

MINUTES OF THE EXTRAORDINARY MEETING OF FIRLE PARISH COUNCIL held on Tuesday 25th June 2024, 7.06pm in Firle Village Hall.

Members of the Public in Attendance: None.

Questions RECEIVED from the Public: None.

Members in Attendance: Cllr Hill (Chair), Cllr Barr (Vice-Chair), Cllr Lance.

Members not in Attendance: Cllr Symes and Cllr Bolger.

Others Present: Lorna Thwaites, Clerk and RFO.

1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE** were RECEIVED and ACCEPTED from Cllrs Symes and Bolger.
2. **NO DECLARATIONS OF ANY INTERESTS OR REQUESTS FOR A DISPENSATION WERE MADE WITH RESPECT TO ITEMS ON THE AGENDA**, as required by the Members Code of Conduct.
3. **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING:** The minutes of the ordinary meeting of Firle Parish Council held on 14th May 2024 were RESOLVED to be a correct record and were signed by the Chair.
4. **TO SIGN THE LEGAL AGREEMENT WITH FIRLE VILLAGE HALL AND PLAYING FIELDS:** DEFERRED - the Chair of FVHPFC was unable to attend.
5. **FINANCE:**
 - 5.1 Payments to be made were AUTHORISED and the bank reconciliation was RECEIVED: The Council RESOLVED to allow invoices to be approved via email in July and August, subject to no meetings being held.
 - 5.2 The Council RESOLVED to pay the Clerk for additional hours worked to complete the internal and external audits; the Council expressed its thanks to the Clerk for this work.
6. **ANNUAL GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY RETURN (AGAR):**
 - 6.1 The Internal Audit Report 2023/24 from Mulberry and Co was RECEIVED; the Council NOTED that there were no actions or recommendations to follow and that in the opinion of the auditor the systems and internal procedures of Firle Parish Council are well established and followed; for best practice, the Council AGREED it would seek alternative quotes for the internal audit having appointed Mulberry for the last 3 years.
 - 6.2 The Clerk and Chair SIGNED the Annual Internal Audit Report 2023/24.
 - 6.3 The Clerk and Chair SIGNED Sections 1 and 2 and the Certificate of Exemption 2023/24 - AGAR Form 2.
7. **REPORT(S):**
 - 7.1 Reports RECEIVED from Local and District Councillors and the MP for Lewes: An email was received from Cllr Denis which forwarded correspondence from the new Highways Steward; the Steward recently visited Firle and listed actions he will undertake regarding the pothole and drainage issues in the village; the Clerk was asked to email both Cllr Denis and the Highways Steward to thank them for their attention to these matters; Cllr Barr offered to meet with the Highways Steward and the Clerk was asked to forward his contact details; Cllr Barr raised the issue of the drain by the Brewery; the Council AGREED that the next time that the drain was overflowing Cllr Barr would speak with the Brewery and the Highways Steward; the Council NOTED Cllr Barr's recommendation that the ditch on New Elms side of Bostal Road needs clearing out by the farmers as when it is full the water overflows onto the road; the Council AGREED that the Clerk should email Mr W. Hex and Mr J. Gribble requesting they undertake this work; the Council will continue to monitor the remaining potholes and what is believed to be a collapsed drain on the Bostal Road (near houses 44 - 46); the Council discussed that the field drain behind these houses is not big enough to allow the water to sufficiently drain before reaching the road.
8. **CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED:**
 - 8.1 Complaint A27 Firle: A local resident has forwarded correspondence to Cllr Hill detailing his concerns with the safety of the A27 crossing; Surrey Police visited the crossing and submitted their findings to National Highways; the Clerk was asked to contact the resident to ask if he has received a response from National Highways and to ask him to keep a log of any incidents that he witnesses at the crossing.
 - 8.2 Safety of Lithium ion Batteries and e-bikes and scooters: The Council RESOLVED to support the campaign.
 - 8.3 Defibrillator: Thanks, from the VHPFC were RECEIVED and NOTED; the Council stated their concern about the need for defibrillator training.
 - 8.4 Phase 4 – Refuse Wheelie Bin Roll-out Reminder: NOTED.
 - 8.5 2024-5 Payroll Fees: Knill James are increasing their fees by 15% from 01 July 2024. The Clerk asked to obtain alternative quotes for payroll services.

9. MATTERS ARISING:

- 9.1 An update on the installation of the parking restriction signs to be placed on the wall of The Cottage was RECEIVED: Chilli Graphics have been emailed to proceed with the sign production but no response has been received; the Clerk will chase; Cllr Barr showed the Council a leaflet requesting that vehicles do not park on the pavement; the Clerk was asked to contact ESCC if they have further leaflets available.
- 9.2 Updates on the warning signs installed, including Wick Street were RECEIVED: Cllr Lance AGREED to check if the signs have been installed on South Heighton Street.
- 9.3 The Council AGREED there were no further actions to be taken with respect to completing a Village Design Statement: The Council AGREED that a statement wasn't appropriate for Firle as Firle Estate are the landowner; the Council discussed the recent Firle Estate public meeting, attended by all Councillor Members; Firle Estate confirmed at the meeting that Permitted Development for the New Elms Micro Brewery had been granted; the Council NOTED it would like to work with Firle Estate if parking issues arise from customers attending the micro-brewery.
- 9.4 The Council RESOLVED to request FOI data on the A27 Survey from Maria Caulfield, MP for Lewes: The Clerk was asked to contact Maria Caulfield for the survey results detailed in the pamphlet.

10. HIGHWAYS:

- 10.1 An update on the quote and repairs required to the bus shelter at Crossways was RECEIVED: The repairs are complete except the waterproofing; the invoice hasn't yet been received.
- 10.2 An update from Cllr Denis on the drainage problems and potholes in the Parish after the meeting he attended with Balfour Beatty was RECEIVED: The correspondence received from Cllr Denis was discussed under item 7.1.
- 10.3 An update on further actions taken regarding the dangerous verge-side potholes along Ripe Lane was RECEIVED: This was discussed under item 7.1 and the Council NOTED that ESH have agreed to monitor.
- 10.4 An update further to the Clerk contacting Southern Water regarding the sewage pollution along Wick Street was RECEIVED: The Clerk is to follow up with Southern Water to explain that each year sewage leaks onto Wick Street; previous visits by Southern Water suggest that this is from surface water coming into the sewer from the Park; Southern Water were undertaking a survey with a completion date of May 2024; Cllr Barr suggested the problem could be that the sewer pipe passing under the A27 might be blocked and causing the leak onto Wick Street; the surface water drain is also not working properly.

11. PLANNING APPLICATIONS:

- 11.1 **Proposal:** Ash (T1) - Fell to ground level, showing signs of Ash Dieback Ash (T2) - Fell to ground level, showing signs of Ash Dieback: **Location:** Preston House , Wick Street, Firle, East Sussex, BN8 6LG: Firle Parish Council **AGREED to SUPPORT.**

12. PROJECTS:

12.1 School Footpath

- 12.1.1 An update on further discussions was RECEIVED: Cllr Hill will submit a DINPP request (Do I Need Planning Permission) via the SDNP website; the response will be shared with the Council when received.

12.2 Assets of Community Value

- 12.2.1 An update on the progress of nominating the Ram Inn as an Asset of Community Value was RECEIVED: Lewes District Council require supporting information detailing clubs and societies that use the Ram Inn; Cllr Lance will compile and send to LDC by the deadline of 28th June; LDC will reach a decision by 9th July 2024.

13. NO ITEMS WERE AGREED FOR THE PARISH MAGAZINE.

14. NO AGENDA ITEMS FOR THE NEXT ORDINARY MEETING OF FIRLE PARISH COUNCIL were proposed.

15. THE TIME AND DATE OF THE NEXT ORDINARY MEETING OF FIRLE PARISH COUNCIL was RECEIVED as Tuesday 10th September 2024, 7pm Firle Village Hall; the Council RESOLVED to cancel the ordinary meeting of 9th July but if business requires, an extraordinary meeting will be called for 6th August 2024.

16. THE MEETING CLOSED at 20.57.