

**Minutes of an additional meeting of Cold Ash Parish Council on Tuesday 16th
January 2024 at 7.30pm in the Acland Memorial Hall**



Present: Cllrs Fenner, Chair (MF) McArdle (IM), Hanks (RH), Adams (PA) Murray (PM), Wilding (JW), Codling (HC), Clark (BC)

In attendance: Rosie Jardine (Clerk)

239398 Apologies for Absence
Cllrs P Adams (PA), P Murray (PM)

239399 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.

239400 Declarations of Interest
None

239401 Minutes
Minutes of the meeting held on 9.1.24 had not been prepared so will be presented for approval at the next Council meeting.

239402 Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP)
A To consider and resolve, if appropriate, to accept the Independent Examiner's Report and his recommendations for changes to the NDP.

RESOLVED To accept the Independent Examiner's Report and his recommendations for changes to the NDP – all in favour

B To consider and resolve WBDC's request that we agree to an extension on the Decision Notice, which confirms the NDP can proceed to referendum, beyond the statutory timescale and to 1.3.24.

RESOLVED To agree to an extension on the Decision Notice, which confirms the NDP can proceed to referendum, beyond the statutory timescale – all in favour

RESOLVED To refuse WBC's proposal to an extended delay until 26.3.24 – all in favour
Council noted that HC has helped in proposing a 29.2.24 special meeting when WBC will look at the CAPC and Hermitage NDPs

239403 Budget & Precept 2024-2025
A To consider and adopt the 2024-2025 Budget recommended by the Finance & General Purposes Committee
There was extensive discussion to scrutinise the draft budget line-by-line in order to ensure that any increase in precept would be kept as low as possible to protect the electorate from unnecessary rises in Council Tax; the budget was altered accordingly during this discussion. The Clerk reported that a discrepancy between the expected and actual expenditure for 2022-2023 when setting the 2023-2024 budget had contributed significantly to the need to increase the Council's precept request for 2024-2025.

RESOLVED That the 2024-2025 Budget be adopted – see budget on following page

B To approve precept to be requested

RESOLVED That a precept of £66,000.00 be requested

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.26pm

Chairman

Date

2024/2025							Notes	
	COLD ASH PARISH COUNCIL	23-24 Budget	23-24 Predicted Spend	Under/ Overspent	24-25 Budget	Budget compared to last year		
1	STAFF COSTS	Clerk's Salary (Gross)	18,700.00	21,363.68	-2,663.68	19,136.00	436.00	Clerk's SCP24 and assumes SCP increase after probation plus est. annual SCP increase April 2024 as per contract
2		Fees for Clerk training	500.00	165.00	335.00	1,050.00	550.00	
3		Clerk's Pension	561.00	645.77	-84.77	956.80	395.80	
4		Employer's NI	1,300.00	1,403.52	-103.52	1,385.52	85.52	
5								
6	OFFICE	Electricity	1,000.00	807.40	192.60	1,100.00	100.00	Assumed increase in charges
7		Water	300.00	406.63	-106.63	500.00	200.00	Water prices have increased. Predicted 23/24 spend does not include Tennis Club use which is recharged. Tennis Club seeking own meter
8		Maintenance	300.00	0.00	300.00	300.00	0.00	
9		Alarm & Maintenance	250.00	0.00	250.00	100.00	-150.00	
10		Telephone/Broadband	450.00	391.70	58.30	500.00	50.00	Changing provider
11		Office Equipment/Sundries	300.00	300.00	0.00	300.00	0.00	6.7.23 F&GP Committee opted not to include the following: new Office PC - current only capable of running Windows 10 which will be unsupported by Windows 2024-2025
12								
13		Postal Charges	50.00	38.45	11.55	25.00	-25.00	Move to digital banking therefore less post
14		Imprest - Petty Cash	150.00	0.00	150.00	0.00	-150.00	No longer required, use debit card
15		Stationery	350.00	193.51	156.49	300.00	-50.00	
16								
17		Mileage	50.00	15.00	35.00	80.00	30.00	Increase includes 15 noticeboard updates by Clerk at 8.5 miles each time = £57.38 plus a buffer for ad hoc Clerk or Member mileage
18		Chairman's Allowance	100.00	226.27	-126.27	100.00	0.00	Overspend due to Clerk retirement gift
19		Reference Books	120.00	51.50	68.50	120.00	0.00	
20		Training/Meetings	150.00	60.00	90.00	150.00	0.00	
21		Advertising	50.00	0.00	50.00	0.00	-50.00	Remove budget line?
22	ADMINISTRATIONS	Hire of Premises	800.00	585.71	214.29	430.00	-370.00	Includes 12 Committee Room hires at 2.25 hours plus 2 ad hoc plus 2 F&GP plus 1 x Memorial Hall for Annual Parish Meeting - reduction due to move to Committee Room and one Council meeting per month
23		Insurance	1,800.00	1,770.41	29.59	2,340.00	540.00	Assume 30% increase
24		Audit/Payroll	1,100.00	1,102.84	-2.84	1,000.00	-100.00	
24a		Elections	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	
25		Annual Meeting	100.00	117.29	-17.29	150.00	50.00	
26		Website	100.00	100.00	0.00	100.00	0.00	Increased to £6.00 p/month plus annual Domain Guard fee £15.00
27		.org.uk email hosting	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	Line previously Competitions. Currently free
28		Office 365	0.00	0.00	0.00	183.60	183.60	Predicted 2023-24 spend includes partial year for Clerk only at £61.80 allocated to line 11. New line includes Clerk £123.60p/a plus one Basic sub for a Cllr if required at £60p/a plus VAT
29		Finance Software	0.00	0.00	0.00	756.00	756.00	New line - Clerk's preferred supplier approved by F&GP, including £99 for Charity ledger
28	SUBSCRIPTIONS	SLCC	190.00	188.00	2.00	190.00	0.00	
29		BALC	800.00	802.97	-2.97	880.00	80.00	Awaiting 2024-2025 charges
30		CCB	42.00	35.00	7.00	38.00	-4.00	
31		CPRE	36.00	36.00	0.00	36.00	0.00	
32		Data Protection	40.00	35.00	5.00	35.00	-5.00	Reduced due to DD payment
32a		Digital Mapping	200.00	192.00	8.00	200.00	0.00	
33	COMMUNITY	Grants	1,250.00	300.00	950.00	1,250.00	0.00	
33a		Content moved to Poor's section						
34		Remembrance Day Wreath	50.00	50.00	0.00	26.00	-24.00	Reflects actual cost of wreath
34a		Grit Bins	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	Sufficient funds in reserves
34b		Libraries Contribution	2,500.00	2,500.00	0.00	2,738.00	238.00	Increase to £1 per head of electorate as per 14.11.23 Council resolution
34c		Comm. Christmas Tree	300.00	299.15	0.85	330.00	30.00	Allow 10% rise in cost
35		Street Lighting Supply Charge	1,000.00	538.10	461.90	750.00	-250.00	Supply increases not as significant as feared for 2023-2024
36		Street Lighting Repairs/Maintenance	350.00	569.01	-219.01	600.00	250.00	inc. for poss. Repairs. 23/24 budget allowed for contract only but spend inc. 2 repairs
37		Waste collection	850.00	682.18	167.82	750.00	-100.00	
38		Litter Picking/Dog bin emptying	4,600.00	4,134.71	465.29	3,900.00	-700.00	New contractor. Allows for possible adoption of 1 x dog bin from WBC
39		Litter/Dog bin- purchase	500.00	0.00	500.00	0.00	-500.00	Use CIL monies
40		Flood Warden Safety Clothing	50.00	0.00	50.00	0.00	-50.00	EDIT: never used so take down to 0
41		Street Furniture Purchase	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	
42		Street Furniture Maintenance	250.00	170.24	79.76	250.00	0.00	
43		Content moved to Poor's section below						
44		War Memorial Maintenance Fund	200.00	200.00	0.00	200.00	0.00	
45		Rights of Way maintenance	500.00	168.63	331.37	500.00	0.00	
46		Winter Service	250.00	250.00	0.00	250.00	0.00	
47		Ashmore Green						
47		Grass Cutting	295.20	295.20	0.00	324.80	29.60	10% increase
48		Maintenance	100.00	100.00	0.00	100.00	0.00	
49		Burial Ground						
49		Grass Cutting	590.40	553.50	36.90	649.00	58.60	
50		Maintenance	300.00	150.00	150.00	300.00	0.00	
51		Closed Churchyard						
51		Grass Cutting	737.44	737.44	0.00	811.20	73.76	
52		Maintenance	500.00	150.00	350.00	300.00	-200.00	
53		Recreation Ground						
53		Content moved to Poor's section below						
54		Content moved to Poor's section below						
55		Play Area Maint. - all	700.00	445.50	254.50	700.00	0.00	
56		Play Area Insp. - all	950.00	869.56	80.44	950.00	0.00	
57		Tennis Courts maintenance Fund	750.00	789.00	-39.00	800.00	50.00	Increase agreed by 14.11.23 Council resolution
58								
59		Southend						
60		Grounds Maintenance	300.00	75.00	225.00	300.00	0.00	
61		Content moved to Poor's section below						
61a		Content moved to Poor's section below						
33a	POORS CHARITY	Grant	0.00	0.00	0.00	11,034.80	11,034.80	Grant for Poors Charity - inc. one-off £1000 start up balance for ad hoc expenditure, allows for est. £2000 income from Rec use and Allotments. See draft Charity budget for 24/25
53		Recreation Ground						
53		Grass Cutting	2,949.92	2,765.55	184.37	0.00	-2,949.92	
54		Maintenance	800.00	631.02	168.98	0.00	-800.00	
43		Hedge cutting RecGround & WAG	2,180.00	2,180.00	0.00	0.00	-2,180.00	
61		Allotments/WAG/Orchard						
61		Maintenance	3,600.00	2,623.61	976.39	0.00	-3,600.00	
61a		Ash Die Back	2,000.00	2,000.00	0.00	0.00	-2,000.00	
62								
63								
64		Neighbourhood Development Plan	5,000.00	3,031.10	1,968.90	0.00	-5,000.00	
65		Implementation of NDP	0.00	0.00	0.00	2,000.00	2,000.00	New line to replace NDP Fund - 14.11.23 Council resolution
66		Contingency	2,000.00	847.65	1,152.35	2,000.00	0.00	
67							0.00	
68		Contribution to Reserves	1,430.96	1,430.96	0.00	1,157.22	-273.74	
		TOTAL	67,722.92	60,570.76	7,152.16	65,412.94	-2,309.98	