causing so much damage to property.

Sir Robert ended by giving his own views on the latest troubles in Parliament – ‘party gate’ and ‘beer gate’.

A lady resident gave a big thank you to Sir Robert that he gave up his time to speak at our meeting and gave her the workings of parliament first hand.

Tonie Baker asked Sir Robert if the Government’s proposed cuts in the Civil Service will also affect local authorities. Sir Robert didn’t think so. This is partly an effort by the government to get people back into their places of work in London, and the civil service was increased greatly because more were needed to deal with covid.

Vicky Moss asked that as the South West receives one of the lowest receipts per head of population for capital investment and public services of all regions in the UK from Central Government expenditure, what is the Conservative’s plan for improving the lives of people living in South East Dorset?

Sir Robert admitted that this area has not been well funded by any government for quite a while. In the South West of England nearly every MP is Conservative and they are all putting a lot of pressure on Government to ensure that the South West gets its fair share of resources.

On the question of immigration and the protocol a resident suggested that we should work with Europe rather than being threatening. Sir Robert answered that he feels the government are taking the correct line as far as immigration, and if the latest measures stop some people attempting to cross the channel in small boats it will save lives. As far as the protocol goes, we shall just have to see what happens.

Sir Robert ended here to allow time for the next speaker.

### **GUEST SPEAKER – DREW MELLOR, LEADER OF BCP**

Drew Mellor began by saying that he had been leader of the BCP Council for twenty months, and went on to say what had been done so far, and what is proposed.

£50million has been gained from the amalgamation of the three Councils.  
Concerning our area.

The Council owned beach huts are to be put into an SVP (Special Purpose Vehicle) into which the income from Beach Huts will be put and this will enable the Council to borrow money.

We have paused any proposal to sell part of the Beach Road Car Park, and for the time being this will be upgraded, and there will be better signage.

We have put in place measures to deal with anti-social behaviour.

We now have more powers to deal with Travellers and unauthorised camp sites.

There are proposals to improve the beach front area.

Consultation with residents has been improved vastly.

As he said before, the cuts being made by the Government will not affect BCP Council.

One of the things done since amalgamation is to invest in better technology to make the Council more efficient.

Poole town centre will be improved.

The Chairman asked that as interest rates are going up, will that make it more difficult to raise the sort of money needed from the SPV?

Drew Mellor said that the plan was to raise funds with 20-year loans, thus avoiding future interest rate increases.

The Chairman's next question was about the beach proposals by Rockwater. He had attended meeting between Rockwater and some local residents, and the representative of Rockwater refused to admit that there had been any problem in Hove, despite the fact that we have seen evidence of this. Is there any connection between the proposals to improve the beach front area and Rockwater?

Drew Mellor replied that without doubt the Rockwater proposals will improve the beach area, but there is no connection between BCP's intentions and Rockwater.

The Chairman then invited those attending to ask any questions.

John Mills: Why has the Conservation area in Branksome Park not been updated since 2006?

Drew Mellor said that the Council is very committed to retaining the Conservation areas and the need to keep the character of the area.

The Chairman said that there had in fact been changes to the Conservation area of Branksome Park and Chine Gardens, and the boundary had been changed in 2014.

Roger Brooks: What action can be taken to avoid cyclists and scooter riders speeding along the prom, ignoring the signage, especially when it is crowded?

Drew Mellor said that more money is being put into the sea front area, and there are now more marshals, patrolling the prom, and there has been an investment in signage.

A lady resident said that when she was walking on the prom, encountering the problem of speeding cyclists and scooters, she approached one of the Marshalls to be told that there was nothing to be done.

The Chairman thinks that this problem occurs as the Bournemouth map shows our beach front and the chines shows are part of the National Cycle Tracks, which contradicts the order that there is No Cycling.

A lady resident asked if anything was going to be done about the appalling state of the roads in our area.

Drew Mellor said that money is being into roads throughout BPC.

A Lady asked if there were any plans to regenerate Bournemouth town centre.

Drew Mellor answered that yes, there are.

Roy Pointer asked that if there is going to be so much investment in the BCP area, where will all this money come from if we have been assured that the Council Tax will not be increased.

Drew Mellor answered that £50M will have resulted from efficiency savings, and will be taken out of the budget for investment. Staff at BCP has been reduced considerably.

Vicky Moss asked if there were plans to make it safer to walk, across roads for instance as there is so much traffic.

Drew Mellor answered that there has been, and will be much more investment in cycle paths, walking routes etc.

Paul Fearnley asked was there a plan to maintain the historic buildings in the area.

Drew Mellor answered that certainly there was.

John Gunton said that we were having quite a lot of problems with anti social behaviour at the weekend on the prom. This resulted in a lot of broken glass being left around. And as regards the Rockwater proposals, we have to be extremely careful that we don't allow a lovely area to be destroyed.

Drew Mellor answered that there was every intention to retain the character of the area.

John Gunton also thanked Drew Mellor for the work he had done on unauthorised encampments.

Cllr. May Haines said that in regard to anti social behaviour, Operation SandMan is in operation, stretching from Sandbanks to Branksome Chine. She is working closely with the Safer Neighbourhood Team of the police and asks that if there are any problems to let her know and she will let the police know and it can be dealt with.

A resident said that he was very pleased to hear that BCP's assets were not being sold off and specifically wanted assurance that the Chamber at the Civic Centre in Bournemouth will be retained.

Drew Mellor assured him that they were absolutely committed to retaining the Chamber at the Civic Centre, and as many historical buildings as possible.

A resident of Westminster Road pointed out that Branksome Beach is very much a family area and the Council needs to be very careful what they will allow there.

Drew Mellor's answer was that they are very aware of this.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 1205.