

BPCCRA Open Meeting

11th February 2026 @ 7:30pm St Aldhelm's Church Hall

1. Welcome & Apologies

Apologies: Peter Schroeder, Roy Pointer, John Challoner

Welcomed All, plus, Cllr Gavin Wright (GW) to talk about the new Town & Parish Council system (AC) reminded members that only they can vote at the AGM, but membership is open to all local residents, plus those from further afield. Hard copies of Association Rules are available, plus are to be found on website: <https://www.pinesandchines.co.uk/about/>

2. Chairman's Items - to include proposed Membership Subscription increase-noted in Feb Newsletter.

There has not been an increase for 15+yrs. Neighbouring associations charge a minimum of £12, we are at £5. Current level is clearly unsustainable. Proposed increase of £10 for individual households & £7 for a block resident, needs AGM approval under current rules.

- A. **Payment Methods-** Standing orders are currently the main method however some committee members feel direct debit is preferred. There are problems with collecting checks and cash. However, we are moving to a cheque less & cash less operation, mirroring society; this has not yet been formally announced. Carol Parkin reminded (AC) that there are '*many*' members who are older & only use cash. (The Association Treasurer (SP) later confirmed the actual number of cash payers is very few).
- **Payment issues were noted:** (SP) reported that three members are still paying the outdated £3 subscription, while only 13 have transferred out of the 70 who previously paid via Santander.
(AC) suggested a move to direct debits is essential.

B. Membership Categories & General Information

- i. **Care Homes - per annum** as per blocks. The Care Home would charge their residents for a personal, bi-annual copy of Pines & Chines via individual expense accounts
- ii. **Business membership.** The Exec suggests the introduction of a business membership rate pay £x /per annum to include a preferential advertising rate & x number of P&Cs. Proposed £20-25 per annum.
- iii. **Membership Information** (AC) explained we have a major challenge getting member info, procedures up to date. There is no doubt we need a digitised system. (AC) acknowledged advice received from IT 'whiz' who lives out of our area but volunteered to review our situation.
Communication - We need to collect the names and personal contact data of members in blocks.
Carol Parkin explained blocks used to get a printed copy agendas and minutes of Open Meetings to put on notice boards
- iv. **Membership Subscription Increase**
As above: to be £10 for individual households & £7 for residents of apartment blocks
- v. **Wardens** – they once collected individual member information but former Execs let this drop. Recent effort to arrange a warden meeting has not succeeded. (AC) noted our current Chair (PS) will be working on the warden situation.

vi.

C. 3. Overview of Increasing Costs

- i. Costs have gone up significantly. P & C Magazine does not t pay for itself anymore.
Reasons:
 - Warden delivery to the blocks; there are not enough volunteers coming forward and we are not proactively promoting our Association.

- Beach Road Carpark Legal Advice. It was noted that that only twice in 10+yrs money had been spent on a London QC/KC; recently £1500 to challenge the sale of Beach Road Carpark. Covenant challenges are costly, but the Association took appropriate action in the interests of its membership.
 - Larger P&C magazine; with an Editor focused on how to move ahead appropriately.
 - £10 contribution pax allocation for gardeners Xmas dinner- although this kindly was picked up by one of the gardeners last Christmas. (SP) noted
 - Audit fees- £800+ (AC) noted an objection to this charge which came with zero warning. Exec made no efforts to find an alternative. (JG) stated Schofield had carried out the audit for years thus attempting to justify without meeting agreement. Michael Parkin offered a possible audit volunteer. TBA
 - AGM last year cost £400 – steep increases in food & drink prices in last 5 years were noted; insurance is also creeping up.
- ii. **Forward Planning** (AC) – emphasised the importance of foresight & fore-planning- we need to think about how go to forward and the fact we perhaps need younger, vibrant people who have skills to support us move ahead.
(JG) gave a brief summary of the accounts over the last 6 years:
- iii. **Previous Accounts**
- 2021/22 – excess £2-4k
 - 2023 - broke even.
 - Since 2024 - losses
 - Up until 3 years ago we were turning a profit with £40k in bank.
 - One P&C edition costs 60p. (JG) stated a decision was made not to fill the magazine up with adverts, pointing out it is very good value. It was pointed out by attendees that this is **his** opinion with no provision of criteria, not an objective one.
- iv. (JG) agreed subscriptions need to increase but expressed the need to look at what we are doing with the money. (AC) noted that the Chair has received suggestions from members & a conversation is underway.
(JP) suggested coming up with a proposal to look at older members & how to accommodate them.

How we spend funds going forward?

It would seem the Chair has received email queries around what positive initiatives are undertaken for the community. 2 members lobbied the committee to support local sports teams; plus, the Charity teaching lifesaving at Branksome Beach has been raised as a worthy initiative. It was asked why we are not supporting these small organisations? One attendee insisted that Current & previous Chairs were lobbied to support the installation of better Chine lighting in the early evenings for increased safety. There followed further open conversation as to how money is spent with membership suggesting that monies could be dispersed in wider ways than currently. BP members noted considerable money being spent on Canford Cliffs Christmas lights with zero in Branksome Park.

4. Incoming Membership Secretary to include a conversation on the composition of the Executive Committee

- i. **Change of key officers:** Pamela Carvel resigned as Membership Secretary with John Pearce (JP) the in-coming membership secretary. (AC) welcomed & introduced the former Olympian. (JP) runs Beach Champs for last 10 years – the popular summer sports festival on Branksome Beach, with netball, football & rugby teams. He expressed his support of moving the Association to an online system. A former teacher, he was born in area thus bringing extremely helpful local familiarity. (AC) reinforced the imperative of moving to a digital system and thanked data analyst member, Howard Freeman who is working with us to move away from EXCEL spreadsheets and centralise our BPCCRAP&C footprint.
- ii. **Composition of the Executive Committee.** (AC) re-emphasised the need to have the right skills in Exec. Marketing, IT and Community Outreach for example. A smaller Exec committee has been suggested and discussed; possibly core members with an extended committee. Upcoming officer changes will enable this to be

progressed. It was noted the association needs more visibility with posters on noticeboards, leaflet drops, etc. It was agreed, BPC CRA is not sufficiently known locally.

5. A Review of the CIL-financed Pinecliff Gardens Shelter Replacement and Interior Mural/Decoration Planning

Chair (PS) has met artist Stewart Roberts, a member of Poole Leisure Painters (Lighthouse, Poole) to discuss the mural. The question of a brief was raised along with queries around the former mural. It appears nobody has retained pictures. The cost of materials was raised - £100-200 according to (PS). Scaffolding? Cllr Gavin Wright (GW) said two other community groups have put themselves forward -one is a nursery school. He stressed the mural as a community asset; thus artist payment is not appropriate. He informed meeting of his intention to approach/consult the Arts Uni about the project.

A short lively discussion around the brief followed. Attendees favoured linking world-renowned attributes of Poole/the Jurassic Coast, Poole conservation themes (sea, harbour, heathlands, wildlife) to the project.

6. Planning Update

(JH), our Planning Officer, noted the volume of decisions this month but questioned their consistency. The Council's level and depth of professionalism in this arena is deeply disappointing (even disturbing).

- i. **No 16 Lakeside Rd** – a terrible construction process that currently is effectively monitored by vigilant residents. (GW) questioned whether this should be considered a building regs or a planning issue. (JH) noted the need to go through a check list of issues to make an informed judgment. Things such as excavations near TPO'd trees, with which council officers concur; grey areas where council gives its approval but lack a monitoring so are hands-off until something goes wrong with the result that residents submit multiple complaints. Bottom line, (JH) felt that the council is on top of the process. So, it can be said that there is a strong need for clear build work guidelines, plus governance clarity from the council over build work in their area. This lack of specifics is well illustrated by the recent 'token' tree-felling fine of £20k on an egregious cliff plot developer - very little compared to value of building and its land. (GW) said Council had told him they would step in if it goes wrong. Through resident hard we might ensure that correct procedures are followed. To ensure developments in the area are scrutinised (GW) noted the complexity of the challenge in assessing the accuracy of answers to problems. It was noted that the official conservation officer was not well-informed plus, other council teams such as Highways, frequently contradict each other. There is no clear framework for the correct procedures.
- ii. **Town Councils-** From a planning point of view there is no change. The new structure we will be Branksome Park and Canford Cliffs Parish Ward. (GW) noted a Town Council can take a planning advisory position but has no power.

7. The Future Poole Town Council – (GW) talked extensively on the structure & mechanisms of Town and Parish Councils

(AC) read out the published background information in these key bullet points:

- i. Local Authority councillors are elected to ensure local interests are acted upon, they participate in meetings, champion interests, monitor effectiveness of public services, education, social care, libraries & highways.
- ii. The new town/parish councillors do this at a hyper-local level. They sign a published code of conduct.
- iii. New Poole Town Council introduces an additional tier under BCP Council
- iv. There will be 15 wards, represented by 21 parish councillors
- v. BP & CC Parish Ward will return one councillor. BCP Councillor numbers will not change.
- vi. A Town Council has a mayor
- vii. Its only legal obligation is looking after allotments
- viii. BCP cannot force Town Councils to take on anything they are not willing to

- ix. Neighbourhood CIL -Legally, the Town Council will have to take on responsibility for allocating moneys.
- x. Currently there is no possible candidate information; there are also no premises no allocated premises.
- xi. 21 councillors in Poole. No remuneration. Only allowances.
- xii. Town Council elections cost £1m for Poole, £1m for Bournemouth...total cost of Town Council Elections will be £3m & Town Councils will have to pay this back so they will start in deficit. Hiring venues, staffing, holding meetings, etc., present challenges.
- xiii. Byelections cost...should a councillor resign or withdraw.
- xiv. Until elected the councillors set their own budget. £1.9m in Poole to cover an election, setting up the council for the first year with repay via a Council Tax precept. £35 increase per residency in Poole.
- xv. (GW) considers this 'a stealth tax. 'Town Councils can choose what they take on impacting the precept.
- xvi. (JP) used example of Christchurch Town Council.70 % of Council Tax goes on Admin, only 20 % goes on services with the remaining 10% getting lost in other expenses. (GW) used the example of Corfe Mullen Parish Council website showing there are 9 administrators and 3 gardeners doing all the work. Last year Holdenhurst Parish Council had a budget of £500,000 and all they could show for it was a £500 noticeboard. A community governance review went to consultation with a 62% negative response.
- xvii. (JP) further pointed out that in 2025/26 BCP Council's debt of £540m attracts interest payments of £6.8million per annum. BCP wants to offload services to reduce costs. He gave the example of Lib Dem Town Councils taking on responsibility for former BCP services such as street cleaning and gardens. (GW) gave the example of Exeter...it started at £35 year with an increase to £300 per annum within 8 years. He feels BCP will try to pass on responsibilities and thus council tax will rise.
- xviii. Mayors will be elected from the Town Councils.
- xix. Town Councils have the choice of taking on CIL or not. It is possible to get 21 councillors who are against Town Councils & take on very little. It was stated that Lib Dem councillors have a record of increasing costs. Christchurch TC is held up as beacon of success, but the reality is 70% of its funds go on bureaucracy. BCP sold a carpark Christchurch had funded back to it! Other worrying examples were reviewed and discussed. (VM) raised Branksome Chine maintenance issues as a further example of BCP's 'palming off' through 'out-contracting' behaviour.

8. Road Safety Achievements

- i. The Avenue/Western Road Junction. BCP Council have finally installed a fully lit pelican crossing which opened today, Feb 11.
- ii. CIL Bid for crossing points and traffic calming on Western Rd outside All Saints' Church and the junction of Western/Leicester Rd – outcome will be made public in March

At the end of the meeting the Chair asked attendees for their views on the following issues that were raised in the meeting and for a show of hands to gauge level of agreement:

1. **Do you agree with raising the "BPCCRA Annual Subscription from £5 to £10 for individual households and from £3- £7 for block membership?**
The majority agreed.
2. **Do you agree with changing the payment methods from Standing Orders to Direct Debit for new members and for existing members if they can?**
There was a majority in favour
(JP) commented on the increased flexibility afforded by DD.
Micheal Parkin raised the need for a plan for cash payers; plus, a strategy to manage double payers.
3. **Do you agree with charging care homes at same rate as blocks?**

The majority agreed

4. Do you agree with a new Businesses Member category?

Yes, but maybe postpone for a year as there is a lot currently going on!

The Chair reminded attendees of the AGM details:

Saturday 11th April 10:30am, CC Village Hall

Neil Duncan Jordan, the Mayor of Poole and BPC Millie Earl attending, along with other officials. (Neighbouring Association Chairs etc)

The Meeting ended at 9:30pm

Actions

- i. Inform Managers of blocks of the need to put Open Meeting Agendas, Minutes on block noticeboards
- ii. Review how Association disburses its money
- iii. Review policy on using funds to support local groups & using funds in wider ways
- iv. Move payment methods to direct debits while exploring ways to ensure that members stay with the Association as it switches from standing orders, checks, cash
- v. Continue to implement effective ways to record names and addresses of members of all categories
- vi. Brief for the shelter – it was agreed that the Brief should link conservation of the exceptional attributes of the Poole area: the local wildlife habitats, the Sea, Poole Harbour and the heathlands. (VM) to work on this with Chair.