FIRLE PARISH COUNCIL

DRAFT MINUTES OF THE ORDINARY MEETING OF FIRLE PARISH COUNCIL: Tuesday 13th October 2026, 7pm, Firle Village Hall. **Members in Attendance:** Cllr Hill (Chair), Cllr Barr (Vice-Chair), Cllr Lance, Cllr James, Cllr Symes. **Members not in Attendance:** 0 **Others Present:** Lorna Thwaites, Clerk and RFO. **Members of the Public in Attendance:** 7 **Questions Received from the Public:** None.

1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:** None received.
2. **NO DECLARATIONS OF ANY INTERESTS were made and NO REQUESTS FOR A DISPENSATION WITH RESPECT TO ITEMS ON THE AGENDA**, as required by the Members Code of Conduct. Cllr Barr declared an non prejudicial interest in item 10.1.
3. **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING:** The minutes of the ordinary meeting of Firle Parish Council held on 8th Sept 2026 were RESOLVED to be a correct record and were signed by the Chair.
4. **FINANCE & ADMIN:**
   - 4.1 The October finance report and bank reconciliation were RECEIVED and SIGNED and payments to be made were AUTHORISED.
   - 4.2 The Council AGREED that the direction of the 2027/8 budget would be following the current strategy and initial precept thoughts were a small increase as per last year.
   - 4.3 The Clerk's leave request was AGREED.
5. **GRANT AWARDS:** None received.
6. **REPORT(S):**
   - 6.1 Reports were RECEIVED and NOTED from Cllr O'Brien and James MacCleary, MP for Lewes.
   - 6.2 The presentations from the SDNPA Parishes Meeting of 30 September 2026 were RECEIVED and NOTED.
7. **CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED:**
   - 7.1 From low(er) Traffic Lewes to a Movement Strategy to a Master Plan for Lewes (28 Oct): NOTED, no councillors can attend.
   - 7.2 6 May 2027 Local Elections Estimated Costs – LDC: The estimated costs of £2020 were NOTED and will be allowed for in the 2027/8 budget.
   - 7.3 Government Policy Change Forces pause and review of Lewes Local Plan – LDC: NOTED.
8. **MATTERS ARISING:**
   - 8.1 Action AGREED to update the Firle Emergency Plan: The plan will be put on the agenda for next month; the Clerk was asked to prepare a template.
   - 8.2 The litter bin ordered for the Cricket Ground is now in place and the wood will be replaced by LDC with a concrete foundation; the Council AGREED to allocate the cost to CIL funding.
   - 8.3 Letters have been sent to residents regarding overgrown foliage: Cllr Hill will speak to the homeowner where overgrowth is forcing bikes into the middle of the road and Cllr Lance will check the other work done and confirm to Cllr Hill.
   - 8.4 An update on proposed speed reduction measures around Firle Primary School was RECEVIED: The question of speed around the school was put to James MacCleary MP at his Q&A session; Mr MacCleary advised the ESCC Transport lead has changed and he will investigate if there will be a change in emphasis on speed limits around schools; the Clerk will follow up; the Council NOTED that it had done a speed survey several years ago.
   - 8.5 Cllr Lance shared further information regarding a sewage leak at Cornes Cottage, the Dock: The non-return valve has been cleared and there has been no re-occurrence; there is no regular maintenance schedule, so it needs to be monitored.
   - 8.6 An update on the playing fields proposal was RECEIVED: A discussion has been had since the last fete and the suggestion of siting a storage container behind the machinery shed was SUPPORTED by the Council.
9. **HIGHWAYS:**
   - 9.1 The reported faded road markings by Firle Primary School are now on the ESH schedule to be re-painted; Cllr Lance will request that the Give Way markings at the end of the Bostal are also re-painted; the speed sign caught by the hedgecutter has been reported.
10. **PLANNING APPLICATIONS:** Comments Agreed:

10.1 **SDNP/26/03416/FUL: Proposal:** Change of use of an agricultural barn to a bakery (Class B2) and brewery storage (Class B8) with building alterations including internal subdivision, the creation of a new vehicular access, car parking and associated landscaping; **Location:** Place Farm, The Street, Firle, East Sussex, BN8 6LP (comments by 16th Oct): Councillors shared their thoughts on the application and the Chair granted permission for members of the public to make representations on the application during this agenda item. The Council RESOLVED to OBJECT to the application; the main concern is traffic along the by-way and along the street and concerns about any future expansion; it was felt that the application had not considered traffic resulting from the change of use to the buildings behind; the Council AGREED that Cllr Hill will prepare a detailed statement of comments for submission and that this will be circulated to Council Members for approval prior to submission to SDNPA Planning.

11. **ITEMS AGREED FOR THE PARISH MAGAZINE:** Update on the Q&A with James MacCleary –biosolids spreading; speed limit around the school; full fibre broadband for the village; the questions on solar panels and barn conversions received; information on the UK Defence strategy; and concerns about rogue AI.

12. **AGENDA ITEMS FOR THE NEXT ORDINARY MEETING OF FIRLE PARISH COUNCIL:** Leaf sweeping.

13. **THE TIME AND DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING OF FIRLE PARISH COUNCIL:** 10th November, 7pm.

14. **THE MEETING CLOSED** at 20.44.