



COLNEY HEATH PARISH COUNCIL

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Hill End Lane
St Albans
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Tel: 01727 825314
Email: clerk@colneyheathparishcouncil.gov.uk

Colney Heath Village Office
83 High Street
Colney Heath
Hertfordshire AL4 0NS

13th July 2020

**RE: Freedom of Information Act 2000
Colney Heath Parish Council – Correspondence from Village Hall Council
September 2001**

I am replying to you in response to your email received 29th June 2020 which was treated as a Freedom of Information request.

Your request:

a copy of 'the Village Hall Council's letter dated 8th September 2001 referenced in Debenham Ottaway's letter dated 11 December 2017'.

Our response:

A copy of the letter requested is attached to this response.

I hope this information is helpful. If you have any further queries, then please send them to me at clerk@colneyheathparishcouncil.gov.uk

Yours sincerely,

**Lisa Chaplin LCGI PSLCC CPFA CiLCA
Clerk to the Council
For and on behalf of
Colney Heath Parish Council**

COLNEY HEATH VILLAGE HALL COUNCIL

High Street, Colney Heath, Herts. AL4 0NS

Registered Charity Number 302357

Please reply to:

58 Tollgate Road
Colney Heath
St Albans
AL4 0PY

Mrs D Mayhew
Clerk to the Parish Council
Colney Heath Parish Council
Village Hall
High Street
Colney Heath

8th September 2001

Dear Debra

Thank you for your letter dated 17th July relating to letting charges for the Community Room at the Village Hall when used by the Parish Council. I was unable to respond earlier as we did not have a meeting scheduled until Tuesday, 4th September.

The Management Committee discussed the matter you raised and I was asked to reply to your letter on their behalf. We referred back to our minutes for December 1999, a copy of which is enclosed, and you will notice that they preceded those of the Parish Council. We can only assume they were mis-interpreted. In the discussions held by the sub-committee concerning the extension it was agreed that the Parish Council should not pay for monthly Parish meetings, Budget meetings and other associated PC meetings. Where the meetings referred to in the Village Hall Council minutes as 'meetings held for the benefit of parishioners', these were at the discretion of this committee and did not state that all meetings arranged by the Parish Council would be free. The reference to PC associated meetings referred to the Annual Parish Meetings which are held alternately in Tyttenhanger and Colney Heath. There was never any question of funds being provided only on condition that any meetings arranged for by the Parish Council would be free. We did in fact notice that the Parish Council elected to hire the Church Hall in favour of using the Community Room this year.

An important point is that provision of Parish Council funding was to enable the Parish Council to have it's own office instead of hiring private premises as it had done up until the extension was completed. There is also available for the use of the Parish Council and staff, the kitchen and toilet facilities which are used as much by yourselves as anybody.

In acquiring grants to assist with the building of the extension we had to provide documentation showing how we intended to manage and fund the maintenance of the building and this included projected figures for hiring and managing the Community Room.

The Village Hall Council provided by way of grants applied for, plus monies from our own funds and directly equipping the new buildings, a total of £49,207.72. This is almost 50% of the overall cost. These grants were only available to us as a Charity and would not have been made to a Parish Council. We still have a lot more to do to provide further equipment as well as ensure that the building is kept clean, heated and well lit and in a good state of repair.

On top of paying a cleaner to regularly clean the whole building we also, after every hire, have to pay the cleaner to come in and clean the room and associated facilities, i.e.: kitchen and toilet. In some cases when used after an outside activity, for example Beating the Bounds, there is a lot of mud etc. left on the carpets as well as food being dropped when refreshments are involved. This cleaning also entails additional costs such as electricity, cleaning materials and equipment plus the cleaner's expenses. There is also the increased insurance premium which has virtually doubled and has to be taken into consideration when charges are calculated. The only way these costs can be covered is by charging a hire fee whenever the premises are used.

As the Management Committee it is our responsibility to make these decisions and we consider it is necessary to continue charging for the hire of the Community Room in the majority of instances. When the fee is waived there will be a charge to cover the costs as previously detailed. As we have no other source of income this is very necessary and do not feel that we should have to provide for this out of income from the hire of the main hall. It is also for us to decide each case on its merits and charge accordingly though there is a general scale of charges laid down by us. We hope this now clarifies the situation.

Please find enclosed our invoice to cover the costs incurred for the use of the hall on the dates detailed in the previous invoice that you refused to pay and look forward to receiving the payment.

I was also asked to comment on the last sentence of the letter received from you. We did consider the choice of words rather unfortunate and hope they were unintentionally curt.

Yours sincerely



Frank Graham - Chairman
For and on behalf of the Management Committee
Colney Heath Village Hall Council

cc: Cllr. Mr Chris Brazier – Chairman, Colney Heath Parish Council
Cllr. Mrs Gerry Cloke – Parish Council Representative, Village Hall Council,

Enc.

COLNEY HEATH VILLAGE HALL COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 13 DECEMBER 1999

Present: Mrs Dickinson, Mrs Fowler, Mrs Glassey, Mr & Mrs Graham, Mr Jarman, Mrs Jeffrey, Mrs Luxford, Mrs Packer, Mrs Stoker, Mr Walker.

Apologies:

Minutes of the last meeting: Agreed

Matters Arising:

Extension - £16,500 has been paid to the PC - £10,000 from Groundwork and £6,500 from District Council. Still awaiting a further £17,004.18 from three more funders. Central Heating boiler has been installed, plastering complete inside and out, radiators going in now. JJ pointed out that some of the rendering appears to be coming away on the corners. *
Meeting with PC - funding has been put aside for furnishing parish office and community room. *
Blinds will be fitted in community room. Commemorative plaque to be put up stating that the building will be called the Millennium Extension and opened by the Major. A notice in the lobby will state who has helped with funding for this project. The office will have a separate burglar alarm and the PC will cover running costs and installation. The two keyholders will be CP and CB. A cleaner will be required for 2 hours a week to clean the office and community room. CP will be responsible for hiring the community room. Opening to be held on either 15th April, 6th May or 13th May at 2.00pm. The WI have agreed to provide tea and sandwiches. CP will write an article for the Chronicle. CP/JJ/Chairman of PC will hold keys to the entrance and community room doors. PC will pay a proportion of the electricity and gas although members of the VHC thought that separate meters were being installed. The following meetings will be held free of hiring charges PC meetings including budget meetings or meetings held for benefit of parishioners, VHC meetings and PC associated meetings. All other users including District Council, MP surgeries etc. will be charged. The VHC believed that the community room would be an asset for the hall and let as such, never was it planned that this room would be solely for the use of the PC and in this respect it was felt that the furnishing costs of the community room should be met by the VHC. *
10% of the total cost will be held back for 6 months in case of any problems with the work.

Damage - The sensor light outside the Gents has been broken and the cage damaged. The small toilet window has also been smashed. FG has arranged for the window to be replaced. More tiles have also been damaged on the roof which Grimwades have replaced - GG asked that this be billed separately from the extension work.

Sewers - A further £6,000 will be paid once the work has been completed. More granite chippings need to be put on the car park and it was felt that the PC would do this when all the work is finished.

School House - Rubble removed by GBS.

Senior Citizen's Party - The entertainers do not need a keyboard.

Health & Safety - Quote received from DH for £180 + VAT which includes 6 valves, draining and refilling the system. NL pointed out that 2 more valves would be needed for the radiators in both toilets as neither of these work. DH will be given the go ahead. If this does not cure the problem then in the future we may have to consider cages around the radiators.

Charity Commission - Forms have been updated and sent off.