

**Minutes of a meeting of Cold Ash Parish Council on
Tuesday 9.7.2024 at 7pm in the Committee Room of
Acland Memorial Hall**



Present: Wilding (JW), Adams (PA), Hanks (RH), Murray (PM) and Morrow (AM)

In attendance: Rosie Jardine (Clerk & RFO)
2 members of the public

The Clerk indicated the absence of the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Council and that a Chair should be elected for duration of the meeting.

RH nominated PA to be elected to Chair the meeting. This was seconded by JW.
That PA Chair the meeting.

**RESOLVED
ALL IN FAVOUR**

239491 Apologies for Absence

Cllrs Fenner (MF), McArdle (IM), Clark (BC), Codling (HC) and District Cllr Dick

239492 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

239493 Minutes

**RESOLVED
ALL IN FAVOUR** To approve the minutes of the meetings held on 11.6.24 and 25.6.24.

239494 Planning Matters

A Applications

Council considered the following applications and resolved responses:

JW [24/01022/HOUSE Whixo, Cold Ash Hill](#)

Removal of existing 2.4m hedge and 1.2m fence on front boundary. Erection of new 1.8m fence in same style as neighbouring fence.

**RESOLVED
UNANIMOUS** NO OBJECTION

Council noted that although the replacement of hedging with fencing is not consistent with the Village Design Statement nor with the NDP's focus of maintaining a rural feel, the new fencing will be of the same style as immediate neighbouring properties so could not be objected to.

PM [23/02536/FULMAJ Land West Of Heath Lane and North Of, Bowling Green Road, Thatcham](#)

Section 73 - Vary condition 2 (Approved plans) of approved application 21/03154/COMIND: Construction of a detention basin with an area of 0.20 hectares and a 0.7m high earth bund to the south of the scheme. Realignment of an existing ditch for 12m into the proposed basin and installation of a bypass structure to facilitate flows in the existing watercourse downstream. A 300mm diameter pipe will convey flows from the basin during flood events to the existing ditch to the south of the scheme before out falling to the existing Thames Water sewer to the southwest. The existing ditch will be regraded from the outlet from the basin to the inlet to Thames Water sewer. The provision of a 3m wide access track from Bowling Green Road to serve the Scheme. Removal and reposition and levelling of soil on adjoining land and land north of Tull Way

7.11pm Standing Orders were suspended to allow the Volunteer Flood Warden to comment.

7.15pm Standing Orders were reinstated.

- RESOLVED** NO OBJECTION:
4 IN FAVOUR Council has no objections in principle, subject to certain assurances.
1 ABSTENTION CAPC requests that West Berks Council (WBC) ensure that the reports from Ardent are verified as both independent and accurate before acceptance by the planning officer. As CAPC does not have the technical resources to validate the reports it is crucial that they undergo thorough fact-checking to confirm their reliability.
- In the letter dated January 2024 from A. W. Lees & V. J. Guy, concerns were raised about the potential negative impact on the hydrology of the basin. Although the 10.5.24 report from Ardent Consultant Engineers provides some reassurance, stating that both the topology and hydrology of the basin will be enhanced not impacted, CAPC urges WBC to double check that these findings are indeed accurate and independent and thus when completed this amendment does not have any negative impacts in these areas.
- B** **Designation of a New Neighbourhood Plan Area – Thatcham Parish**
NOTED That notice has been received of the Designation of a New Neighbourhood Plan Area for Thatcham, a neighbouring parish.
- C** **Coley Farm – removal of pump house**
 No update available subsequent to an email dated 18.6.24 from the WBC Principal Engineer (Drainage and Flood Risk):
The developer used an acceptable variety of SuDS on the replacement properties. There were no apparent technical reasons to recommend refusal, just one or two minor points requiring additional information either submitted now or via condition.
- 239495** **Clerk's Report**
- A new 24-month contract has been entered for the supply of power to the 7 streetlights in the parish. The Clerk used a broker to identify the best provider for unmetered supplies and a renewal with SSE represented best value.
 - Research is underway to identify a new location for the Waller Drive community noticeboard currently sited on private land. Communication is underway with known contractors for an indication of cost for the different options identified so far.
- ACTION** Clerk to contact landowner to establish if this community asset can remain in situ or if it must be removed for storage whilst a new site is identified. Further research to be completed by Clerk regarding new sites and associated costs. Explain to landowner that the Council cannot undertake grass cutting on private land.
- 239496** **Finance**
- NOTED A** A report from the Chair of the F&GP Committee, PM. Minutes will be presented at a later meeting, once approved by F&GP.
- RESOLVED B** To approve items for payment totalling £2,964.80 (see appendix I).
- APPROVED C** The Bank Reconciliation to 27.6.24.
- NOTED D** The Budget Report to 30.6.24
- NOTED E** The Clerk has submitted a VAT Reclaim of £891.77 for quarter 1
- RESOLVED F** To gratefully accept the donation of £800.00 from Cold Ash & Ashmore Green Cricket Club following closure of the Club. It was noted that the Cricket Club desired that these funds be awarded to a sporting group or event; the Council will endeavour to identify an appropriate cause.
- ACTION** Clerk to report this resolution to a representative of the Club.
- 239497** **Financial Regulations**
- RESOLVED** To adopt the Financial Regulations recommended by the F&GP Committee.
- 239498** **Risk Assessment Review**
- REVIEWED** The risk assessment prepared by Cllr McArdle and the Clerk (see appendix II).

239499 Highways & Transport

A WBC Winter Service Plan

RESOLVED Not to submit comments to WBC on the Winter Service Plan. Council noted that Cold
NO COMMENT Ash Hill/Hermitage Road remains a primary gritting route and Ashmore Green Road remains a secondary gritting route.

B WBC Request for Bus Shelter Proposals

7.52pm Standing orders were suspended to allow a member of the public to share their knowledge about bus services through Cold Ash.

7.54pm Standing Orders were reinstated.

RESOLVED Not to apply for funding from WBC for bus shelters due to a lack of bus services through
NO COMMENT Cold Ash. Data on bus stop usage had been requested from WBC by the Clerk but was not provided prior to this meeting.

239500 Outside Bodies

There were no reports.

239501 Councillors' Reports & Questions

PM There is a lot of behind-the-scenes work happening regarding the proposed Henwick Park development. With the recent change in national political outlook and the fact that there's a commitment to build a certain number of houses it seems likely that the site will come back under the spotlight by WBC very swiftly, with developers hot on their heels. CAPC should find out from the new local MP what position we can take and what support we might gain from him. The previous MP did not engage with CAPC on planning matters. PM will continue proactively working behind-the-scenes as it's likely the site will be back in play very soon. PM will liaise with HC. Something else to be aware of is that it is possible that NDP quotas will be revisited. More background work will be done before reporting/discussing at Council formally.

239502 Correspondence

Council noted the correspondence received since the last meeting of Council.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8pm

Chairman

Date

Appendix I - Item 239496 B Items for Payment

Voucher	Description	Supplier	Net	VAT	Total
68	Stationery	Land Registry	3.00	0.00	3.00
69	Venue hire	Acland Memorial Hall	49.50	0.00	49.50
70	Street Lighting	SSE Energy Solutions	44.51	3.12	47.63
71	Parish office - supplies	Amazon	59.02	0.00	59.02
72	Bin emptying	Tactical Facilities Management Ltd	256.40	51.28	307.68
73	Parish office - supplies	Tesco	16.45	0.00	16.45
74	Payroll	HMRC	223.57	0.00	223.57
75	Payroll	CAPC Parish Clerk	1,304.77	0.00	1,304.77
76	Payroll	NEST	135.77	0.00	135.77
77	Payroll	Autela Payroll Services Ltd	92.08	18.42	110.50
78	Poor's Charity - to be recovered	Pentaprise Ltd t/a TreeMarker.co.uk	37.20	7.44	44.64
79	Poor's Charity - to be recovered	CAPC Councillor	6.54	1.31	7.85
79	Poor's Charity - to be recovered	CAPC Councillor	172.40	34.48	206.88
79	Poor's Charity - to be recovered	CAPC Councillor	49.68	9.94	59.62
79	Poor's Charity - to be recovered	CAPC Councillor	55.35	11.07	66.42
79	Poor's Charity - to be recovered	CAPC Councillor	76.92	15.38	92.30
79	Poor's Charity - to be recovered	CAPC Councillor	49.71	9.94	59.65
79	Poor's Charity - to be recovered	CAPC Councillor	42.31	8.46	50.77
79	Poor's Charity - to be recovered	CAPC Councillor	7.79	0.00	7.79
79	Poor's Charity - to be recovered	CAPC Councillor	2.90	0.58	3.48
79	Poor's Charity - to be recovered	CAPC Councillor	6.66	1.33	7.99
80	Membership subscription	Information Commissioners Office	35.00	0.00	35.00
81	Bin emptying	Grundon Waste Management Ltd	53.77	10.75	64.52
			2,781.30	183.50	2,964.80

Appendix I - Item 239498 Risk Assessment Review

Risk no	Area	Description of Risk	Impact	Likelihood	Impact Score	Risk Rating	Response (what actions have been taken)
1	Insurance	Inadequate cover may not cover Loss or damage	Council would have to cover cost of repair & replacement	1	1	Low	Adequate insurance. Cover reviewed annually in line with RPI. High cost items insured individually.
2	Liability	The health and safety of members of the public who could incur injury.	Parish Council would be liable	1	1	Low	Full third party liability insurance in place. Reviewed annually. Southend play areas safety checked bi-monthly by playground inspectors and written report supplied to PC. Also inspected by ROSPA on annual basis. Areas litter picked weekly and any defects reported to Parish Council. Parish Council owned goal posts are left out for community use. Cemetery headstones need to conform to size indicated and be professionally erected.
3	Buildings	Security may be breached and equipment may be stolen	Parish Council security arrangements would be inadequate, damage would be caused.	1	1	Low	Acland Hall & Committee Room managed by Acland Hall Committee. Parish Council, as Custodian Trustee, ensures that adequate insurances are in place and retains a copy. Buildings kept locked. Parish Office has adequate insurance and metal shutters. Adequate Store (Rifle Shed) used for storage by third parties who have responsibility to insure their contents.
4	Burial Ground & Closed Church yard	The health and safety of members of the public who could incur injury.	Parish Council would be liable for the repair to damaged areas. The public would not be able to use the areas whilst repairs are carried out.	1	1	Low	Burial ground & closed Churchyard are inspected each year. Tree inspection carried out each year. Both grounds are included in mowing time table. Headstones are inspected for safety.
5	Legal Liability Activities are not Ultra Vires	Council may not have access to legal advice	Council would need to pay for independent legal advice	1	1	Low	Clerk/RFO advises on legal position where known, otherwise seeks legal advice before any action is taken. Parish Council Insurance also includes access to legal advice. Parish Council subscribes to Hampshire Association Local Councils/Berkshire Association Local Councils
6	Council Meetings	Parish Council may not be able to hold meetings	Parish Council would not be able to discuss important issues relevant to the Parish and local planning.	1	1	Low	Council Meetings held monthly (or more frequently if required) in the Acland Hall, alternative meeting rooms are available. All Minutes approved and signed. Available to the public via the Clerk or the Parish Council website. Press is invited to all meetings.
7	Storage of Documents	Parish Council may lose important historical information and documents.	Parish Council would not be able to access to important Parish records.	1	1	Low	Copies of land registry documents stored with Solicitor. Hard copy minutes, AGAR and accounting records are periodically archived to Berkshire Records Office. Where possible, new records are made digitally and stored on "the cloud". Southend originals of play area leases stored with Leaser (Sovereign).
8	Finance	Parish Council may lose public finances.	Parish Council would not have the finances to carry out its statutory duties.	3	1	Med	All income paid direct into Bank. All Funds within limit covered by the Government Financial Compensation Scheme.
9	Poor's Charity	Parish Council as Sole Corporate Trustee may be in breach of statutory charity regulations relating to Poor's Charity	Parish Council would not be adhering to charity regulations	3	1	Med	CAPC's responsibilities as sole corporate trustee are set out in JPAG Practitioners Guide. The Clerk has undertaken preliminary training and can seek advice from HALC/BALC and is working to distinguish Charity from Council activities with the support of Cllr Ivor McArdle.
10	Consequence of resignation, sickness or death of Clerk	Parish Council may not be able to access information or carry out statutory duties effectively	Parish Council would be unable to continue to carry out duties	3	2	Med	The Clerk/RFO has commenced work on a replacement manual explaining the Clerk's duties, processes and procedures including relevant security measures. This work is ongoing.
11	Risk of consequential loss of income	Parish Council may lose funds	Parish Council would lose money that could not be recouped.	3	2	Med	All transactions are recorded on Scribe software and reported to Council monthly. Financial Controls are in place as per financial regulations.
12	Loss of cash through theft or dishonesty	Parish Council may not have adequate fidelity guarantee	Parish Council could lose funds. Lack of financial controls could result in mis-use of funds.	3	1	Med	Adequate insurance cover in place. Internal controls checked by quarterly by F&GP Committee and annually by internal auditor.

13	Financial Controls and Records	Parish Council records may be destroyed or lost. Parish Council may have inadequate financial controls.	Parish Council would lose vital information.	3	2	Med	Monthly reconciliation of bank statements prepared by Clerk /RFO and retained digitally. Nominated Councillors authorise online banking payments following approval at Council. Invoices recorded digitally on Scribe software as per internal auditor recommendation. Full internal and external audit controls in place. Finance documents stored digitally on cloud based storage. Insurance in place to cover issues of fraud.
14	Compliance with Customs & Excise Regulations	Parish Council may not be conforming to VAT regulations.	Parish Council could incur penalties.	1	1	Low	VAT reclaims made by Clerk/RFO on quarterly basis (or more as deemed beneficial), supported by Scribe software. Checked by internal auditor.
15	Sound budgeting to underlie annual precept	Parish Council may risk not having enough funds to cover costs	Parish Council would not have public funds to fulfil their duties	1	1	Low	Finance & General Purposes Committee & Clerk/RFO prepare draft budget in autumn. Precept calculated from this and set by Full Council in January. Precept request submitted to West Berkshire Council. Expenditure against Budget reported to Council by Clerk/ RFO on monthly basis.
16	Compliance with Borrowing Restrictions	Parish Council may not be complying to Financial regulations	May impact the Parish Councils financial position.	1	1	Low	No borrowing this year
17	Employer Liability Compliance with Employment Law	Parish Council may not be conforming to employment law	Clerk/RFO position would not be in line with employment law.	1	1	Low	Clerk is Member of the SLCC (Society of Local Council Clerks). Employers liability insurance is in place and displayed.
18	Compliance with Inland Revenue requirements	Parish Council may raise incorrect salary amounts and HMRC payments	Parish Council could incur fines for incorrect payments	1	1	Low	Payroll prepared by Autela via HMRC real time. Tax and NI contributions paid monthly and recorded on the Items for Payment sheet supplied to Council.
19	Safety of Staff and Visitors	Clerk/RFO and Public may suffer physical injury or abuse.	Parish Council would be liable for any injury.	1	2	Med	Clerk/RFO works alone in the Parish Office. Security is in place using a lockable door opening from inside. Visitors attend at Parish Office. Clerk/RFO ensures health and safety within the Parish Office.
20	Data Protection	Parish Council may incorrectly share personal information and inadequately protect third party information.	Parish Council would be in breach of data protection law.	1	2	Med	CAPC is GDPR compliant. Privacy statement on website. External audit taken place and sample checks taken place. Dates for deletion/shredding in place. Member of Information Commissioners Office. Data Protection Officer in place via Hampshire Association Local Clerks/Berkshire Association Local Clerks.

21	Councillors Property Registers of Interests and Gifts & Hospitality in place	Councillors may not disclose correct information relating to their interests and gifts.	Councillors would not be declaring correct information and therefore breaching their responsibilities.	1	1	Low	Register of Interests completed. Reviewed annually. Gifts and Hospitality register available from Clerk/RFO. Members' Code of Conduct signed annually and kept on file.
22	Action against Council for improper conduct or accounting	Parish Council may not have proper accounting procedures or code of conduct in place.	Parish Council would lose integrity and may be inspected.	1	1	Low	Standing Orders & Financial Controls in place and working. Clerk/RFO receives training as required. Internal Audit procedures are maintained. Complaints procedure is in place.
23	Christmas Tree	Public may incur Injury if hit by tree, Trip hazard if tree falls, Vandals may cause damage to tree, Electrocutation may occur whilst tree is in place	Parish Council could be sued for injury to member of Public.	1	2	Med	Tree Trunk is shaped to fit into 160mm sleeve 600mm long sleeve installed into the ground. Tree slides tightly into sleeve until bottom branches of the tree are resting on the ground branches act as stabilisers and increase base area. Electricity power is in the ground and is controlled by a RCBO Adequate insurance in place. Public liability insurance in place.
24	Remembrance Parade	Public may incur Injury during the parade.	Parish Council could be sued for injury to members of the public adequate health and safety not in place.	1	2	Med	Rolling Road block arranged via West Berkshire Council, Barriers and cones used and drop of area in car park one way, Group leaders are first aiders, Marshall is experienced in organising Parade. Public liability insurance in place.

This Document was adopted by the Parish Council at the meeting on 9.7.2024 and will be reviewed again in 2025

Signed

Rosie Jardine

Clerk/RFO Cold Ash Parish Council

Likelihood	Highly likely (3)	Medium (3)	High (6)	High (9)
	Possible (2)	Low (2)	Medium (4)	High (6)
	Unlikely (1)	Low (1)	Low (2)	Medium (3)
		Negligible (1)	Moderate (2)	Severe (3)
		Impact		