

FIRLE PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE ORDINARY MEETING OF FIRLE PARISH COUNCIL

Tuesday 10th January 2023, 7.00pm in Firle Village Hall.

Members of the Public in Attendance: 1 – Bob Baines, Estate Director, Firle Estate (left at 19.45).

Questions RECEIVED from the Public: None.

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

Members not in Attendance: Cllr Gravett.

Others Present: Clerk and RFO Lorna Thwaites and Cllr Johnny Denis (left 20.11).

1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:** Were RECEIVED and ACCEPTED from Cllr Gravett; Cllr Gravett was wished all the best for a speedy recovery; Cllr Barr (Vice-Chair) chaired the meeting in Cllr Gravett's absence.
2. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:** None received.
3. **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING:** Held on 13th December 2022 were RESOLVED to be a correct record and were signed by the Cllr Barr (Vice-Chair); the minutes of 10th December were also signed as a correct record by Cllr Barr.
4. **REPORTS:**
 - 4.1 Were RECEIVED from Cllrs Denis and O'Brien and Maria Caulfield MP; the Clerk was asked to write to Cristina Bucur, Project Manager, RIP South A27 East of Lewes Scheme, to clarify the problems with the traffic island; Cllr Denis has also raised the issue of the lack of a safe path from the Toucan Crossing to Firle Primary School and has requested a discussion about applying for CIL to install a safe path; the withdrawal of transport entitlement for the children that live in Glynde and attend Firle Primary School was also raised by Cllr Denis.
 - 4.2 The correspondence regarding the A27 traffic island and foul water flooding was RECEIVED: The Council shared again its concerns over the lack of a traffic island on the A27, particularly at the Toucan Crossing where pedestrians are crossing the road; a council member highlighted his concerns when two lorries overtook his tractor on the hatching; Cllr Denis has asked for a meeting with Christina Bucur, Project Manager, A27 East of Lewes Scheme, as her email response did not alleviate his concerns or those of the Parish Council; the Council discussed the response from Southern Water regarding Gibraltar farm forwarded by Maria Caulfield MP; no further actions were agreed at this stage.
5. **REVIEW OF ARRANGEMENTS AND LEGAL AGREEMENT WITH FIRLE VILLAGE HALL AND PLAYING FIELDS:**
 - 5.1 An update from FVHPFC regarding the insurance cover, and maintenance/safety inspections was RECEIVED: Insurance is now in place and a schedule for maintenance/safety inspections has been sent to the Parish Council.
 - 5.2 Amendments to the FVHPFC Legal Agreement resulting from agenda item 5.1 were AGREED; the Clerk was asked to update the Agreement to be signed at the next meeting.
 - 5.3 No further actions were agreed resulting from agenda item 5.1.
6. **MATTERS ARISING:**
 - 6.1 An update from Firle Estate on their work to improve the state of the pavement from the shop down to the wishing well at the bottom of the Dock, which is covered in brambles and difficult to use was RECEIVED: Bob Baines, Firle Estate Director has asked for the work to be done but it is still pending.
 - 6.2 Cllr Denis will follow up regarding opening the public toilets at the Ram Inn.
 - 6.3 The Clerk was asked to contact LDC to remove the 2 large LDC wheelie bins in the Village Car Park which are full of rubbish.
 - 6.4 Potholes on Bostal Road to Crossways and by The Shire House have been reported by the Council.
 - 6.5 The Council requested ESH to clear out the drains at Crossways again to prevent further flooding; the drain near the bus stop does not clear and this causes a problem with ice and a hazard when coming out of Crossways.
7. **SUB LEASE OF PLAYING FIELDS TO FIRLE CRICKET CLUB:**
 - 7.1 The Clerk was asked to request an update on the Sublease with Firle Cricket Club.
 - 7.2 The Council DEFERED the adoption of the Sublease for Firle Cricket Club.
8. **FINANCE:**
 - 8.1 Payments to be made in January were APPROVED and the bank reconciliation was AUTHORISED and SIGNED.

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8.2 The budget for 2023-2024 was DISCUSSED and amends were AGREED; the LDC precept request form was signed.

9. CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED:

9.1 Lewes District Citizens Advice: The Council AGREED it would promote their services and invite them to submit a grant application.

9.2 Local Plan Review Update: NOTED, no further actions agreed.

9.3 Grit Bin refills: The grit bins are currently full, no further action required; the Council NOTED that the bins are for public use only and grit should not be taken for private use.

9.4 King Charles III: A card in response to the condolences sent by Firle Parish Council to King Charles III was RECEIVED and NOTED.

9.5 Glynde School bus: The Council NOTED that transport has been provided and funded by East Sussex County Council (ESCC) for 13 children living in Glynde attending Firle Primary School; this transport entitlement is being withdrawn by ESCC as the walked route from Glynde Village to Firle Primary has been assessed by the Road Safety Team and found to be safe; Cllr Denis is trying to get the Road Safety Team to reassess the route as there are concerns that it is not safe enough; the Council RESOLVED write a letter stating their concerns, to support the work that Cllr Denis is undertaking and to attend the proposed meeting with ESCC; the Council also discussed concerns over the drains that are flooding by the school bus stop at Crossways.

9.6 Planning Policy Consultation: The Council AGREED that available members would meet on 24th January, 6.30pm in the Selwood Room of the Village Hall to complete the consultation.

10. 20sPLENTY CAMPAIGN:

10.1 The Council AGREED that to progress the 20sPlenty Campaign in Firle it would look for volunteers who would manage the campaign; the Council are keen to support a campaign to lower the speed limit to 20mph; Cllr Hill AGREED to ask the FCA to put it on their agenda.

11. PLANNING APPLICATIONS:

11.1 To AGREE comments for any applications received:

11.1.1 SDNP 22/05784/TCA Location: Old Vicarage The Street Firle East Sussex BN8 6NR Proposal: T1: Mature Horse Chestnut - Reduce height and spread by approximately 3-5m, maximum 200cm diameter pruning wounds T2: Mature Austrian Pine - Reduce spread by approximately 2m to reduce wind load.

Comments AGREED: The Council AGREED to SUPPORT.

11.1.2 SDNP 22/03264/FUL Location: Firle Beacon Car Park South Downs Way Lewes BN8 6LR Proposal: Installation of pay machines, solar panels, CCTV and associated infrastructure.

Bob Baines, Firle Estate Director was asked to provide an overview of the application and questions were raised by Council Members; there is no lighting; the ANPR works at night with infrared; the car park is not expanding but an estimate for the number of cars was provided for the application; the tariff is not a planning matter but a higher longer stay charge has been set to discourage overnight parking; the road is a public road and therefore Firle Estate cannot prevent verge parking if visitors choose not to park in car park; a request was made to state no parking on the verges; the agricultural fencing will come closer to the road and reduce the verge size; a turning area is being created and a layby for tractors and large vehicles; the surface of the car park will remain as it is currently; the Estate wishes the car park to remain as unintrusive as possible; concerns were raised regarding the blocking of gateways.

Comments AGREED: The Council would like confirmation that there is no lighting at the car park and their concerns over gate blocking, parking on verges and larger vehicles limiting access and restricting traffic flow by parking outside of the car park should be NOTED; the verge is a designated wildlife verge with orchids; the Council is concerned that car park should remain of low visual impact. The Council RESOLVED to remain NEUTRAL.

Cllr Denis suggested the Council request a parking review specifically at the Firle Beacon.

11.1.3 SDNP 22/03265/ADV Location: Firle Beacon Car Park South Downs Way Lewes BN8 6LR Proposal: Installation of advertisements in relation to the continued use of the site as a car park, providing details of tariffs and terms of use – the signage board has an explanation and narrative about the facility and what the car park is funding.

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The initial application saw urban adverts – the Estate re commissioned and a sign that is aesthetically pleasing.

Comments Agreed: The Council RESOLVED to remain NEUTRAL.

- 11.1.4 SDNP 22/05967/LDE Location: The Workshop Heighton Street Firle Lewes East Sussex BN8 6NZ
Proposal: Construction of car storage building in relation to SDNP/19/04328/FUL has commenced
Comments AGREED: There is no evidence on the planning portal showing the start of the work and therefore the Council cannot make comments; the Council AGREED to request the evidence stated in the cover letter and an extension to the deadline so comments can be agreed at the next meeting.
12. **TO PROPOSE AGENDA ITEMS FOR THE NEXT ORDINARY MEETING OF FIRLE PARISH COUNCIL:** Repairs to the bus stop at the bottom of Heighton Street; Update on the Planning Policy Consultation; Update of 20sPlenty.
13. **TO RECEIVE THE TIME AND DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING OF FIRLE PARISH COUNCIL.** Tuesday 14th February, 7pm Firle Village Hall.
14. **THE MEETING CLOSED** at 20.58.