



**MINUTES OF A SPECIAL MEETING COLNEY HEATH PARISH COUNCIL
HELD IN THE VILLAGE HALL ON THURSDAY -27TH SEPTEMBER 2004
TO CONSIDER THE COMMONS STEWARDSHIP -FUTURE DECISIONS**

Present;- Cllr's D Crump Chair- Cllr C Brazier-Cllr M Corley
Cllr S Hall

Clerk; Mr J E Dean

Public Attendance- There were no public present

The meeting opened at 8pm

1. APOLOGIES

Cllr J Day- Cllr G Rump Cllr P Reeves

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST- ITEMS ON THE AGENDA

No Declarations of interest.

3. COMMONS STEWARDSHIP-PUBLIC CONSULTATION

3a-Clerk Report

The Chair invited the Clerk to present the results of the recent final public survey on the issues surrounding the Commons Stewardship consideration by this Council. A great deal of past debate in full council meetings together with two public meetings which produced two opposing views, both transcripts were available with the public consultation document. The survey requested opinions on the keeping of sheep and cattle in the Furze Field and Park Corner. It asked opinions, both for-! & against-!!. The results were produced into an opinion graph, clearly showing a close division-25 for and 26 against, with 2 undecided. Six letters were received including Cllr Reeves who agreed the ecological issue was paramount for the future of the common. This was also supported by past presentations from various countryside organisations. It was clear in the opinion that even as a close run issue members should consider this carefully, the future of the common, its environs, nature, self maturing, eco issues. The Clerk added that much of the responses and the view on the past public meeting was that the public had misunderstood the council intentions, only a small part of the common would be used in Furze Field, this for a short March- November period. Dog exercise would not be affected only near a pen where leads should always be used, if this was on the Furze Field area then it had little inconvenience.

3b The Debate

Cllr Hall added his opinion that the presentation from Mr Moss at the July public meeting had more than convinced him to share this view. Cllr Corley also agreed and made the comment that sheep be preferable to cattle, that the fencing is rotated or moved with only Furze Field be used, say 7 acres out of 67 would have little effect on the denial of public access issue. Cllr Reeves comments were noted along with the

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other letters sent in with the responses. The Chair invited Cllr Brazier to make some comments, being the member responsible for the original introduction of this idea.

3b-The Debate-continued

He said that the question of the future of the common was a very emotive matter with many people, not all of the common would be used, and it was clear sheep not cattle would be best. The Council could not continue with the level of precept revenue to have adequate funds to keep to the ultimate commons management level required. Our present style of upkeep was just adequate. Sheep would keep the grass down and provide additional benefits to the environment already mentioned. Fencing would not ever encroach the whole common, that rumour was a misnomer. Costs of fencing would be partly borne by the DEFRA award, remainder would come from a past commons reserve budget. He urged members to go ahead with the project, a breed of coarse wool sheep that has little fear affinity to dogs could with advice be chosen.

3c RESOLUTION

The Chairman asked for a proposal to agree to the project-To go ahead with the sheep grazing on Furze Field for a period,


Proposed by Cllr Brazier

Seconded Cllr Hall

The proposal was agreed

The Chair stated that work was required to start on the common as soon as possible to eradicate areas of weed, thistle and ragwort, and to begin the preparation of the area. The Clerk asked for help with finding a suitable contractor, following the knowledge that Cllr Brazier had acquired on the project prior to his engagement as Clerk. Cllr Brazier agreed to pass names and details to the office.

There being no further issues on the subject the meeting closed at 8.25


John Dean

Clerk to the Council

