



COLD ASH PARISH COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON
TUESDAY, 11th January 2022

Present:

Cllrs Fenner, Verner, Clark, McArdle, Silsby, Hanks, Bailey, & Marsh
Clerk L Randall

In Attendance:

Mr J Hislop, Mr C Morris, Mr J Ruddy, Mr & Mrs Brickall, Mr P Dann, Mr & Mrs Devall & Mr Whitehead.

Public Participation

Mr C Morris asked the Parish Council if the matter concerning the response to residents would be discussed in open Council. **Cllr Fenner** confirmed it would be.

218783 Apologies for Absence
Cllr Adams

218784 Declarations of Interest
No Declarations of interest.

218785 Granting of Dispensations to allow Councillors to discuss Precepts
With the authority granted to her, the **Clerk** will grant dispensations to those present to discuss matters pertaining to the Precept, having received the necessary signed pro formas Declarations of Interest

218786 Minutes
Minutes of the Meeting held on 14th December 2021 were approved. They were duly signed by the Chairman **Cllr Fenner**.

218787 Matters Arising

- **Clerk** asked **Cllr Silsby** what the outcome was regarding a letter received from the electricity supplier. He confirmed there was little change in the new contract offer.
- Larger dog bins were discussed and further discussion would take place under the budget item.
- **Cllr Clark** asked if any Councillor had visited the site for the proposed application for Sylvan House. **Cllr McArdle** confirmed that no other councillor visited the site as **Cllr Clark** had only let the Parish Clerk know he would not be able to attend the meeting on the morning of the meeting.

218788 Report from District Councillors

The District Councillors' report had not been received by the Clerk

It was agreed to bring item 218792 forward on the agenda.

218792 Response to Residents

Cllr Fenner advised that the draft response was to confirm the protocols that had been used in the discussion on the planning application; this proposed response had been circulated to all Councillors. **Cllr Clark** wanted it noted that parts of the proposed letter were disingenuous, he asked for the bullet points in proposed response to be removed. He understood that the Parish Council had discussed the application and voted and the result should stand although he did not agree with the decision. Councillors stressed that the discussion this evening was regarding a response to residents and not a further discussion on the proposed application. **Cllr McArdle** stressed that a full discussion took place at the meeting on the 23rd November 2021. **Cllr Marsh** stated the comments referring to **Cllr Clark** could be de-sensitised. **Cllr McArdle** recommended that all bullet points and accounts should be removed from the letter. **Cllr Bailey** felt a comprehensive response should be sent including an acknowledgement regarding the concerns to the Village Design Statement and the three previous applications. **Cllr Fenner** agreed to remove **Cllr Clark's** points and the full report in appendix A. **Cllr Verner** asked for the reference to herself and **Cllr Silsby** declaring an interest in the application to be added to the proposed letter. **Cllr Silsby** felt that previous applications on properties should be given consideration when looking at new applications. Councillors stated that previous applications should be referred to but each new application should be discussed on its own merit. **Cllr Bailey** asked for consistency on all applications. Councillors voted on the proposed letter 7 in favour and 1 abstaining. **Cllr Fenner** would update the draft letter.

218789 Clerk's Report

- **Clerk** asked **Cllr Bailey** to confirm her attendance to the reviews on the Libraries which would be taking place in January. **Cllr Bailey** confirmed she would attend, **Clerk** would send her information on Cold Ash Parish Councils contributions to the Libraries.
- **Clerk** advised she had received the tree report for September and there were no scheduled works for the areas inspected. However, there were some outstanding works to take place in the Wildlife Allotment Garden. **Clerk** would chase the contractor again for an update.
- **Clerk** advised that unfortunately the Christmas tree had been vandalised during Christmas and New Year. The lights had been broken and an attempt to push the tree over had been made. Councillors suggested a notice in the Parish News before Christmas 2022 explaining this, would be a good idea.

218790 Planning Matters

If members of the Public would like to comment on an application, they should check the advice on our website:

<https://coldashpc.org.uk/the-council/planning/>

- a) **Planning Applications**
21/03089/HOUSE 38 Strouds Meadow Cold Ash RG18 9PQ –
Extensions and Alterations to 38 Strouds Meadow **No Objection** –
Unanimous - subject to the following condition:-

- **Off street parking issue resolved with Highways**

b) **WBC (West Berks Council) Planning Decisions** Members noted following decisions:

21/02570/HOUSE Rose Cottage Bucklebury Alley RG18 9NH – Erection of side and rear extensions with a separate car port.

APPROVED – *Previous Parish Council Comments -Objection – Unanimous.*

- *Over development of site*
- *Proposed Extension is overbearing and not subservient to the main dwelling.*
- *Existing house is characterful and of historic interest; whilst not listed, the impact of the proposed changes would be detrimental to the character of the dwelling and surrounding area.*
- *Not in keeping with street scene*
- *Due to the narrow lane upon which the current house sits and the potential size of the proposed works, extensive provisions would have to be made for construction related vehicles and these would be detrimental to the area and the neighbours. There is also the potential for considerable damage to the access/egress areas of the property.*
- *Proposed car port is out of keeping with the neighbourhood and too close to neighbouring boundaries.*

21/02534/PIP Land Adjacent Little Copse Southend - Application for permission in principle for the erection of nine dwellings (first homes).

WITHDRAWN – *Previous Parish Council Comments - Objection – Unanimous –*

The planning application relates to land included in West Berkshire Council's Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (HELAA); site CA11. The proposed development site was fully assessed as part of the HELAA process and was assessed as 'unsuitable' for development (West Berkshire Council statement - 'Development would be inappropriate in the context of the existing settlement form, pattern and character of the landscape'). This is expanded on in the following statement, also taken from the HELAA suitability assessment:

West Berkshire LCA (2019) - the site lies within the Cold Ash Woodland and Heathland Mosaic LCA. The decreasing separation/coalescence between Cold Ash and Thatcham, increased suburbanisation and the loss of gradation between settlement and countryside have been identified as key detractors in this area. The landscape strategy is therefore to retain the distinction between and individual identity of settlements such as Thatcham and Cold Ash and to conserve elements that mark a transition between settlement and countryside. Development on the site would clearly extend development into the countryside and is not considered appropriate in the context of the existing settlement form, pattern and character of the landscape.

We believe that this is sufficient reason for refusal of the planning application, but include the following as additional reasons for

completeness:

- *The site is outside of the settlement boundary*
- *Access is inappropriate, as Lawrence's Lane is narrow and unsuitable for any increase in traffic. The application also conflicts with West Berkshire Council's proposal to restrict access to Lawrence's Lane and designate it as a route for 'Active Travel'. Access to the site through Southend is also unsuitable.*

Acceptance of this planning application would not only undermine West Berkshire Council's Local Plan and HELAA assessment, it would also undermine Cold Ash Parish's emerging Neighbourhood Development Plan, which was submitted to West Berkshire Council for screening on 11th August 2021.

21/02725/COND2 - 20/00604/FULEXT Coley Farm Stoney Lane - Erection of 75 dwellings, with associated access, parking, internal roads, drainage, landscaping, children's play space and other associated infrastructure. **APPROVED** Previous Parish Council Comments - **OBJECTION – UNAINMOUS.**

- *Loss of valued views across this rural valley. Urbanises rural area.*
- *Widening Stoney Lane will require removing hedgerows and trees causing immense damage to this narrow lane and Waller Park.*
- *Significant flood risk to Manor Park.*
- *Damage to the rural gateway to Ashmore Green.*
- *Traffic/congestion issues.*
- *Development not sustainable as due to Steepness of levels this would make building difficult and also deter cyclists.*
- *Loss of Public amenity to Manor Park. Waller Park is currently an enclosed grassy open space. The current application proposes to remove most of the hedgerow on the north boundary within the site, which would have an urbanising effect on the park as views would consist of a housing estate rather than a hedgerow. The play area should be within the application site.*

c) **Appeals**

There were no appeals

218791 Finance

1. **Items for payment.** Members agreed Items for Payment on Sheet No 10 2021/2022.

Summary of sheet:

New Bench – 464.00

Street Light maintenance – 27.42

Street Light supply – 143.53

Zoom – 14.39

Payroll – 54.60

Litter Pick – 65.00

A D Clark – 1018.26

Telephone – 40.19

2. **Bank reconciliation** – Members noted the Bank Reconciliation for December 2021

3. **Payments against Budget** – Members noted the Analysis of Payments

Against Budget to January 2022

218793 Platinum Jubilee Beacon

Cllr Silsby advised that the person who had agreed to make the basket for the beacon had now decided the job was too large for him. **Cllr Silsby** had investigated costs to have a bespoke basket made and would be in excess of £2K. **Cllr Marsh** suggested looking at costings for a standard beacon. **Cllr Silsby** would investigate further. A bonfire was also discussed.

Standing orders were suspended at 7.58pm to allow Mr. Hislop to speak.

Mr. Hislop gave some further options regarding bonfires and safety issues. **Cllr Silsby** felt further discussion should take place and that Mr. Hislop was trying to find out locations of other beacons. More information would be gathered, and this matter would be added to the next agenda. Forming a subcommittee was also discussed.

Standing orders resumed at 8.05pm

218794 Tree Preservation Orders

Cllr McArdle suggested a communication should be made to the Parishioners advising them that they could arrange TPO's on trees that they felt should be protected. This could be done via West Berkshire Councils Tree Officer. He felt that contact information should be made available, as it wasn't just the Parish Council who could arrange this. **Cllr Fenner** suggested making this information available on the Parish Council website. **Cllr Marsh** reminded Councillors that even if a tree carried a TPO if it was causing a problem to a property it could still be removed. **Cllr Fenner** would meet with an interested resident and discuss further.

218795 Grazing Field 1

Cllr McArdle had circulated a plan of action for Grazing Field 1. He advised that new goats should be installed in Grazing Field 2 in the next few weeks. He advised that all the Ash trees needed to be inspected once they were in leaf for Ash die back and this could be costly for the Parish Council. He asked for the cost centre for the Wildlife Allotment Garden to be doubled in the budget to cover opening grazing field 1 to the public and incorporating a reflection garden, wildlife garden and sheep. **Cllr Marsh** felt cheaper options for getting water to the allotments could be investigated, **Cllr Clark** supported this. **Cllr Marsh** thanked **Cllr McArdle** and the volunteers for all their hard work.

218796 Environment Committee

Cllr McArdle asked the Parish Council to confirm they were happy for **Cllr Hanks** to lead on the Recreation Ground and Playgrounds now that Cllr Jaques had left the Parish Council. Councillors agreed to this request.

218797 Parish Council Charges

The Parish Council Charges were reviewed, and the Councillors agreed to no changes at the moment.

218798 Draft Budget 2022/23

Cllr Marsh took the Councillors through the papers tabled at the December meeting; he had investigated increases in National Insurance and the Clerks salary, these new figures were reflected in the proposed budget. He was waiting for final figures for the

NDP which could make a slight change to the proposed precept, and should have these by the next meeting. Councillors agreed to increase Electricity to £1000.00 and training for new councilors to £250.00. A savings account to cover Ash Die Back was agreed with a starting contribution of £1000.00. It was agreed to increase Dog Bins to £500.00 to cover a couple of replacements with larger bins. The Wildlife Allotment Garden cost centre was increased to £3600.00. The final decision on the precept would be made at the next meeting.

218799 Terms of Reference NDP Steering Group Committee

Cllr McArdle advised that due to **Cllr Silsby** resigning from the NDP Steering Group they were now short and had been having informal meetings as the committee was not quorate. **Cllr Silsby** was still handling initiatives but a replacement Councillor was required. The terms of reference would remain for the moment but would need to be agreed at the next meeting. He asked for all Councillors to give consideration to joining the NDP.

218800 Committee Reports

22nd December 21 & 5th January 22- NDP Steering Group – **Cllr McArdle**
As no formal meetings had taken place there was no report.

218801 Meetings with other bodies –

Improvement Plan Working Group 13th December – **Cllr Fenner** had circulated a report to the Councillors, she did advise that a question was tabled asking what weight the Parish Councils input into planning applications carried, and a request for a list of material considerations to be given to Parish Council to assist them when discussing applications.

218802 Councillors' Questions

- **Cllr Silsby** asked who owned that pathway between the Acland Hall and Down House, as this was severely overgrown and causing issues to wheelchair users. **Clerk** advised this had been reported to WBC but she would also speak to the District Councillor.

218803 Correspondence

A list of correspondence received and sent since the meeting held on 14th December 2021 had been circulated as Information Sheet no9/January 2022 and was noted by Members.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.02pm

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