



**DRAFT MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING OF COLD ASH PARISH
HELD ON Thursday 22nd April 2021 on Zoom**

Present:

13 Members of the Public

For the Parish Council: Cllrs M Jaques, P Adams R Marsh, L Verner, I McArdle, D Silsby, M Fenner & R Hanks

District Councillors Garth Simpson (Cold Ash), District Cllr Cole (Chieveley)

Linda Randall, Parish Council Clerk

1. Apologies

Cllrs Le-Cornu & Cllr Clark and District Cllr Beck

2. Minutes and Matters Arising

The minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 22nd April 2019 were signed by the Chairman. There were no matters arising.

3. Parish Council Introduction and update by Chairman of Council

Chairman gave an update on the past two years, as no Annual Parish Meeting took place in 2020 due to Covid 19. He thanked the Councillors, Clerk, District Councillors, Contractors, Community Groups and Parishioners for their hard work and support during this time. The pandemic had brought a lot of issues which had to be addressed - the closure of facilities (the Tennis Courts and Play areas being amongst them) and working with West Berkshire Council to get the community hubs set up. He advised that over the past two years there had been improvements to the Wildlife Allotment Garden, various treatments had been carried out on the Recreation Ground, the Parish Councillors had looked at 99 planning applications and the NDP Steering Group were continuing the hard work with the Neighbourhood Development Plan. The Parish Council had contributed to West Berkshire Libraries. The Parish Council now had a new website and were using the community Facebook page and the Bulletin to advertise information. There were ten Parish Councillors with one vacancy. He then asked all Councillors present and the Parish Clerk to introduce themselves.

4. WAG Project – Environment Committee – Cllr McArdle

Cllr McArdle gave a presentation on the works and changes currently taking place in the Wildlife Allotment Garden. It was announced that there would be a formal opening ceremony later in the year. The full presentation will be available on the Parish Council website.

Questions/Comments:

- There were no questions.

5. Neighbourhood Development Plan – NDP Committee – Cllr Adams

Cllr Adams gave a presentation on the current position of the Neighbourhood Development Plan. He thanked everyone involved with the NDP. A copy of the presentation will be available on the Parish Council website.

Questions/Comments:

A poll was run with the following results:

- **Question:** In principle, from what you have heard, do you support site CA10 as the preferred development site for our parish - **14 yes 3 don't know**
- A resident asked how many trees would be lost within site CA10. **Chairman Marsh** advised that at the moment he could not answer but would have more information once a planning application had been submitted. There were no current TPOs on the site.
- Is there a requirement for 40 houses in the next 17 years? **Cllr Adams** advised yes but we cannot rule out more, but we have been advised this is unlikely. **Chairman** advised this was on top of the DPD allocation. **Cllr McArdle** advised that there may be some windfall sites but the NDP would have some influence over these.

6. Parish Footpaths – Environment Committee – Cllr Hanks

Cllr Hanks gave a presentation on the current condition of Public Right of Ways in the Parish. The full presentation is available on the website.

Questions/Comments

A poll was run with the following results:

- **Question 1:** Are you supportive of Cold Ash Parish Council looking to lead proactive action on our parishes PROWs? **Yes 100%**
- **Question 2:** Are you supportive of us trying to establish a team of Footpath Marshalls? **Yes 89% No 5% DK 5%**
- **Question 3:** Would you be prepared to volunteer as a Footpath Marshall? **Yes 42% No 37% DK 21%**
- **Question 4:** Would you be prepared to volunteer to join the team of Footpath Volunteers? **Yes 47% No 26% DK 26%**

- **Question 5:** Would you support Cold Ash Parish Council in allocating budget to the Footpath Volunteers initiative? **Yes 79% No 5% DK 16%**
- A resident stated they were not keen on the title Marshal. **Cllr McArdle** advised this was not an agreed term and could be changed. Suggestion was Guardian.
- It was suggested that residents living alongside footpaths were in a good position to see first-hand what was happening.
- A resident asked if barbed wire was allowed to be used on footpaths. **Cllr McArdle** advised it was not banned but that, if it caused a nuisance, it should be removed.

7. Biodiversity/Hedge and Mowing Cycles – Environment Committee – Cllr Fenner

Cllr Fenner gave a presentation on the Biodiversity Hedgerows and mowing Cycles. A full copy of the presentation will be available on the Parish Council website.

Questions/Comments

A poll was run with the following results:

- **Question 1:** Do you support Cold Ash Parish Council taking a ‘Biodiversity-friendly’ approach to managing the parishes assets? **Yes 100%**
- **Question 2:** Do you support a change to our mowing approach? **Yes 76% No 0 DK 24%**
- **Question 3:** Do you support a change to our hedgerow cutting approach? **Yes 62% No 10% DK 29%**
- **Question 4:** Would you like us to explore other options in the Biodiversity Toolkit? **Yes 90% No 0 DK 10%**

8. Girl Guiding – Report from Abi Layton

Abi Layton gave a presentation on Girlguiding in Cold Ash and how they coped during the pandemic. A full report and presentation will be available on the Parish Council website.

9. Thank You to Community Groups – Cllr Marsh

Chairman thanked all the volunteers within Cold Ash Parish for their hard work and strong community ethos. The pandemic had brought many challenges and the support groups proactively supported the residents with many needs. Many groups reverted to Zoom meetings, including the Parish Council. Activities became limited, but the football club set up 1-2-1 training through the summer to keep children active. **Chairman** felt that, overall, it had been a great year for support by volunteers within the community. The Covid Support Group received an award from West Berkshire Council. **Chairman** mentioned the extreme hard work which had gone into restoring the War Memorial in St Marks Churchyard: he thanked all the members involved. He advised that all

the information was on the Cold Ash Parish Council website. He thanked the village post office/shop for staying open and accessible during the past year. He finished with thanking all the Community Groups and clubs in the Parish.

10. Choice from Members of the Public

Questions followed from Parishioners:

- A resident asked - how would voting in a referendum be measured? **Cllr Adams** advised it would be 51% of actual voters.
- A resident asked - could anything could be done to stop speeding on Hermitage Road? **Cllr Silsby** advised that recent surveys had been carried out and the data would soon be available on the Parish Council website. He did advise that only a small percentage of traffic did speed, with 85% below and 15% above the speed limit. At St Mark’s School the speeds had been measured at 28mph. Vehicles would speed between each chicane. **District Cllr Simpson** advised that there were certain areas where speeding took place and there was HGV abuse.
- A resident suggested investigating an allegation of cyclists speeding on Cold Ash Hill. **Cllr Silsby** would look at this.
- Parking outside St Finian’s School was an issue. **Cllr Silsby** was in the process of speaking to the schools.
- **Cllr Fenner** advised that TPOs had been applied to the land behind Woodland Leaves where there was now a large protected area.

Chairman thanked everyone for attending.

The Meeting closed at 21.01 Date of next Meeting –April 2022

Signed..... Date.....
Chairman