



**Minutes of a meeting of Cold Ash Parish Council on Tuesday 10th October 2023 at 7pm
In the Acland Memorial Hall**

Present: Cllr Fenner (Chair) (MF), Cllr Clark, Cllr Murray (PM), Cllr Adams (PA) and Cllr Codling (HC)

In attendance: Rosie Jardine (Clerk)

239323 Apologies for Absence

Cllr McArdle (IM), Cllr Hanks (RH), Cllr Wilding (JW) and District Cllr Dick

239324 Declarations of Interest

There were no Declarations of Interest

239325 Minutes

Minutes of the meeting held on 26.09.23 were not signed and approved. Amendment requested by PA.

239326 Matters Arising

The Clerk advised that West Berkshire Council (WBC) had confirmed receipt of the pre-planning application relating to the Recreation Ground project.

239327 Councillor Co-Option

RESOLVED that Mr Andrew Morrow should be co-opted as a Councillor

239328 Reports from District Councillors

District Cllr Codling briefly presented her report. The report from District Cllr Dick was noted.

239329 Clerk's Report

The Clerk reported on issues of note not included on the agenda:

- The new contractor has commenced emptying litter and dog foul bins as of 2.10.23 with no notable difficulties. The contractor has identified some areas where new or larger bins may be required; the Clerk will report further on this in due course. The Clerk will also share a means of reporting dog bin issues for both Council Members and residents and prepare a brief news article.
- A letter has been received from a former Councillor resigning from their role as Council representative and trustee for Thatcham Parochial Charities. The Clerk will enquire as to whether a replacement Council representative is required.
- The Clerk requested permission to order 3 replacement swings seats as identified in periodic play area inspections by the Council's contractor. **RESOLVED** that the Clerk should place the order to supply and fit as per the quotation supplied.
- A £50.00 cheque payable to the Council was received intended as a donation towards the current Recreation Ground fundraising efforts. It was agreed that once the cheque has cleared it can be paid directly to Greenham Trust for match funding.
- The Greening Group has organised a visit by a mobile knife/tools sharpener on 18.11.23. The Clerk has consented to the use of 3 parking spaces to accommodate this.

239330

Planning Matters

Members noted the Decision Notices

239331

Finance

1. Items for Payment - Members approved the report.
2. Bank Reconciliation – Members noted the Bank Reconciliation dated 30.09.23.
3. Payments Against Budget – Members noted the Analysis of Payments Against Budget to October 2023.
4. VAT Return – Members noted the half yearly VAT return has been submitted.
5. AGAR – Members noted the return of the Annual Return and briefly reviewed reports from both internal and external auditors. The Clerk briefly shared a working document to begin to implement recommendations made by the Auditors.
6. Credit card – Members considered and approved a recommendation by the Clerk to apply for a debit card supplied by the Council's existing banking provider.

239332

NDP Update

PM reported the positive step that the NDP was unanimously supported by WBC; things can now move forward. The Steering Group (SG) will consider how to respond to feedback and work will commence on the selection of an Independent Examiner. Members discussed the ongoing need for the SG and whether discussions could now be part of Council meetings. Members agreed that due to the specialist understanding gained by its members the SG should continue to meet. PM suggested that the work of the SG should be complete once the Independent Examiner is appointed.

239333

Remembrance Parade

HC reported her wish to step away from coordinating preparations for the annual Parade and opened discussion regarding the appointment of a volunteer to take over the role. Members agreed that this should be addressed following this year's event.

239334

Office IT, Clerk's Laptop & Broadband/Telephone

RESOLVED the following actions drawn from a report by the Clerk:

1. That Council introduce "Basic Mail" email addresses for Councillors and Clerk using the coldashpc.org.uk domain hosted by IONOS.
2. That the Clerk should commence an Office 365 subscription, addressing core data storage issues and remote meeting needs for Steering Groups. Members experiencing data storage difficulties, specifically those working on the Neighbourhood Development Plan, will discuss the benefits of short-term subscriptions and report back to Council.
3. That the Clerk should order the laptop identified.
4. That the office PC should be upgraded to Windows 11 Pro as soon as is practicable.
5. That provided the broadband speed is adequate, that the Clerk should transfer the office broadband and telephone line to BT as per the updated offer of £30.95 per month, fixed for 24 months.
6. That the redundant PC should be safely disposed of and an appropriate certificate obtained.

239335

St Mark's CE Primary School Crossing Patrol

RESOLVED that PM should submit a response on behalf of the Council: "We believe that, on balance, the three parking places on Cold Ash Hill near St Marys School southbound generate traffic issues, allowing traffic to pile up and, as a result, safety concerns arise, particularly during school hours. We believe that they now put more strain on traffic safety than provide a safe parking solution for the parish, and as such, we would favour a no-parking zone throughout the entire highway carriageway near the school to prevent this. If however, these spaces are indeed eliminated, we would like to see additional traffic calming alternatives investigated to help decrease traffic on both the northern and southern carriageways near the school."

239336

Tennis Club

Members discussed the terms of use of the Tennis Courts and agreed that it is desirable to see improved access for members of the public who are not Tennis Club members. Members agreed that MF and PA should open a dialogue with the Club to work towards this goal.

A resolution was passed to permit the meeting run beyond 9pm

239337

Parish Council Budget

Members proposed items they would like to have considered for inclusion in the 2023-2024 budget:

HC: Youth Working and Youth Club – seed funding. This may be more long-term and for future budgets

MF: Warm Spaces initiative and Training budget for new Clerk

PM: Speed Indicator Device and Grant or match funding budget to support current Recreation Ground Project fundraising

PA: Funding to support the changing role of the Council when the NDP comes into action including training costs

239338

Parish Christmas Tree

RESOLVED that a Christmas Tree and replacement lights should be purchased as per the 2023-2024 budget. HC would make enquiries about the price of a tree. MF will arrange selection of said tree. The Clerk will order replacement lights.

MF left the room for the next item

239339

Councillors' Questions

BC suggested that the Council include the Definitive Map Modification Order for Drove Lane on a future agenda so that members can discuss if Council will make a representation or objection to the Order, and if so what it will be. Members agreed that PM will seek clarity as to what is required of Cold Ash Parish Council before further action is agreed.

239340

Correspondence

Members noted the correspondence reported by the Clerk

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.08pm

Chairman

Date