

FIRLE PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE ORDINARY MEETING OF FIRLE PARISH COUNCIL: Tuesday 11th March 2025, 7.02pm

Firle Village Hall.

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

Members not in Attendance: Cllrs Bolger and Lance **Others Present:** Lorna Thwaites, Clerk and RFO.

Members of the Public in Attendance: 1 (representing Firle Bonfire Society).

Questions RECEIVED from the Public: Firle Bonfire Society would like to discuss the access to the playing field and how to make the playing field accessible all year round; they would like to see a better entrance (currently a large pothole is at the entrance) and better access routes including to the play area for pushchairs and wheelchairs; a request was made to the Parish Council to support this idea and potentially with funding; it is felt that other community groups may want to be involved; the Council NOTED that it is on the agenda for the next FVHPFC meeting.

Firework provision for VE Day 80: Firle Bonfire Society shared concerns of the increasing costs of fireworks displays and that the D Day fireworks cost more than the grant awarded by the Parish Council; the Bonfire Society would like to ask the Parish Council if they could fund this shortfall; the Bonfire Society will light the beacon for VE Day 80 if required.

1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:** RECEIVED and ACCEPTED from Cllrs Lance and Bolger.
2. **DECLARATIONS OF ANY INTERESTS WERE MADE BUT NO REQUESTS FOR A DISPENSATION WITH RESPECT TO ITEMS ON THE AGENDA,** as required by the Members Code of Conduct: All Councillors at the meeting are members of Firle Bonfire Society.
3. **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING:** The minutes of the ordinary meeting of Firle Parish Council held on 11th February 2025 were RESOLVED as a correct record and were signed by the Chair.
4. **FINANCE & ADMIN:**
 - 4.1 Payments to be made in March were AUTHORISED and the bank reconciliation RECEIVED and SIGNED.
 - 4.2 The format for the Annual Parish Meeting to be held on Tuesday 13th May 2025 was DISCUSSED: The Clerk will update the presentation and prepare the agenda.
5. **GRANT AWARDS:**
 - 5.1 Firle Primary School: An award of £276 was AGREED.
 - 5.2 VE Day 80: The Council AGREED that they would like the beacon to be lit; the Clerk will advise Firle Bonfire Society that no fireworks are required but request the Beacon is lit; the Council AGREED to discuss the additional £150 incurred by the Bonfire Society for D Day fireworks, at their April meeting.
6. **REPORT(S):**
 - 6.1 Reports from Local and District Councillors and the MP for Lewes were RECEIVED and NOTED.
 - 6.2 A report on the meeting with Firle Estate regarding the village car park was RECEIVED: Firle Estate asked Cllr Hill to meet to discuss the car park; Firle Estate are considering changing the signage at the entrance to the car park to advertise that it is a free car park, and adding extra spaces into the car park; it was discussed that often motorists see the car park is full at the entrance and as such don't use it; it was raised that the Firle Community website received emails from people who have been fined at the car park at Firle Top, which are forwarded to Firle Estate; it was noted that many of the visitors using the car park are attending the pub; the agreement with Firle Estate is that they will maintain the car park twice a year; Cllr Barr advised the temporary car park will be opened at Easter if dry enough.
7. **CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED:**
 - 7.1 Devolution Briefing, 14th March – ESALC: NOTED; no cllrs can attend.
 - 7.2 Thank you – Firle Village Hall: Thanks were RECEIVED for the donation for the Christmas Raffle.
 - 7.3 East Sussex Rights of Way Action Plan: COMPLETED by Cllrs Symes and Barr.
 - 7.4 Summer visit from James MacCleary M.P.: The Council proposed mid-July, preferably Tuesday 15th July; the Clerk was asked to confirm if a July date is available for the visit.
 - 7.5 Road works A27: The Council NOTED the lack of communication regarding the closure of the A27, for road resurfacing between the Beddingham roundabout to Berwick, and the impact this had on residents accessing or leaving the village as well as scheduled events held in the village; the Council were aware of one Firle resident who received a letter (dated 3rd March) advising of the road works planned for 7th and 8th March; the Clerk was asked to contact National Highways to advise of the problems occurred through lack of notification.
8. **MATTERS ARISING:**

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- 8.1 An update on repairs to the noticeboard by Firle Primary School was RECEIVED: Cllrs Symes and Hill have mended the noticeboard, and it has also been treated for woodworm; the Clerk will inform the school; thanks were expressed to Cllrs Symes and Hill for their work.
- 8.2 An update on the completion of the SDNP Local Plan Consultation was RECEIVED: The consultation has been COMPLETED; the Clerk will contact Emily O'Brien to give her the view of Firle Parish Council - that there is a need for 100% affordable housing within the Southdown National Park as families cannot afford to live within the area and this has an impact on local schools; local builders and community land trusts could manage these projects but land needs to be put forward by landowners at affordable prices.
- 8.3 The management of the Millennium Wood was DISCUSSED: The works undertaken look very good; the aim is to cut the grass in October and for it to be done twice a year; there has been a suggestion that a sauna be placed on the Millennium Wood; whilst permission would need to be gained from Firle Estate, Firle Parish Council consider it could be a fire hazard and that there would be public liability implications; the Council AGREED to add Millennium Woods to the list of ACV applications.

9. HIGHWAYS:

- 9.1 Cllr Lance will report the pothole outside the village hall.
- 9.2 The repairs to the telescopic bollards by the Rights of Way team are now complete.

10. PLANNING APPLICATIONS/TREE WORKS: None received.

11. PROJECTS:

11.1 Assets of Community Value

- 11.1.1 No update on the nomination of Firle Playing Fields Area as an ACV has been received.

12. ITEMS AGREED FOR THE PARISH MAGAZINE: The Annual Parish Meeting; the visit of James MacCleary M.P.; the Grant Award to Firle Primary School; consultations completed – SDNP Local Plan and Rights of Way.

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

14. THE TIME AND DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING OF FIRLE PARISH COUNCIL: Tuesday 8th April, 7pm Firle Village Hall.

15. THE MEETING CLOSED at 20.21.