

**Minutes of the Annual Meeting of Cold Ash Parish Council
on Tuesday 14.5.2024 at 7pm in the Committee Room of
Acland Memorial Hall**



**Public
Participation**

Mr Bernard Clark reported an awareness of residents' frustration at being unable to access the Tennis Courts despite them often being unused. He believes the Council should take urgent action to ensure easy access to those who are not Club members. RH advised that he and HC have had a meeting with the Tennis Club regarding this matter, that progress is being made and outcomes will be reported to The Poor's Allotments & Recreation Grounds Charities Trust at the next Trust meeting.

Two members of the public were present. They have purchased Windyridge ([24/00370/HOUSE Windyridge The Ridge Cold Ash](#)) and presented to Council their intention to return the property to good order and ensure it is in keeping with neighbouring homes having been empty for some years and fallen into disrepair. They acknowledged one objection raised by a nearby resident but the basis for that objection seemed factually incorrect. Council thanked the members of the public for attending.

Present:

Cllrs Fenner (MF) (Chair), McArdle (IM), Wilding (JW) Adams (PA), Clark (BC) and Hanks (RH)

**In
attendance:**

Rosie Jardine (Clerk & RFO)

239456 Election of the Chair of Cold Ash Parish Council

**RESOLVED
ALL IN FAVOUR**

Cllr Marie Fenner was nominated by BC. This was seconded by IM. There were no other nominations and MF was elected Chair of Cold Ash Parish Council.

239457 Apologies for Absence

Cllrs Codling (HC), Murray (PM), Morrow (AM) and District Cllr Dick

239458 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest

239459 Election of the Vice Chair of Cold Ash Parish Council

**RESOLVED
ALL IN FAVOUR**

Cllr Ivor McArdle was nominated by BC. This was seconded by MF. There were no other nominations and IM was elected Vice Chair of Cold Ash Parish Council.

239460 Minutes

IM suggested a correction to the 9.4.24 draft minute wording of item 239444 Neighbourhood Development Plan and handwritten corrections were made.

**RESOLVED
ALL IN FAVOUR**

Minutes of the meeting held on 9.4.24 were approved and signed

ACTION

IM suggested an action that CAPC follow up with WBC regarding the application for 6 additional houses at Coley Farm considered on 9.4.24. "Why was CACP not informed of the application for the removal of the pump house?"

Clerk to forward relevant email from Volunteer Flood Warden to BC to action and to pass on the contact information for WBC's Officer who commented on the earlier Greenbanks application as a useful contact.

Standing Order 1a – at the Chair's discretion, item 239469 Planning Matters A Applications was discussed to accommodate members of the public with an interest in application 24/00370 Windyridge. Once item 239469 A had been completed, the normal order of agenda items resumed.

- 239461** **Asset Register**
NOTED The Asset Register as at 31.3.24 was reviewed and approved.
ACTION The Clerk identified the need to add the Tennis Courts to the Register and advised that at some point Charity and Council assets will be defined in separate Registers.
- 239462** **Risk Assessment Review**
NOTED The Risk Assessment was reviewed and necessary amendments were identified. This review will be completed at a future CAPC meeting due to the number of amendments required.
Addition to line 5 Open Spaces:
Ash Dieback: the WAG has circa 25 ash trees. Whilst they currently appear healthy, there is a risk that they may need to be removed or an area sectioned off as needed, if Ash Dieback is found. The risk is being mitigated by building a financial reserve specifically for this item.
Clarity to line 10 Storage of Documents
Remove out of date statements and add use of Cloud storage referring to Audit recommendations.
New line for Play Areas
ACTION **Update 4 Tennis Courts**
Clerk to share any Tennis Court lease documents with the Poor's Trust to aid understanding.
ACTION **Update Line 13 Consequence of resignation, sickness or death of Clerk**
Re-word control as no there is not currently an up-to-date Clerk's manual
The Risk Assessment should be split into two separate Assessments, one for Council and another for the Poor's Charity.
- 239463** **Outside Body Appointments**
RESOLVED To appoint representatives to the following Outside Bodies:
ALL IN FAVOUR Berkshire Association of Local Councils (BALC) – Cllr Pete Adams
Acland Hall Committee – Cllr Jon Wilding
Thatcham Flood Forum – Cllr Pete Murray
District Parish Conference – Cllrs Pete Adams and Ivor McArdle
Thatcham Parochial Charities – Cllr Ivor McArdle appointed 9.4.24
- 239464** **Planning Committee**
RESOLVED **A** Not to appoint a Planning Committee and return to a second Council meeting limited to
5 IN FAVOUR Planning matters only.
1 ABSTENTION No minutes will be approved at Planning meetings, only at the first meeting of each month.
- 239465** **Council and Committee meeting dates for 2024-2025**
RESOLVED Following discussion, to approve the schedule of meetings prepared by the Clerk for the
ALL IN FAVOUR year 2024-2025 as per appendix I.
ACTION The Clerk will identify a suitable date for a Trust meeting for The Poor's Allotments & Recreation Ground Charities. The Clerk suggested a standing item on Trust agendas to receive updates on the invaluable work of the WAG volunteers.
ACTION Check on reporting of attendance – will those not attending "Planning" meetings have a poor attendance record?
- 239466** **Committee Appointments**
RESOLVED **A** Finance & General Purposes
ALL IN FAVOUR Cllr Adams stated that, due to other time pressures, he was standing down as Chairman of F&GP Committee and from the Committee. The Chairman asked him if he could remain on the Committee at least for a while because of his work so far to clarify financial

matters. Cllr Adams agreed, but stated this would have to be dependent on his circumstances.

Cllrs AM, PM, HC, PA and MF – amend terms of reference to reflect membership of 5.

B HR

Cllrs MF (ex officio), PM and IM

239467

Councillors’ Areas of Interest

RESOLVED Councillor’s areas of interest as follows:

| | |
|----------------------------|-----------|
| Culture/Leisure | J Wilding |
| Heritage | P Murray |
| Housing/Planning | P Murray |
| NDP | I McArdle |
| Environment/Climate Change | I McArdle |
| Digital/Technology | R Hanks |
| Legal/Constitutional | B Clark |
| Health | J Wilding |
| Finance | H Codling |
| Transport/Travel | P Murray |
| Risk & Insurance | I McArdle |
| Business/Commercial | P Murray |
| Charity/Trust | I McArdle |
| Youth | R Hanks |
| Community Engagement | A Morrow |

239467 Final Internal Audit

There was discussion expressing concern regarding the volume of recommendations made by the Internal Auditor (IA) as well as with the prescribed timelines to address issues such as the handling of The Poor’s Chairty which has been ongoing for many years but is in hand. PA expressed concern regarding why some of these, and indeed other issues, had not been highlighted by previous audits, and in particular the implications for previous approval of financial statements and the precept setting process.

NOTED The Annual Internal Audit Report 2023-2024 (appendix II) and discussed the recommendations from the full IA report (found on the CAPC website).

Standing Order 3x was suspended to allow to go beyond 2 hours.

ACTION F&GP Committee to review reserves and the Reserve Policy, referring to the JPAG for guidance on the appropriate level of reserve, and also to clarify the definition of types of reserve.

The Clerk suggested that the implementation of accounting software and the quarterly meeting of the F & GP Committee should begin to address recommendations and concerns relating to budget monitoring and setting the precept. It was recognized that there will be additional work for the members of the F & GP Committee.

239467 Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) 2023-2024

RESOLVED **A** To approve the Annual Governance Statement (Section 1) 2023-2024
ALL IN FAVOUR

RESOLVED **B** To approve the Accounting Statements (Section 2) 2023-2024
ALL IN FAVOUR

RESOLVED **C** To note that the RFO has prepared the Notice of Public Rights: Tuesday 4.6.2024 –

ALL IN FAVOUR Monday 15.7.2024

239469 Planning Matters

A Applications

PA [24/00862/HOUSE Drake House, The Ridge, Cold Ash, Thatcham RG18 9HX](#)

Construction of a timber garden room in rear garden of Drake House

**RESOLVED
UNANIMOUS**

NO OBJECTION

BC [24/00509/FULMAJ Cleardene Farm, Ashmore Green Road](#)

Section 73 - Variation of condition 2 (approved plans) of application 22/00810/FULMAJ allowed under Appeal B Ref: APP/W0340/W/22/3306639: Conversion of redundant buildings at Cleardene Farm, Ashmore Green, into four detached dwellings, and to demolish two redundant buildings.

**RESOLVED
UNANIMOUS** OBJECT on the basis that this application does not adhere to the Class Q permission previously granted on appeal. It is also not consistent with the Cold Ash NDP, specifically regarding design and the dark sky zone.

IM [24/00532/HOUSE 7 Sewell Close, Cold Ash](#)

Demolition of existing conservatory and replacement with single storey rear extension. Additional two storey side extension.

**RESOLVED
UNANIMOUS** NO OBJECTION, but CAPC fully supports the Tree Officer's recommendation that a Tree Protection Scheme be put in place, given that there are TPOs at the property.

MF [24/00494/HOUSE 28 Hatchgate Close, Cold Ash](#)

Loft conversion within the roof space and addition of 2 rooflights at the front and 3 rooflights at the rear.

Council noted the wording that the "a consistent roof design is likely to be maintained". Provided that, if the roofline were to increase to match nearby properties which have completed this conversion, the impact on other properties should be minimal.

**RESOLVED
UNANIMOUS** NO OBJECTION, but CAPC supports the Highways Team request for a submission of plans detailing all 3 parking spaces and the driveway materials.

JW [24/00560/FUL Land Adjacent To 40 Bowling Green Road Thatcham](#)

New detached dwelling.

**RESOLVED
5 IN FAVOUR,
1 ABSTENTION**

NO OBJECTION

BC [24/00370/HOUSE Windyridge The Ridge Cold Ash](#)

Addition of first floor with extension and alterations to bungalow.

Council noted that one objection had been made to the WBC portal but BC, having visited the site to consider the comments, recommended no objection. Vistas between properties should be unaffected.

**RESOLVED
UNANIMOUS**

NO OBJECTION

B Parish Council Planning Responses

There was discussion to identify solutions to the ongoing difficulties presented by WBC's recent refusal to grant extensions to Consultee response dates, despite public notices not being displayed at properties. Applications have previously been removed from CAPC agendas expecting extensions to be approved, as had happened in the past.

**RESOLVED
ALL IN FAVOUR** To consider applications even if notices are not displayed to protect CAPC's consultee role, but continue to press WBC for notices to be displayed. Minutes will record "no public site notice at time of report preparation" when applicable.

ACTION Clerk to ask WBC to confirm they are sending letters to immediate neighbours. What is their consultation deadline from the issuing of such letters?

239470 Neighbourhood Development Plan

IM reported the successful referendum for the NDP on 2.5.24 with a good turnout of 27% (higher than for the election of PCC). The plan has officially been adopted by West Berkshire Council so will be used in determining applications in the parish. There is a deadline for legal challenge until 14.6.24. If there is no legal challenge the result will be ratified at a Full Council meeting of WBC in July. IM will work with PM to bring back plans for CAPC's implementation of the NDP at a future meeting.

239471

Ashmore Green Complaint

Members considered the following matters, raised by a resident of Ashmore Green who attended the 9.4.24 Council meeting and spoke during public participation.

A Noticeboard

The wooden noticeboard is in poor condition.

RESOLVED
ALL IN FAVOUR

To replace the noticeboard to match the others installed in the parish at a cost of £929.00 plus VAT and installation, to be funded from CIL monies.

B Grass cutting

The grass is cut less frequently than other grassed areas in the parish. Would Council like to consider additional cuts this year?

The Clerk reported that the grass cutting contractor advises it is not practical to use their commercial cutter that collects on this site, the cost would be prohibitive at more than double the current fee, resulting in an increase to budget.

ACTION F & GP Committee to assess at budget time.

ACTION Clerk to contact existing alternative contractor to obtain a quote for cutting with push along mower.

ACTION Advise complainant of the above actions as a contract in place for this financial year.

C Bench

Reported to be in poor condition.

The Clerk reported that a CAPC contractor voluntarily scrubbed lichen from the bench and checked for stability; it was reported to be sound and serviceable. Based on this report,

ACTION Council agreed no further action is required.

Advise complainant of the above.

D Precept

Justification of the precept increase, evidence of precept being spent in Ashmore Green and a commitment to considering their comments when setting future budgets.

The Clerk reported that the complainant was provided with a link to the CAPC website detailing the budget for 2024-2025 and the statement previously prepared by this Council specifically for this purpose. The Council took great care to ensure that the budget was increased only as much as was absolutely necessary. Council was satisfied that this was sufficient.

ACTION Advise complainant of the above.

239472

Clerk's Report

- New Model Financial Regulations were received from HALC on 7.5.24. Councils are urged to adopt them as soon as is practicable. They will be presented at the June meeting once the Clerk and Chair of F&GP have scrutinised them.
- Reports have been received from RoSPA following the annual inspection of play areas. These reports will be presented to Council at the June meeting.
- The replacement bins previously approved by Council for the Recreation Ground, one dog waste and 2 litter, have been installed. Replacement bins ordered for The Ridge WAG entrance, Manor Lane and Southend are due for delivery this Wednesday.
- The Secretary of the Acland Hall Committee has asked Council to consider a request for funding towards the toilet refurbishment project from CIL monies. Would members like a representative to present to Council at the June meeting? Invite to June meeting.
- The cemetery contractor has completed his maintenance work at Glebelands Cemetery. One member of the public has contacted the office to remark on the

ACTION

improvement.

239473 Finance

- RESOLVED A** To approve items for payment totalling £8,202.52 (see appendix III)
- RESOLVED B** To approve the bank reconciliation for April 2024 and corresponding bank statements were signed by PA, outgoing Chair of F&GP.
- NOTED C** The Monthly Budget Report for April 2024 was noted.
- NOTED D** The first precept installment of £33,000.00 and a CIL payment of £47,202.24 had been received.
- NOTED E** The RFO has transferred £50,000.00 from the current account to the Council's savings account.

239474 Outside Bodies

None

239475 Councillors' Reports & Questions

- RH:** The Tennis Club clubhouse has a CCTV camera. Was permission requested and is it active? There should be a notice warning of CCTV surveillance.
- ACTION** Refer to Trust, write a letter to the Club raising this query.
- ACTION** The Clerk will provide a copy of the lease between the Council and the Club for members to familiarize themselves with the terms. This will also be a Trust matter.
- MF:** A member of the public has asked if they can sow spare wildflower seeds on verges? IM suggested they might be better used elsewhere as wildflowers are difficult to establish and need a lot of maintenance.

239476 Correspondence

Council noted the correspondence received since the last meeting of Council.
Query: Anonymous letter regarding possible development at Cedar Haven. The Clerk reported is has been acknowledged by WBC Planning Enforcement.
Query re: St Gabriel's Convent correspondence. Enquire with prospective site owners who previously attended a CAPC meeting as to progress, invites to visit the site and advise that a MOP has been in touch with concerns regarding traffic, forwarding the traffic survey provided by that MOP.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.50pm

Chairman

Date

Appendix I - Item 239465 Calendar of Meetings

| | | | | <i>if required</i> | | | | |
|--------------|------------------|---------|------------------|--------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------|--|--|
| May 2024 | 14 th | Council | | | ? Trustee | | | |
| June | 11 th | Council | 25 th | Council/Planning | 25 th F&GP | | | |
| July | 9 th | Council | 23 rd | Council/Planning | 23 rd Trustee | | | |
| August | 13 th | Council | SUMMER BREAK | | | | | |
| September | 10 th | Council | 17th | F&GP - Budget | 24 th Council/Planning | 24 th Trustee | | |
| October | 8 th | Council | 22 nd | Council/Planning | | | | |
| November | 12 th | Council | 26 th | Council/Planning | 26 th Trustee | | | |
| December | 10 th | Council | 17th | F&GP - Budget | CHRISTMAS BREAK | | | |
| January 2025 | 14 th | Council | 28 th | Council/Planning | 28 th Trustee | | | |
| February | 11 th | Council | 25 th | Council/Planning | | | | |
| March | 11 th | Council | 18th | F&GP | 25 th Council/Planning | 25th Trustee | | |
| April | 8 th | Council | 22 nd | Council/Planning | | | | |

| |
|--------------------------------|
| Council - monthly |
| Planning/Council - as required |
| F&GP - quarterly |
| Trustee - bi-monthly |

Annual Internal Audit Report 2023/24

COLD ASH PARISH COUNCIL

<https://coldashpc.org.uk/the-council/finance/> BLE WEBSITE/WEBPAGE ADDRESS

During the financial year ended 31 March 2024, this authority's internal auditor acting independently and on the basis of an assessment of risk, carried out a selective assessment of compliance with the relevant procedures and controls in operation and obtained appropriate evidence from the authority.

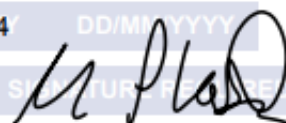
The internal audit for 2023/24 has been carried out in accordance with this authority's needs and planned coverage. On the basis of the findings in the areas examined, the internal audit conclusions are summarised in this table. Set out below are the objectives of internal control and alongside are the internal audit conclusions on whether, in all significant respects, the control objectives were being achieved throughout the financial year to a standard adequate to meet the needs of this authority.

| Internal control objective | Yes | No* | Not covered** |
|--|-----|-----|----------------|
| A. Appropriate accounting records have been properly kept throughout the financial year. | | ✓ | |
| B. This authority complied with its financial regulations, payments were supported by invoices, all expenditure was approved and VAT was appropriately accounted for. | ✓ | | |
| C. This authority assessed the significant risks to achieving its objectives and reviewed the adequacy of arrangements to manage these. | ✓ | | |
| D. The precept or rates requirement resulted from an adequate budgetary process; progress against the budget was regularly monitored; and reserves were appropriate. | ✓ | | |
| E. Expected income was fully received, based on correct prices, properly recorded and promptly banked; and VAT was appropriately accounted for. | ✓ | | |
| F. Petty cash payments were properly supported by receipts, all petty cash expenditure was approved and VAT appropriately accounted for. | ✓ | | |
| G. Salaries to employees and allowances to members were paid in accordance with this authority's approvals, and PAYE and NI requirements were properly applied. | ✓ | | |
| H. Asset and investments registers were complete and accurate and properly maintained. | ✓ | | |
| I. Periodic bank account reconciliations were properly carried out during the year. | | ✓ | |
| J. Accounting statements prepared during the year were prepared on the correct accounting basis (receipts and payments or income and expenditure), agreed to the cash book, supported by an adequate audit trail from underlying records and where appropriate debtors and creditors were properly recorded. | ✓ | | |
| K. If the authority certified itself as exempt from a limited assurance review in 2022/23, it met the exemption criteria and correctly declared itself exempt. <i>(If the authority had a limited assurance review of its 2022/23 AGAR tick "not covered")</i> | | | ✓ |
| L. The authority published the required information on a website/webpage up to date at the time of the internal audit in accordance with the relevant legislation. | ✓ | | |
| M. In the year covered by this AGAR, the authority correctly provided for a period for the exercise of public rights as required by the Accounts and Audit Regulations <i>(during the 2023-24 AGAR period, were public rights in relation to the 2022-23 AGAR evidenced by a notice on the website and/or authority approved minutes confirming the dates set)</i> . | ✓ | | |
| N. The authority has complied with the publication requirements for 2022/23 AGAR <i>(see AGAR Page 1 Guidance Notes)</i> . | ✓ | | |
| O. (For local councils only) Trust funds (including charitable) – The council met its responsibilities as a trustee. | Yes | No | Not applicable |
| | | ✓ | |

For any other risk areas identified by this authority adequate controls existed (list any other risk areas on separate sheets if needed).

Date(s) internal audit undertaken: 17/10/2023 22/04/2024 DD/MM/YYYY

Name of person who carried out the internal audit: M PLATTEN CPFA INTERNAL AUDITOR

Signature of person who carried out the internal audit:  Date 24/04/2024

***If the response is 'no' please state the implications and action being taken to address any weakness in control identified (add separate sheets if needed).**

****Note: If the response is 'not covered' please state when the most recent internal audit work was done in this area and when it is next planned; or, if coverage is not required, the annual internal audit report must explain why not (add separate sheets if needed).**

Appendix III - Item 239450 A Items for Payment

| Vouche | Description | Supplier | Net | VAT | Total |
|--------|-------------------------------------|---|----------|--------|-----------------|
| 16 | Parish Office - telephone/broadband | BT plc | 34.66 | 6.93 | 41.59 |
| 17 | Play area inspection | ARD Playgrounds | 106.26 | 21.25 | 127.51 |
| 18 | Website | IONOS | 16.00 | 3.20 | 19.20 |
| 19 | Payroll | CAPC Parish Clerk | 1,304.97 | 0.00 | 1,304.97 |
| 20 | Payroll | NEST | 59.49 | 0.00 | 59.49 |
| 20 | Payroll | NEST | 74.36 | 0.00 | 74.36 |
| 21 | Payroll | HMRC | 223.37 | 0.00 | 223.37 |
| 22 | Parish office - supplies | Newbury Office Supplies | 67.67 | 13.54 | 81.21 |
| 23 | Poor's Charity - to be recovered | Castle Water | 55.42 | 0.00 | 55.42 |
| 24 | Audit | April Skies Accounting | 336.50 | 0.00 | 336.50 |
| 25 | Training/Courses | SLCC | 120.00 | 24.00 | 144.00 |
| 26 | Bin emptying | Tactical Facilities Management Ltd | 320.50 | 64.10 | 384.60 |
| 27 | Venue hire | Acland Memorial Hall | 24.75 | 0.00 | 24.75 |
| 28 | Accounts subs | Starboard Systems Limited t/a Scribe Accounts | 99.00 | 19.80 | 118.80 |
| 29 | Parish Office - utilities | SSE Energy Solutions | 44.51 | 3.12 | 47.63 |
| 30 | Annual Parish Meeting | Cold Ash Stores | 49.23 | 9.84 | 59.07 |
| 30 | Annual Parish Meeting | Cold Ash Stores | 10.59 | 0.00 | 10.59 |
| 31 | Annual Parish Meeting | Tesco | 7.25 | 0.00 | 7.25 |
| 32 | Mileage | CAPC Parish Clerk | 15.30 | 0.00 | 15.30 |
| 33 | Assets - street furniture | Earth Anchors Ltd | 937.00 | 187.40 | 1,124.40 |
| 34 | Poor's Charity - to be recovered | Castle Water | 48.54 | 0.00 | 48.54 |
| 35 | Parish Office - utilities | Castle Water | 118.98 | 0.00 | 118.98 |
| 36 | Play area inspection | Play Safety Limited | 246.00 | 49.20 | 295.20 |
| 37 | Cemetery- maintenance | Craig Little | 455.00 | 0.00 | 455.00 |
| 38 | Payroll | HMRC | 223.57 | 0.00 | 223.57 |
| 39 | Payroll | NEST | 135.77 | 0.00 | 135.77 |
| 40 | Payroll | CAPC Parish Clerk | 1,304.77 | 0.00 | 1,304.77 |
| 41 | Bin emptying | Grundon Waste Management Ltd | 53.77 | 10.75 | 64.52 |
| 42 | Stationery | Newbury Office Supplies | 59.97 | 12.00 | 71.97 |
| 43 | Litter picking | Litter picking - J Hauxwell | 65.00 | 0.00 | 65.00 |
| 44 | Website | IONOS | 6.00 | 1.20 | 7.20 |
| 45 | Membership subscription | Parish Online/Geosphere Ltd | 192.00 | 38.40 | 230.40 |
| 46 | Parish Office - telephone/broadband | BT plc | 34.66 | 6.93 | 41.59 |
| 47 | Poor's Charity - to be recovered | Four Winds Court Services | 880.00 | 0.00 | 880.00 |
| | | | 7,730.86 | 471.66 | 8,202.52 |