

FIRLE PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE ORDINARY MEETING OF FIRLE PARISH COUNCIL held on Tuesday 10th September 2024, 7.03pm in Firle Village Hall.

Members of the Public in Attendance: 1 – the Village Hall Secretary for several minutes at the start of the meeting.

Questions RECEIVED from the Public: None.

Members in Attendance: Cllr Hill (Chair), Cllr Barr (Vice-Chair), Cllr Lance, Cllr Bolger (arrived 19.25).

Members not in Attendance: Cllr Symes. **Others Present:** Lorna Thwaites, Clerk and RFO.

1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:** RECEIVED and ACCEPTED from Cllr Symes.
2. **DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS WERE RECEIVED BUT NO REQUESTS FOR A DISPENSATION WITH RESPECT TO ITEMS ON THE AGENDA WERE MADE,** as required by the Members Code of Conduct: Agenda item 5.2: Cllr Barr is a member of the Firle Bonfire Society; Agenda item 8.2 - Cllrs Hill and Barr are members of the Firle Tree Planting Initiative.
3. **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING:** The minutes of the extraordinary meeting of Firle Parish Council held on 25th June 2024 were RESOLVED to be a correct record and were signed by the Chairman.
4. **THE LEGAL AGREEMENT WITH FIRLE VILLAGE HALL AND PLAYING FIELDS** was SIGNED by the Chair of Firle Parish Council and the Hall Secretary.
5. **FINANCE & ADMIN:**
 - 5.1 Payments made in July and August were RATIFIED and the bank reconciliations was SIGNED.
 - 5.2 Payments to be made in September were AUTHORISED with the following AGREED: the Council had not received a grant application from Firle Bonfire Society for D Day Fireworks but had set aside £500 for the display; the Council RESOLVED to contribute £500 towards these fireworks; the Clerk was asked to request Firle Bonfire Society to send invoices within 60 days of any event that has been agreed with the Council by way of a grant application; the Council also AGREED that Firle Bonfire Society should invoice the maroon provision annually at the end of November.
 - 5.3 A summary of spend vs budget 2024-2025 was RECEIVED.
 - 5.4 The Council RESOLVED to appoint Mulberry and Co as their Internal Auditor for 2024-2025 for 3 years.
 - 5.5 The Council RESOLVED to appoint Team4Solutions as its payroll provider and to give notice to the incumbent payroll provider.
 - 5.6 Notification of exempt status for the external audit 2024 was RECEIVED from PKF Littlejohn.
6. **REPORT(S):**
 - 6.1 A report was received from Cllr Lucy Agace, and apologies were received from Cllrs Denis and O'Brien.
7. **CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED:**
 - 7.1 Town and Parish Council Info on Lewes District Council's website: Councillors CONFIRMED their details.
 - 7.2 Firle Top and Firle Beacon Car Park Request – Martin Mitev, Parking Review Officer: Firle Parish Council has been asked to clarify their requirements of the review; the Council NOTED there have been some issues with users parking on the verges to avoid paying the Firle Beacon car park charge; this can causes problems for vehicles using the road particularly two vehicles trying to pass; the Council AGREED to write to Firle Estate advising of the issues and to request their support by intalling no parking signs.
 - 7.3 Urban Mowing 2025 – Countrymans: The Council AGREED that no quote is required from Countrymans and NOTED the rolling agreement with ESCC for urban cuts.
 - 7.4 ESALC Training Dates – Emily Simpson, ESALC: NOTED but no training to be booked.
 - 7.5 Response to NPPF report – ESALC: The response has been completed; no further action to be taken.
 - 7.6 Further £1m on improving the roads in East Sussex – Cllr Claire Dowling: NOTED – the Council discussed the patching work that had been undertaken in Firle to fill potholes and repair the roads.
 - 7.7 Sensitive Interests Letter to LA's – ESALC: NOTED.
 - 7.8 Response to the Government consultation to the new NPPF – Sarah Lawrence: The Clerk was asked to draft a letter of support and to circulate to the parish council for approval.
 - 7.9 New Chief Executive for SDNP: NOTED.
 - 7.10 Invitation to SDNPA Parish Meeting – 2nd October 2024: Cllrs Hill and Bolger AGREED to attend.
 - 7.11 Proposed Tree in Cricket Field: The Council NOTED the request of the WI to plant a small oak tree on the perimeter of the cricket field and agreed to include this on the agenda next month; the Council discussed the importance of choosing the correct place to plant the tree.
8. **MATTERS ARISING:**

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- 8.1 An update on the parking restriction signs for the wall of The Cottage was RECEIVED: the signs are not yet installed but will be done by the next meeting.
- 8.2 The Council RESOLVED to fund 2 mows per year of the Millennium Woods: One cut has already been undertaken and the Council will fund the second hire of the brush cutter for Autumn 2024; the Council would like to see the woods maintained for biodiversity with cuts undertaken in Spring and Autumn and cuttings gathered up; the Clerk will email Mike Hall and Caroline Lovett confirming 2 mows per year and how Firle Parish Council would like to see the woods maintained for bio diversity.

Cllr Bolger left the meeting at 20.13

9. HIGHWAYS:

- 9.1 An update on the response of the new Highways Steward to arranging a meeting with Cllr Barr was RECEIVED: Cllr Barr hasn't had any contact from the Steward but the Council NOTED that a lot of work has recently been undertaken in Firle; a collapsed drain was identified but repairs were not possible with a parked car blocking the drain; Cllr Barr asked the Clerk to email the Highways Steward providing his contact details so he can be contacted in advance of any further work.
- 9.2 The response of ESH to overhanging branches from Wick Street East (HED002758) was RECEIVED: ESH have advised that the A26 isn't owned or maintained by ESCC; Cllr Barr will confirm to the Clerk if the branches are still overhanging and causing a problem.
- 9.3 An update on the clearing of the ditch on the New Elms side of Bostal Road was RECEIVED: The ditches have been cleared by Firle Estate who have dug a ditch and installed a drain; one of the ditches was blocked with rubbish and building materials which has now been cleared.
- 9.4 An update on the invoice for the work done to the Crossways bus shelter was RECEIVED: Cllr Barr gave an estimate and invoice to the Clerk and the Council confirmed it would like to proceed with the waterproofing treatment; the Clerk will email the contractor and Cllr Barr will confirm via phone.
- 9.5 An update on reporting the verge-side potholes along Ripe Lane (POT025738): The following response was RECEIVED from ESH: Our Steward has visited the site and has found that the pothole does not require repairs at this time based on the council's investigatory levels. The Council NOTED their disappointment.
- Cllr Bolger returned at 20.27*
- 9.6 An update on the email sent to Claire Colburn, Southern Water re Wick Street sewage: No response has been received; the Clerk was asked to contact James McCleary MP to highlight the problem and to raise the concern that Wick Street is part of the new cycle path.
- 9.7 An update on the damaged Wick Street sign reported to ESH (SIG001295): This has now been repaired.
- 9.8 An update on the re-painting of the zig-zag markings outside of Firle Primary School (RML1863) was RECEIVED: A job has been raised by ESH to have this work carried out.
- 9.9 To RESOLVE to request ESH to revisit and repair the broken drain on Bostal Road and to give notice of the repair date: ESH have identified the broken drain but could not repair it as it was blocked by a parked car.

10. PLANNING APPLICATIONS: To AGREE comments for any applications received: NONE received.

11. PROJECTS:

11.1 School Footpath

- 11.1.1 An update on the DINPP request was RECEIVED: Cllr Hill will complete the request.
- 11.1.2 To RECEIVE the date of the CIL Expressions of Interest for LDC as 18th November 2024. NOTED.

11.2 Assets of Community Value

- 11.2.1 An update on the Ram Inn as an Asset of Community Value was RECEIVED: The application was successful, and Cllr Lance was thanked for her work on this.
- 11.2.2 The next Asset AGREED for nomination was Firle Playing Fields Area.

12. ITEMS AGREED FOR THE PARISH MAGAZINE. The repair of potholes, drains by ESH and the painting of lines by Firle Primary School; The Ram Inn as an ACV and Firle Playing Fields to be nominated next with Firle Allotments following; the Crossways bus shelter repairs; grant awards for the fencing of the playing fields; funding the hire of a brush cutter for twice yearly cuts of the Millennium Woods; funding the maroons on Remembrance Day and purchase of a Poppy Wreath.

13. NO AGENDA ITEMS PROPOSED FOR THE NEXT ORDINARY MEETING OF FIRLE PARISH COUNCIL.

14. THE TIME AND DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING OF FIRLE PARISH COUNCIL was RECEIVED as Tuesday 8th October 2024, 7pm in Firle Village Hall; Cllr Lance submitted her apologies for this meeting.

15. THE MEETING CLOSED at 20.45.