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**MINUTES OF THE COLNEY HEATH SPECIAL EMERGENCY MEETING
AT THE VILLAGE HALL 83 HIGH STREET COLNEY HEATH AL4 0NS.
ON WEDNESDAY 18TH AUGUST 2004 AT 7.30 PM.**

Present Cllr D Crump Chair-Cllr C Brazier-Cllr G Rump-Cllr M Corley
Cllr P Reeves-Cllr Hall.

Clerk:- Mr J Dean Assistant Clerk Mrs K Parker-Mead

Members of the Public- 32 Attendees as noted on a separate list

1. APOLOGIES RECIEVED

Cllr J Henchley-Cllr D Clarke-Cllr J Day

2. DECLARATIONS

There were no declarations

3. MINUTES

On this occasion were not read having being declared as a part II on 27th July as this was an emergency meeting with a specific topic-COLNEY HEATH PRE-SCHOOL CLOSURE and the public opinion to re-start the pre school as a Community Project

4.COLNEY HEATH PRE SCHOOL CLOSURE

The Chair outlined the current situation and invited the Clerk to offer an overview of the possible conclusions to re start that he had worked on since the meeting in July. At that time the Assistant Clerk had passed a form to the parents asking for contacts to form the basis of a viability exercise that had been presented to members, more would be given in part II.

Three best and most viable alternatives were put to the meeting by the Clerk and copies distributed. Also remembering that CH Parish Council had since the last meeting in part II considered the possible purchase of the business, instructing the Clerk to approach the previous owner (without any predijice or implied guarantee's) At this suggestion several members of the parent group gave a strong indications that this should no longer an be considered. This was also voiced by most others attending who suggested that a new Community Group be formed, hopefully to be able to start on 6th September; all present offered the council full support in making it a success. At this point the Chair suggested that the meeting be suspended for 10 mins in order that the parents could discuss and decide amongst themselves how they wished to see a community pre school continue and with their support if it could do so, and how.

MEETING ADJOURNED-19.55-20.08.pm

The Clerk confirmed that it was possible for a Parish Council to operate a business and in this particular instance the criteria would be to break even. Staff would have to be employed and the council could support with simple administration tasks from the office. It was however essential to engage qualified staff as the previous staff had left. It was clear to many and stated by several parents that there was only the equipment to buy, against which they were strongly in favour of starting again with new kit.

JSC

No indication of the cost of the business or equipment was disclosed, any opinions were not responded to or clarified or stated here. No figures were considered. It was also understood that the OFSTED had or was about to lapse making a similar pre school option impossible to start in the same way in time for September 6th. The council had also engaged professional advice in HCC and were able to consult a pre school expert, this could continue for the foreseeable future provided as a service.

Several people from the assembly offered to assist with the start up process and it was agreed to set up a Steering Committee if the Council could make a grant available and offer administrative support. Names were taken by the Clerk and a further list of those interested in sending their children to the pre-school was noted by Assistant Clerk. Some 25 names were gathered to establish a voluntary list which the Clerk would use for the possible register if the school was started and met the expectations of all. Costs were briefly considered, the past fees of £5.50 per day were considered fair, £6 was a cost that many felt might be unacceptable to those parents without govt funding from in looking at a family affordance point of view. Those parents were vulnerable to not benefit from a social need here. Members noted this in light of the Clerks comments.

The Chair then summarised the general view and noted the feelings and wishes of the meeting all having heard a positive viewpoint to take forward to the part II to follow. Noting the parent's suggestion that there were people attending the meeting who had the right qualifications he would instruct the Clerk to take the appropriate action later to see if this could help with the requirements of a pre school. It was known to be a very difficult recruitment area, one which required a very specific area of compliance. Grants were available, the council were aware of the government grants to 3yr olds.

He thanked all for attending and stated that the members would debate the issues very seriously and take the appropriate action within their powers. He explained the part II procedure was not open to the public as matters of confidential nature were involved.

The meeting closed at 20.20pm

Here followed a Part II


John Dean
Clerk to the Council

**MINUTES OF THE COLNEY HEATH SPECIAL EMERGENCY MEETING
AT THE VILLAGE HALL 83 HIGH STREET COLNEY HEATH AL4 0NS.
ON WEDNESDAY 18TH AUGUST 2004 AT 8.30 PM.**

PART II

Present Cllr D Crump Chair-Cllr C Brazier-Cllr G Rump-Cllr M Corley
Cllr P Reeves-Cllr Hall.

Clerk:- Mr J Dean Assistant Clerk Mrs K Parker-Mead

1. APOLOGIES RECIEVED

Cllr J Henchley-Cllr D Clarke-Cllr J Day

2. DECLARATIONS

There were no declarations

3. MINUTES

The minutes of the Part II meeting held on the 27th July 2004 were approved

4 CLERKS REPORT

The Clerk said he had carried out the instructions of the members and had been in contact with various people and organisations. He gave members an overview of the work he had done with the help of the Assistant Clerk in building up a data base of 25 names of parents likely to attend the pre-school in September. It was looking fairly impossible to re engage the past leader who had decided for various reasons to seek other employment. Members were also aware of the issues in starting up a pre school that were outlined by Ms Julie Capon during her presentation. Contact had been made with Sue Packer the previous owner. OFSTED were aware of our interest in continuing, although not prepared to do anything until we complete an application.

He had also to report the discussion with Sue Packer and sending a letter, without any guarantee to request an inventory list. This was presented to members showing the valuation of £12,000. It was noted that the comments of the parents was negative in agreeing to purchase and gave strong indications to re start with new. Requesting an emergency Council grant-aid payment. Figures were presented to members indicating the possible initial £10k loss that CHPC might have to shield if we go ahead. Initial pupil numbers show how attendance ratios have a profound effect on revenue. Especially if our ratios dropped to less than 75% and might even drop to 50%, this was because we would have to start without an OFSTED in place for some weeks. A suggested plan would be to create a Community based school until half term, by which time staff stability and reaching the qualification should be achievable. The period up to Christmas term would then be to consolidate the business plan and aim to reach a firm budget, good staff, pupil numbers plus other objectives for 2005.

Other issues involve the ratio of staff to infant's, it can require up to 4 staff on 20 children under 3years, qualified leaders are at £10/12k in the industry, other helpers

less qualified are in the £8/9k area. This means a wages bill that would easily top end at up to £34k/p.a. Average 100% revenue at 200x20 infant/days x £6 or £7 p/d means a big chunk of top up, aside of operating costs reckoned to be £3k+ kit WDV £2k. The Clerk reported it was his plan to speak with Ms Julie Capon immediately on her return from Holiday 23rd August to see if any leaders were available for employment.

5.COLNEY HEATH PRE SCHOOL CLOSURE

The Chair asked the members to consider the overview, if we were to support the plan then the suggestions made by the parent's needs consideration. A steering committee would be set up possibly leading to a management committee and constitution being ratified at a later date once established. A representative member from the PC was important and the Assistant Clerk was nominated by the J Dean as an ideal candidate for taking the committee secretary's administration position if it can be created within the team. Overall this would then provide the outline for this to go ahead under the watchful guidance of Julie Capon. Resolutions to give Clerk the authority to proceed-

Proposal No 1

That the Council has decided not to purchase the equipment from the owner of the Pre School having considered the price is too high at over £12,000.00 it is way above any emergency budget this council should afford.

Proposal No 2

That this Council is willing to accept the parent's earlier suggestion that they can provide some equipment from their own sources to enable the Pre School to start.

Proposal No 3

The Council will allow a Steering Committee to be involved in the early decision making and set up process under the watching brief of Julie Capon, the Parish Council Administration Staff and representative members. This must result in a constitution and terms of reference and a business plan established after a reasonable short period. Say by half term in October. Thereafter a final operational procedure and full forward initiative business plan set by the New Year 2005. The Clerk is also instructed to begin the necessary OFSTED application and registration as quickly as possible.

Proposal No 4

To authorise the Clerk to interview two members of staff to fill the post's of leader and assistant in order to start the Pre School by 6th or 13th September 2004. Wages are to be set in the region of £6.50 and £5.00 respectively. On completion of staff checks the process of job offer will be made by the Clerk.

Proposal No 5

The Council will agree to an emergency grant aid of up to £2,500.00 immediately to facilitate the purchase of equipment for the Pre School. The Steering committee to decide in conjunction with guidance from the Leader, to include items OFSTED like.

This resulted in the Chair suggesting that we vote en-bloc for these here unless any member had reservations otherwise. No member came forward or disagreed.

Proposed by Cllr Brazier Seconded-Cllr Corley, carried unanimously by all present

The meeting closed at 23.10



John Dean
Clerk to the Council