



COLNEY HEATH PARISH COUNCIL

Highfield Park Office
Highfield Park Visitor Centre
Hill End Lane
St Albans AL4 0RA

Village Office
83 High Street
Colney Heath
Hertfordshire AL4 0NS

Tel: 01727 825314 Email: clerk@colneyheathparishcouncil.gov.uk

EMERGENCY AEC

MINUTES OF COLNEY HEATH PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD AT COLNEY HEATH SCHOOL ON THURSDAY 9 SEPTEMBER 2021, 7.30pm

Members in attendance

Cllr P Cook (Chairman) (Highfield Ward)
Cllr J Llewellyn (Colney Heath Ward)
Cllr J Mulroney (Highfield Ward)

Cllr K Slaughter (Colney Heath Ward)
Cllr R Solts (Highfield Ward)
Clerk of the Council, Ms. L. Chaplin

Other attendees

6 members of the public

21/22-42 APOLOGIES & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Apologies were received from Cllr Brazier, Cllr Barnes and Cllr Shaw who were all away. Apologies were noted and accepted.

The Chairman announced that the Parish Council has been given Rule 6 status at the Ellenbrook Quarry appeal. The Quarry covers both Hatfield Town Council, in Welwyn Hatfield Borough council area as well, but is predominantly in the Parish. Rule 6 status has also been given to Ellenbrook Area Residents Association who are working with Smallford Residents Association. The Chairman confirmed that working with the Neighbourhood Plan Project Officer on the Statement of Case had gone well and that they attended the case management meeting recently. The appeal would be heard at The Fielder Centre from 16th November 2021.

21/22-43 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

- None declared
- All councillors in attendance confirmed by a show of hands that the published declarations were correct and up to date.
- None received or noted

21/22-44 QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

7.33pm Standing Orders were suspended so members of the public could ask questions/make statements to the Council.

There were no questions from the attending members of the public

7.34pm Standing Orders were resumed.

21/22-44 COLNEY HEATH PARISH VILLAGE OFFICE EVICTION AND ASSOCIATED MATTERS

a) Decision to take the item into closed session

Chairman proposed to have as much debate in open session as possible but advised members to be aware of the confidential information in the papers provided to them. The motion to remain in open session was duly proposed, seconded, and unanimously **RESOLVED** by a show of hands. **Motion carried.**

b) To review the legal advice on the eviction notice issued by Colney Heath Village Hall CIO

Councillors noted the confidential report circulated and commented it was detailed and factual. Concerns raised included that the eviction would mean that in 2023, pending the outcome of the Community Governance review, there would be no presence in the rural area of the parish – neither an office or a meeting room. It was noted that this decision would affect Colney Heath village residents particularly in future years.



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The Chairman confirmed the details of a May 2000 press release that showed the contributors to the costs of the millennium extension were as follows:

- £56,000 - Colney Heath Parish Council
- £20,000 - Lafarge/Redland
- £10,000 - St Albans District Council
- £8,000 - Colney Heath Village Hall Council
- £5,000 - Countryside Agency
- £2,500 - Transco
- £150 – St Albans Sand & Gravel

A councillor made clear that their decision had not changed and felt that the eviction notice should be accepted as the Village Hall had made plans for use by the community and the plans to offer free use of the office for the benefit of local people for internet use and hybrid working should be welcomed.

A proposal to accept the eviction notice and vacate the village office within 6 weeks was duly proposed, seconded, and unanimously **RESOLVED** by a show of hands.
Motion carried.

c) To review the terms of the offer to remain in the village parish office

As Council had resolved to vacate the office the terms of the offer although included in the confidential report were not required to be discussed. Councillors requested that the terms of the offer be included in the minutes for openness and transparency along with the costs to the Council remaining in the office.

The terms offered were as follows:

That the Colney Heath Village Hall CIO (CHVHC) will enter into a written lease of the current 'office':

- a. to run until August 2023.
- b. contracted out of the Landlord & Tenant Act 1954.
- c. CHVHC to be responsible for external repair and there to be a full internal tenant's repairing covenant.
- d. with tenant responsibility for Business Rates and services (excluding heating and power).
- e. expressly recording that the covenant of quiet enjoyment would not be breached by noise from other users of the Village Hall, and at a
- f. rent of £2000 pa with a deposit of £500 (with the total rent for the entire period to be paid simultaneously with the completion of the lease).

Costs for the period 2021-2023

Legal costs to date	£750
Legal costs of lease	£3,000
Rent	£4,000
Business Rates	£2,000
Phones/Internet	£1,080
Photocopier, printer, desk, chair	£1,500
Total	£12,330



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	d) To review the outstanding case for legal costs against the Trustees of the Colney Heath Village Hall for the failed eviction in 2017 The background to the case was discussed. There was a debate with differing views from councillors. Due to the confidential nature of the matters to be discussed and the legal ramifications of any decision it was duly proposed, seconded, and unanimously RESOLVED by a show of hands for this item to be discussed in a closed session. Motion carried. e) Highfield Park Trust Lease extension on Highfield Park Visitor Centre Parish office The confidential report on this matter was noted as circulated, councillors commented that given the decision on the village office it was sensible to extend this lease until 30th September 2023. This would give the new councillors in May 2023 serious decisions to be made. A councillor noted that the costs of the office, which can accommodate two members of staff, was cheaper than the proposal on the village office, for more space. The proposal to extend the lease on the office in Highfield Park was duly proposed, seconded, and unanimously RESOLVED by a show of hands for this item to be discussed in a closed session. Motion carried.
21/22-46	QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC <i>7.52pm Standing Orders were suspended so members of the public could ask questions/make statements to the Council.</i> A member of the public asked about the terms of the offer made and why this was not considered. It was confirmed that as Council had accepted the eviction notice and would vacate the office the terms of the offer which were included in the confidential report were reviewed but not required to be discussed. <i>7.54pm Standing Orders were resumed.</i> The Chairman thanked all for their attendance and closed the public meeting at 7.54pm to go into the previously resolved closed session to discuss Item 21/22-45d

Meeting closed at 7.54pm

L Chaplin LCGI PSLCC CPFA CiLCA

Clerk to the Council

Drafted 10/09/2021

Signed by

Chairman Peter Cook

Approved by Council 23 September 2021



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CLOSED SESSION MINUTES OF COLNEY HEATH PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD AT COLNEY HEATH SCHOOL ON THURSDAY 9 SEPTEMBER 2021, 7.58pm

Members in attendance

Cllr P Cook (Chairman) (Highfield Ward)
Cllr J Llewellyn (Colney Heath Ward)
Cllr J Mulroney (Highfield Ward)

Cllr K Slaughter (Colney Heath Ward)
Cllr R Solts (Highfield Ward)
Clerk of the Council, Ms. L. Chaplin

21/22-44d

To review the outstanding case for legal costs against the Trustees of the Colney Heath Village Hall for the failed eviction in 2017

There was an exchange of views on the action and costs matter. It was suggested that Council should draw a line under this matter but that parties should cover their own costs. It was duly proposed, seconded, and **RESOLVED** that subject to agreement for parties to agree to pay their own costs and take no further action the legal case would be withdrawn. **Motion carried.** A requested vote was noted, and the voting was as follows: Cllrs Cook, Slaughter, Llewellyn and Mulroney in favour and Councillor Solts abstained.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 8.04pm

Closed session closed at 8.04pm

L Chaplin LCGI PSLCC CPFA CiLCA

Clerk to the Council

Drafted 10/09/2021

Signed by

Chairman Peter Cook

Approved by Council 23 September 2021