

FIRLE PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE ORDINARY MEETING OF FIRLE PARISH COUNCIL: Tuesday 9th December 2025, 7.04pm, Firle Village Hall. **Members in Attendance:** Cllr Hill (Chair), Cllr Barr (Vice Chair), Cllr Lance, Cllr Symes. **Members not in Attendance:** Cllr Bolger. **Others Present:** Lorna Thwaites, Clerk and RFO. **Members of the Public in Attendance:** None. **Questions Received from the Public:** None.

1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:** RECEIVED and ACCEPTED from Cllr Bolger.
2. **NO DECLARATIONS OF ANY INTERESTS MADE AND NO REQUESTS TO CONSIDER FOR A DISPENSATION 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 11th November 2025 were RESOLVED to be a correct record and signed by the Chair.
4. **FINANCE/ADMIN:**
 - 4.1 Payments to be made in December were AUTHORISED and the bank reconciliation RECEIVED and SIGNED; the Council AGREED to donate £100 for the Christmas hamper - FVHPFC raffle.
5. **BUDGET 2026-27:**
 - 5.1 The budget (second draft) was AGREED, and the Council RESOLVED a precept of £12,678 for 2026-2027.
 - 5.2 The allocation of reserves for 2026-2027 was DISCUSSED and they are to remain as currently allocated.
6. **THE LEGAL AGREEMENT WITH FIRLE VILLAGE HALL AND PLAYING FIELDS** was SIGNED by the Chair, Cllr Hill.
7. **TO AGREE ANY COMMENTS REGARDING THE WHOLE ESTATE PLAN – FIRLE ESTATE: DEFER.**
8. **REPORT(S):**
 - 8.1 Reports were RECEIVED and NOTED from James MacCleary MP and Cllr Denis.
9. **MATTERS ARISING:**
 - 9.1 Responses to the letters and emails sent from Firle Parish Council with regards to Biosolids were RECEIVED and NOTED from Southern Water and Firle Estate; the Council AGREED that it had done what it could to investigate the issue and communicate with the farmers; Cllrs AGREED the content of the letter to James MacCleary, MP and the Clerk will send via email.
 - 9.2 Four dog fouling warning signs to use in parts of the village have been delivered and will be put up on the playing fields; an article will be put in the parish magazine, advising people to email the Clerk if any are required for specific areas; it was AGREED that Cllr Barr will hang deterrent signs on several gates.
 - 9.3 No response yet received to the email sent to Firle Bonfire Society; defer to the January meeting.
 - 9.4 The Council RESOLVED to select Option 1, Standard cuts with ESCC for urban grass cutting 2026-27: The Council NOTED that orchids are growing up the hill by the car park and they would like that area to be maintained for the wildflowers and orchids; this area was once designated as a wildflower verge; a request will be made to ESCC to cut after the orchids have flowered and not whilst in bloom.
10. **CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED:**
 - 10.1 Update on SDNP Planning in Lewes District – SDNPA: NOTED.
 - 10.2 Consultation on Local Government re-organisation – LDC: AGREED to support option one: The proposal by Lewes District Council, Eastbourne Borough Council, East Sussex County Council, Hastings Borough Council, and Rother District Council - one unitary council for the current East Sussex County footprint; the Clerk will email the response of the Parish Council.
 - 10.3 Tree Warden Training – ESCC: NOTED.
 - 10.4 Consultation on a South Downs National Park Technical Advice Notice – Retrofitting Historic Buildings for Energy Efficiency: NOTED.
 - 10.5 Tea for volunteers: No nominations to be put forward.
11. **HIGHWAYS:**
 - 11.1 The blocked drains by Redwood Cottage in Wick Street were reported to ESH who have advised that they are the responsibility of SouthEast Water and that they have referred the issue to them to carry out the repairs; Cllr Barr to follow up with SouthEast water.
 - 11.2 The repairs to The Street sign will be replaced by ESCC but it may take several weeks; Cllr Barr advised the BOAT road is still open and the closed signs are not in place; the Clerk to follow up.
12. **PLANNING: Applications Received:**
 - 12.1 The recommendation and comments agreed for **SDNP/25/04284/TCA** – Church House were RATIFIED.

12.2 SDNP/25/04538/TCA Proposal: T1. Willow- Remove Hazard Beams and Dead Branches and Reduce & Reshape Canopy by 4m. T2. Holly- Crown Lift to 2.5m AGL, Crown Reduce & Reshape by 1.5m. T3. Elder- Dead Stems: Fell & Remove. Replace with Malus or Prunus. T4. Ash- Crown Reduction by 3m & Remove Limb (0.5m-South). **Location:** 29A The Street, Firle, East Sussex, BN8 6NS (comments by 12 Dec 25). AGREED NEUTRAL.

13. PROJECTS:

13.1 Footpath

13.1.1 The possibility of re-instating the footpath on the western side of The Street was raised: The Council discussed who owns the verges and AGREED for Cllr Barr to investigate further to see if there is any existence of a footpath below the verges.

13.2 Assets of Community Value

13.2.1 The nomination of the Millennium Woods and the Allotments as an ACV has been submitted.

14. ITEMS AGREED FOR THE PARISH MAGAZINE: Dog Fouling signs; link to the Whole Estate Plan; Bio solids and actions of the parish council; donation for the FVHPFC Christmas hamper.

15. THE TIME AND DATE OF THE NEXT ORDINARY MEETING OF FIRLE PARISH COUNCIL: 13th Jan 2026, 7pm

16. THE MEETING CLOSED at 21.05.