

FIRLE PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING OF FIRLE PARISH COUNCIL: Tuesday 13th May 2025, 8.00pm. Firle Village Hall.

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

Members not in Attendance: None. **Others Present:** Lorna Thwaites, Clerk and RFO.

Members of the Public in Attendance: 0

Questions Received from the Public: None.

1. ELECTION OF THE CHAIR:

1.1 Cllr Hill was elected as the Chair for Firle Parish Council for the forthcoming year.

1.2 The Chair, Cllr Hill SIGNED the Declaration of Office form.

2. ELECTION OF THE VICE-CHAIR. Cllr Barr was elected as the Vice-Chair.

3. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: None received.

4. DECLARATIONS OF ANY INTERESTS AND TO CONSIDER ANY REQUESTS FOR A DISPENSATION WITH RESPECT TO ITEMS ON THE AGENDA, as required by the Members Code of Conduct: None received.

5. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING: The minutes of the ordinary meeting of Firle Parish Council held on 11th March 2025 were RESOLVED to be a correct record and were signed by the Chair; the Clerk was asked to thank Firle Bonfire Society for lighting the Beacon on VE Day.

6. COMMITTEES AND WORKING GROUPS:

6.1 No committees or working groups were agreed.

6.2 The Council AGREED to retain the current individual areas of responsibility.

7. APPOINTMENTS TO OUTSIDE BODIES:

7.1 Councillor appointments to outside bodies were confirmed: Cllr Barr is the Chair for the FHVPC.

8. THE ELIGIBILITY OF THE COUNCIL WITH REGARDS TO MEETING THE CRITERIA FOR THE EXERCISE OF THE GENERAL POWER OF COMPETENCE was CONFIRMED.

9. THE FOLLOWING ORDERS, REGULATIONS AND POLICIES WERE RE-ADOPTED:

9.1 Standing Orders

9.2 Financial Regulations

9.3 Members Code of Conduct

9.4 Freedom of Information Policy

9.5 Complaints Procedure

9.6 Co-option Policy

9.7 Document Retention Scheme

9.8 Grant Awarding Policy

9.9 Risk Management Policy

9.10 Scheme of Delegation

9.11 Social Media Policy

10. TO CONFIRM ARRANGEMENTS AND LEGAL AGREEMENT WITH FIRLE VILLAGE HALL AND PLAYING FIELDS: Cllr Barr will put the legal agreement on the agenda of the next meeting with FVHPC.

11. INSURANCE COVER:

11.1 The Council RESOLVED to renew the insurance cover with Clear Councils by 01 June 2025 and to pay the annual premium, which has been reduced to £825.07.

12. FINANCE:

12.1 The Council RESOLVED to pay subscriptions, regular payments, and direct debits to other bodies as listed: Subscriptions to ESALC/NALC/LDALC/SLCC and CPRE; Direct Debits: Team 4 (payroll); ICO data protection; Standing Orders: ESPF Pension payments and Clerk's salary.

12.2 No changes were agreed to the current banking arrangements for the year or to nominated signatories.

12.3 Payments to be made in June were AUTHORISED and the bank reconciliation RECEIVED and SIGNED.

12.4 The Risk Assessment for 2025 – 2026 was AGREED.

12.5 The Council as NOTIFIED of the CIL Reporting Requirements for 2024/5, and the Clerk was asked to report back that the funds are ringfenced and will be allocated to infrastructure/assets as required.

13. GRANT AWARDS: None received.

14. ANNUAL GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY RETURN (AGAR):

14.1 The Internal Audit is scheduled for 28th May.

14.2 The Certificate of Exemption was SIGNED.

15. REPORT(S):

FIRLE PARISH COUNCIL

15.1 Reports from Local and District Councillors were RECEIVED at the earlier Annual Parish Meeting.

16. CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED:

16.1 The change to the ESH Stakeholder Liaison Team was RECEIVED and it was NOTED that the new customer liaison manager is Sam Crowhurst.

16.2 Lewes District Air Quality Action Plan: The Council agreed not to respond.

16.3 Sussex Police Rural Crime Team – Street Surgery Invitation: The Council discussed the issue with dirt bikers that has been reported; dates for surgeries will be advised once received.

16.4 Installation of Upgrades at Old Water Work site: The Council have responded to this application.

16.5 Health and Safety Concern – Firle Primary School: Firle Estate has written to the neighbours of Firle Primary School advising that if livestock are kept and bird feeders used, that food and grain is not left out which encourages rats; the Clerk was asked to contact the school to ask if pest control have been contacted and if any advice has been given.

17. MATTERS ARISING:

17.1 The Council RESOLVED to award £150 to the Firle Bonfire Society to cover the shortfall from 2024 events; the Clerk was asked to advise the Bonfire Society that grant applications must be received for any further funding awards for fireworks; the Clerk was asked to thank the Bonfire Society for lighting the beacon on VE Day 80.

17.2 James MacCleary M.P. Summer visit, Tuesday 12th August 6.30pm: The Council AGREED to promote in the parish magazine; Cllr Hill will advise the FCA and put on the village WhatsApp; the Clerk will put on the FPC website and Facebook page; it was NOTED that Cllrs Barr and Bolger may not be available to attend.

17.3 The response of Firle Parish Council to the proposed car park plan was AGREED: further to discussions with community groups, the consensus is that the playing field car park area should remain as it is currently; revised plans reflecting the views of the community have been requested.

18. HIGHWAYS:

18.1 Response from National Highways – A27 Road Closure: NOTED and the Council expressed its frustration that this has now happened several times.

18.2 A27 Drainage and Re-surfacing works. NOTED.

18.3 Pothole outside village hall: Cllr Lance AGREED to report.

19. PLANNING APPLICATIONS: To AGREE comments for any applications received:

19.1 **SDNP/25/01919/HOUS Proposal:** Erection of rear dormer to create enough headroom to use space as family bathroom and dressing area **Location:** Little Talland, The Street, Firle, East Sussex, BN8 6NT (comments by 9th June). The Clerk was asked to request an extension to 10th June.

20. PROJECTS:

20.1 Assets of Community Value (ACV):

20.1.1 Firle Playing Fields has been successfully nominated as an Asset of Community Value; thanks were given to Cllr Lance for her work on this application.

20.1.2 The nomination of the Millennium Woods as an ACV was discussed; Cllr Lance raised the specific criteria that is needed for asset nomination and how the application needs to demonstrate the asset's active contribution towards the local community; the use of the Millennium Woods was discussed, and Cllr Lance will make the application.

21. ITEMS AGREED FOR THE PARISH MAGAZINE. James MacCleary M.P. visit; ACVs; link to chair's report; re-election of chair and vice-chair.

22. AGENDA ITEMS PROPOSED FOR THE NEXT ORDINARY MEETING OF FIRLE PARISH COUNCIL: VJ day August 15th.

23. THE TIME AND DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING OF FIRLE PARISH COUNCIL was RECEIVED as 10th June 2025, 7pm Firle Village Hall.

24. THE MEETING CLOSED at 21.03.