



Minutes of a meeting of Cold Ash Parish Council on Tuesday 12th December 2023 at 7pm the Committee Room of Acland Memorial Hall

- Public Participation** Mr Liebreich briefly presented to Council regarding the Woodland Leaves Restoration Project. The Chairman thanked Mr Liebreich for taking the time to attend.
- Present:** Cllrs McArdle (IM) (Chair), Hanks (RH), Morrow (AM) and Adams (PA)
In attendance: Rosie Jardine (Clerk)
- 239362 Apologies for Absence**
Cllrs Murray (PM), Wilding (JW), Codling (HC), Clark (BC), Fenner (MF) and District Cllr Dick
- 239363 Granting of Dispensations to allow Councillors to discuss Budget**
With the authority granted, the Clerk, granted dispensations to those present to discuss matters pertaining to the Budget, having received the necessary signed proforma Declarations of Interest.
- 239364 Declarations of Interest**
There were no Declarations of Interest
- 239365 Minutes**
Minutes of the meeting held on 14.11.23 were approved and signed.
Minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Committee meeting held on 7.11.23 were received and adopted.
- 239366 Clerk's Report**
To receive a report from the Clerk outlining actions taken following the meeting on 14.11.23 on ongoing tasks
- RESOLVED** The Clerk reported the following:
- ACTION**
- A streetlight repair has been chased and completed opposite Southend
 - The streetlight at the junction of The Ridge and Ashmore Green Road with Hermitage Road has also failed and will be reported.
 - An enquiry has been received for the new adult Spotted Dog Football Team which wishes to use The Recreation Ground as it's home ground from September 2024. This will be included for Council to consider on 9.1.24.
 - The Clerk has made arrangements with an existing Council contractor to prepare graves and fill spaces for the interment of cremated remains at Glebelands Cemetery so that bereaved families may arrange such interments directly with the Clerk should they wish, negating the need for the services of a funeral director. The fee for this service will be included for Council approval alongside other Cemetery fees next year.
 - The Flood Warden now carries the drain rods approved at Council on 14.11.23
 - A repair to the Recreation ground hedge has been carried out in order to prevent further sections collapsing into the drainage gully.

- The tree work approved following a report to Council on 14.11.23 has been completed.
- The second interim audit visit scheduled for February 2024 has been cancelled following the 14.11.23 Council decision not to approve a retrospective cashbook for 2023-2024.

ACTION - The Chairman of Cold Ash Volunteer Groups wishes to apply for grant funding towards but not limited to running costs of the Heritage Group and Bulletin – the Clerk will refer to Grants Policy and include for Council's consideration in January.

239367 CIL

To note the recent CIL payment received and to approve the statement prepared by the Clerk for submission to WBC and the CAPC website

Following brief discussion, it was agreed that consideration of potential expenditure of CIL monies should take place at a future Council meeting.

ACTION The Clerk will submit the statement to West Berkshire Council and publish it on the website.

ACTION The Clerk will contact the former Chairman of CAPC before CIL expenditure is discussed to ask for views regarding potential projects at Manor Park using funds from the Coley Farm development.

239368 Poor's Charity

To discuss the notes supplied by Cllr McArdle following legal advice from HALC Legal Advice Service regarding ongoing administration of the Charity and to resolve, if appropriate, the delegation of tasks to establish processes and systems in readiness for April 2024.

IM responded to questions from members and clarified that Cold Ash Parish Council is the sole corporate trustee for the Charity and that individual Councillors would not be personally liable for decisions made by the Trust. Clarity regarding Council assets on Charity land will be given within the Governing Document suggested by the Clerk.

A Preparation of a draft budget by the Clerk

The Clerk has prepared a draft budget.

ACTION Council will consider the draft Charity budget which will be issued by the Clerk in due course.

B Preparation of Code of Conduct and Standing Orders using NALC model

ACTION The Clerk will undertake preparation of Code of Conduct and Standing Orders using NALC models

C Preparation of Governing Document

ACTION The Clerk will undertake preparation of a suitable Governing Document

D Schedule a meeting to adopt the draft budget and Code of Conduct, Governing Document and Standing Orders

ACTION The Clerk will schedule a meeting.

E Preparation of Charity specific correspondence to include but not limited to recording incoming correspondence, letterhead, Clerk's email footer

ACTION The Clerk will prepare Charity specific correspondence and procedures.

F Seek clarity regarding VAT reclaim for Charity expenditure

ACTION The Clerk will seek clarity regarding the VAT reclaim process for Charity expenditure.

G Note that independent audit is not required until Charity income exceeds £25,000.00

NOTED It is noted that audit will not be required unless Charity income exceeds £25,000.00

239369 Budget 2024-2025

To receive an update from the Finance & General Purposes (F&GP) Committee and consider recommendations for resolution

PA briefly reported on the notes of the F&GP meeting held on 6.12.23. No

recommendations were made to Council. The draft budget will be approved and the precept request agreed at Council on 9.1.24.

239370

Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP)

To receive an update from Cllr McArdle.

IM reported that the response approved by Council on 14.11.23 had been submitted by WBC and that the subsequent response by WBC had also been received and responded to; all of the information required has been submitted. IM advised that he expected to receive the examiner's fact-check version of his report the following day. IM will review it with input from the NDP consultant (Alison Eardley) and propose a response for council to agree (it is expected that this can be achieved remotely, via email).

239371

Clothing Recycling Bank

To discuss and resolve, if appropriate, agreement with a new organisation regarding the Clothing Recycling Bank in the car park and the charity to which funds should be donated.

Members discussed the merit of using a local organisation to carry out this service and the advantages of being able to nominate a charity. It might also be an appropriate time to consider re-siting the unit.

RESOLVED To enter an agreement with The Clothing Warehouse (Newbury) on the understanding that the existing container is removed in the appropriate manner and that regular emptying will be carried out to prevent fly-tipping and wasted donations.

ACTION The Clerk will contact the Clothing Warehouse to advise that the Council wishes to proceed.

ACTION The Clerk will contact the Acland Hall Management Committee to enquire about the possibility of siting the clothing bank near to the entrance of the Hall.

DEFERRED A decision to nominate a Charity was deferred until 9.1.24

ACTION Members are invited to nominate a Charity of their choice at Council on 9.1.24.

ACTION RH will enquire on social media for parishioner suggestions of a Charity

239372

Dog Waste & Litter Bins

To consider and approve, if appropriate:

A A press release reporting a change of contractor in response to complaints relating to poor service delivery by CAPC's previous contractor and the subsequent improvement

RESOLVED That the press release be issued subject to some minor edits by the Clerk.

ACTION The Clerk will edit and issue the press release.

B A proposed system for reporting bin issues within the Parish and associated cost
The Clerk answered questions from Councillors.

RESOLVED That suitable labels be ordered for all bins at a cost of £101.00, with minor edits to the proposed wording: to include a note that bins are routinely emptied on Tuesdays and a request that waste is taken home or to the next available bin when a bin is already full.

ACTION The Clerk will order labels and arrange for them to be applied to all CAPC bins.

C Replacement bins on the Recreation Ground to be funded with CIL monies:
One dog waste bin adjacent to the Recreation Ground play area, replacing damaged 35litre with new larger capacity 66litre at £207.00 plus £25.00 installation.
Two litter bins in corners of Recreation Ground adjacent to Ashmore Green Road to replace lid-less bins at £330.00 each (inc. anchor) plus £25.00 installation

RESOLVED To approve the replacements of bins using CIL monies as above.

ACTION The Clerk will order replacement bins and make arrangements for installation.

239373

West Berkshire Council Budget Consultation 2024/25

A To discuss the Consultation and resolve, if appropriate, a response by CAPC.

RESOLVED That no response would be submitted. It was recognised that cost savings need to be made if WBC are to avoid going into s114. CAPC will not submit a formal response but

leave it to individual residents to submit their personal views

- B** To discuss the proposed removal by WBC of one litter bin on Cold Ash Hill and one dog waste bin on Florence Gardens and to consider and resolve, if appropriate, to adopt responsibility.

RESOLVED To approach WBC to adopt only the dog waste bin on Florence Gardens
ACTION The Clerk will approach WBC regarding adopting the Florence Gardens dog waste bin
ACTION The Clerk will approach CAPC's contractor regarding the addition of the above bin

239374 Acland Memorial Hall Car Park – Signage

To discuss the necessity of signage in the car park. At the meeting of 14.11.23, when Council approved the plans prepared for the Recreation Ground Project, members expressed concern regarding damage to cars from ricochet balls. The Clerk has identified that there is currently no signage in situ. Guidance was sought from the Council's insurer.

RESOLVED That in consideration of the advice given by the Council's insurer, signage should not be installed in the car park.

239375 Finance

- A. Items for payment** - To review and approve items of expenditure

Council reviewed and approved the following items of expenditure:

| | |
|--|---------|
| Clerk - retiring Clerk's back payment due to NALC increase | 582.72 |
| Connecting Communities in Berkshire | 42.00 |
| Acland Memorial Hall | 24.75 |
| Wardsflex | 514.68 |
| NBB Outdoors (Rec. Ground Project) | 1457.00 |
| Newbury Christmas Tree Farm | 260.00 |
| Barlow and Sons Ltd | 26.63 |
| Barlow and Sons Ltd | 24.17 |
| Integrated Building Consultancy (Rec. Ground Proj.) | 240.00 |
| NEST (Clerk's Pension) | 124.09 |
| Tactical Facilities Management | 302.54 |
| Microsoft | 12.36 |
| N Perry | 360.00 |
| N Perry | 100.00 |
| J Hauxwell | 65.00 |
| Microsoft | 12.36 |
| Clerk - retiring Clerk's back payment due to NALC rise | 582.72 |
| Connecting Communities in Berkshire | 42.00 |
| Acland Memorial Hall | 24.75 |
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| Integrated Building Consultancy (Rec. Ground Proj.) | 240.00 |
| NEST (Clerk's Pension) | 124.09 |
| Tactical Facilities Management | 302.54 |
| Grundon | £65.63 |
| I McArdle | £404.00 |
| plusnet | £37.51 |
| The Castle Cold Ash | £87.30 |

| | |
|-----------------|--------------|
| IONOS | £4.80 |
| ARD Playgrounds | £127.51 |
| ARD Playgrounds | £321.60 |
| Clerk's Salary | confidential |
| Clerk's Pension | confidential |
| HMRC | £739.01 |

- B. Bank reconciliation for approval** – To receive, approve and sign bank reconciliations prepared by the RFO for November 2023 and Chair to sign the bank statement
Council received and approved the bank reconciliation which was signed by IM
- C. Payments against Budget** - to note the Analysis of Payments against Budget to December 2023
Council noted the payments against Budget
- D. Credit account application** - to consider and resolve, if appropriate, to approve the Clerk's application for a Trade UK credit account

RESOLVED To approve an application as above
ACTION The Clerk will apply

239376 Planning Matters

A Applications

23/02536/FULMAJ – Land West of Heath Lane and North of Bowling Green Road, Thatcham

NO COMMENT No comment will be submitted

23/01916/HOUSE – Birkdale, The Ridge

OBJECT Councils view was that any structures between the houses on the new development that block the views from The Ridge will be in conflict with the planning approval. It was therefore agreed to object to the application. Clerk to action in line with the wording on the previous objection:

- Not in keeping with neighbouring properties
- Overdevelopment of site
- Contradicts original development planning consent stating that any views between properties should not be obstructed with additional development. The importance of gaps between the houses extends back to the West Berkshire Housing Site Allocations Development Plan Document (HAS DPD) published in September 2014, and the Landscape Capacity Assessment (LCA) of 2015. The site referred to as COL006 highlighted the importance of gaps in the built form to allow views through the development to the open landscape to the south. This is included below. This was reiterated throughout the planning process by ProVision on behalf of TA Fisher, the intonation being that the proposed plans and resultant houses recognised the importance of this and would conform to it.

B Decisions

Council noted the following decision:

NOTED APP/W0340/W/23/3316050 – 21/02702/OUTD – Sylvan House Fishers Lane, RG18 9NG - Dismissed

239377 Outside Body Reports

No reports were presented

239378 Councillors' Reports & Questions

To receive reports and questions from Parish and District Councillors
AM presented a draft Communication Strategy and members discussed how it might be used by CAPC.

ACTION The Clerk will report Google and website statistics.

ACTION The Clerk will identify preliminary research undertaken by a former Councillor regarding surveys and engaging residents.

239379 Correspondence

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

ACTION The Clerk will invite No.5 to review CAPC's Grant's Policy should they wish to apply for a grant, following their letter of introduction.

Part 2 - Exclusion of press & Public

In view of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted, it is advisable in the public interest that the press and public be temporarily excluded, and they are instructed to withdraw.

The Clerk left the meeting and notes were taken by IM.

239380 Staffing Matters

To discuss the Clerk's 13-week probation including assessment, objectives and next steps and to resolve, if appropriate, recommendations made by members of the HR Committee.

Interim update provided. Notes recorded in a confidential appendix.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.10pm

Chairman

Date