

Minutes of a meeting of Cold Ash Parish Council held on Tuesday 10.3.20226 at 7.15pm in the Committee Room of Acland Memorial Hall

Present: Councillors McArdle (IM/Chair), Codling (HC), Adams (PA), Maini (VM), Clark (BC), and Riley (JR)

In Attendance: Rosie Jardine (Clerk & RFO)

Absent: Councillor Murray (PM/Vice-Chair), Pemberton (JP), Hanks (RH) and Silsby (DS)

26.36 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received and accepted from Councillors Murray (PM/Vice-Chair), Pemberton (JP), Hanks (RH) and District Councillor Paul Dick

26.37 Declarations of Interest

HC declared that they are a District Councillor, that they will act in the best interests of the Parish and set aside any interest in the District Council during this meeting.

26.38 Minutes

RESOLVED to approve the minutes of the meetings held on 24.2.2026.

26.39 Planning Matters

A Applications - RESOLVED the following consultee responses to planning applications:

NO OBJECTION to ^{BC} 26/00344/HOUSE The Old Dairy, Fishers Farm, Fishers Lane - Ground floor extension to the side of existing dwelling

NO COMMENT to ^{PA} 26/00362/CERTE The Farmhouse, Westrop Farm, The Ridge - Car Port building with attached decked area - please refer to cover letter and Statutory Declaration for further information.

OBJECT to ^{JR} 26/00140/FULMAJ Adjacent Parish: Land at End of Charlotte Close Hermitage - Erection of 16 dwellings and associated landscape and highway works. Section 73 application to vary condition 2 (approved plans) of Planning Permission 20/00912/FULEXT

OBJECT on the basis that the proposed change in the housing mix, specifically the increase in four-bedroom dwellings, creates a significant imbalance between 2-, 3- and 4-bedroom homes, contrary to WBC's Local Plan Policy CS4.

26.40 Finance

A Items for Payment – APPROVED items of expenditure totalling £4,496.43

B Bank Reconciliation – APPROVED the bank reconciliation to 27.2.2026

C Budget – REVIEWED the 2025-2026 budget to date

D VAT – NOTED that Q3 Vat reclaim has been received from HMRC

26.41 Project Updates

RECEIVED updates from Project Leads and resolved actions, if appropriate:

A – West Berkshire Local Plan: IM & PM

HC reported on WBC's call for sites to inform the HELAA for the next Local Plan, that it will be a long process. Discussion is expected soon with the developers for the NE Thatcham site. That will involve engagement with the public and parish councils. The process is behind due to developer delays but the Master Plan is still on track for October 2026. Site CA12 is still ongoing – CAPC will be considering a response to the latest changes at it's 24.3.26 meeting.

B – Bringing the NDP alive: IM & PM

Nothing current to report but will come in to play as and when the new HELAA is published. A reference framework for Councillors reviewing planning applications will be produced in due course.

ACTION: Clerk to share "material considerations" document.

C – Data & Resource Sharing: PM

The Clerk reported that work will resume on SharePoint for document sharing soon.

D – Traffic and Transport (road safety, 20mph, SID's, etc): VM

HC reported that WBC is waiting on the data following consultation on 20mph limits in Cold Ash. The removal of on-street parking spaces outside St Mark's School (opposite St Mark's Church) has been approved and work is expected to be undertaken by a WBC contractor in 6-8 weeks. There is a session regarding the process for sourcing and implementing Speed Indicator Devices (SIDs) in April – VM will be attending.

E – Anti-Social Behaviour (Hermitage Road car park, CCTV and other): DS

The Clerk reported that no response has yet been received from the Police Crime Commissioner further to submission of the grant award feedback. Acland Memorial Hall Management Committee is expected to

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consider mounting of CCTV cameras at its April meeting. HC reported that there has been a suspected “county lines” issue locally – this new CCTV could be helpful in monitoring the matter if Cold Ash is being used.

i APPROVED the draft CCTV Policy

8pm HC and BC left the meeting

ii NOTED footage request forms, DPIA, car park signage

F – Community Engagement: HC and Clerk

Nothing to report

G – Sculpture Trail: IM

IM reported on a potential voluntary contribution to the project from the Ealing Estate.

H – Upper Stone Rise play area: HC & IM

The Clerk has action to liaise with the WBC Officer regarding potential adoption of the new play area.

26.42 Councillors Reports & Questions

To receive reports and questions from Parish and District Councillors.

PA: has yet to see the BALC AGM minutes. Clerk to check

VM: is first aid training available to support use of the new defibrillators in Cold Ash? Is this something CAPC could provide?

IM 1: A WBC Western Area Planning Committee site visit to the St Gabriel’s Convent site with reference to planning application 25/01899/FULMAJ was scheduled for Thursday 12.3.2026 but has been delayed due to a late objection from the WBC SuDS Team.

IM2: Cold Ash Countryside Volunteers felled the yew tree nearest the main entrance to St Mark’s Church but a large stump remains. Quotes are being sought for stump grinding.

IM3: At the Annual Parish Meeting on Saturday 7.3.26, an allotment plot holder requested a water supply to the Gladstone Lane allotments. Add to a Trust agenda.

26.43 Clerk’s Report

- Quotes have been sought for stump grinding of the yew tree recently felled by the Cold Ash Countryside Volunteers in St Mark’s (Closed) Churchyard and will be presented to a future meeting.

26.44 Audit

A NOTED the Internal Auditor’s Interim report and the recommendations made.

Matter Arising	Recommendation	Council Response
There is no evidence retained of who authorises bank payments, this is a result of the poor audit log provided by the Co-op Bank.	Evidence should be retained showing which councillor has approved a payment run. This can be by email or by signature, I understand the Council is planning to move to Unity Bank, which has a better audit log.	Clerk to add digital signing to the payments list.
The Council is due to complete the 25-26 review of the risk assessment at the March Full Council meeting.	I reminded the Clerk that this review must be completed and minuted at a Full Council meeting before 31 March.	See minute 26.46
For 25-26, an additional assertion has been added to the Annual Governance Statement, this covers digital and data compliance. The Council is largely compliant with the requirements of the Practitioners’ Guide in this area.	For clarity, it is recommended that the Council considers compliance with paragraphs 1.47 to 1.54 on page 14 of the Practitioners’ Guide at a meeting before the end of the financial year.	See minute 26.44 B
Bank Reconciliations	The Councillor reviewing the bank reconciliation must initial bank statements as well as the reconciliation, this provides evidence of proper check of the bank reconciliation, and is a requirement of financial regulations.	Clerk to remind Councillor reviewing.

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It is not possible to separate the Charity from the Council until the Charity has its own bank account. This should be progressed as much as possible before year end	Whilst work has continued this issue in 25-26, it is not possible to separate the Charity from the Council until the Charity has its own bank account., This should be seen as a key target for the Council as the 26-27 financial year commences. The Charity should be separated from the Council books of account for the 26-27 financial year.	Clerk to pursue new Unity Trust account.
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B RESOLVED that requirements for the new assertion 10 for External Audit are being met.

C NOTED that the full Internal Audit has been booked for Tuesday 18.5.2026 and provisional External Audit dates pencilled in by the Clerk pending publication of External Audit papers.

26.45 Play Area Inspection Reports and Repairs

NOTED the inspection reports and **RESOLVED** to instruct ARD Playgrounds to undertake the following repairs:

- Southend Toddler total: £77.00
 1. Rocker – re-tension spring
 2. Tower Unit - re-tension and secure slide
- Southend Junior total: £180.00 (N Perry)
 1. Moss Off treatment £180.00
- Hermitage Road total: £492.50
 2. Wet-pour patch repair £149.50
 5. and 6. Wet-pour patch repair £149.50
 9. Wet-pour patch repair £149.50
 10. Slide repairs £44.00

ACTION: Removal of overhead wires at Southend Junior to be considered at a future meeting.

26.46 Risk Management Document

DEFERRED review of the Risk Management Document until the 24.3.26 meeting pending further work by VM and the Clerk.

26.47 Library Service Contribution

DEFERRED the decision on the uptake of WBC's service delivery offer towards the library service pending further consultation with residents. A small number of results were gathered at the recent Annual Parish Meeting but more responses will be sought.

26.48 Policies

A APPROVED the amendment to the Data Retention Policy to include CCTV recordings.

B APPROVED adoption of the Data Protection (GDPR) Policy.

26.49 Insurance

RESOLVED to approve renewal of CAPC's insurance policies.

ACTION: diarise periodic, perhaps 5-yearly, valuations of high value assets.

26.50 Annual Parish Meeting

IM, VM and JR reported on the success of the event held on Saturday 7.3.2026 with estimated attendance in excess of 120 people. A number of community groups reported on recruitment of new members and/or supporters. It is hoped the event will build for future years.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 9pm

Chair Date