

FIRLE PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE ORDINARY MEETING OF FIRLE PARISH COUNCIL

Tuesday 12th April 2022, 7.00pm in Firle Village Hall

Members of the Public in Attendance: 0

Questions RECEIVED from the Public: None

Members in Attendance: Cllrs Gravett (Chairman), Cllr Hill, Cllr Bolger and Cllr Symes.

Others Present: Clerk and RFO Lorna Thwaites.

1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:** Apologies were RECEIVED and ACCEPTED from Cllr Barr.
2. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:** No declarations of interest in respect of items on the agenda, as required by the Members Code of Conduct were received.
3. **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING:** The minutes of the ordinary meeting of Firle Parish Council held on 8th March 2022 were RESOLVED to be a correct record and were signed by the Chairman. The minutes of the ordinary meeting of 8th February and the extraordinary meeting of 21st February 2022, as approved on 8th March 2022 (minute 3) were also signed by the Chairman.
4. **REPORT(S)**
 - 4.1 Reports from Local and District Councillors and the MP for Lewes were RECEIVED: The Council NOTED the update on the A27 plans and expressed the need to keep abreast of developments; the comments on the reluctance for County Councils to set 20mph speed zones was noted although the opinion of FPC Council Members is that there is a good case for 20mph by Firle Primary School.
 - 4.2 A brief report on the Cllr Planning Training attended by Cllrs Hill and Symes was RECEIVED: Slides from the training course have been circulated to Council Members by Cllr Hill; the Council NOTED the recommendation that all planning comments made by the Parish Council should reference the Local Plan and Neighbourhood Plan, where in existence; the Firle Neighbourhood Plan has been developed by Firle Estate and has been sent to SDNPA for adoption; Lewes District Council (LDC) are currently overwhelmed with planning applications and so value comments received from parish councils; it is best practice procedure to agree comments on a planning application during a closed session of a parish council meeting when the applicant is in attendance at the meeting as a member of the public.
 - 4.3 Cllr Gravett was unable to attend the CSAG meeting (Community Safety Action Group) but plans to attend the next one.
 - 4.4 A report on the SDNPA Town and Parish Council Workshop was RECEIVED from Cllr Hill: SDNPA officers gave their views on the Government Consultation on its response to the Glover Landscape; concerns were shared about: the misuse of Byways Open to All Traffic (BOATs) and other unsealed lanes and the need to ensure correct legislation is in place; the potential reduction in the number of representatives and the impact on democracy; a lack of mention of Climate Change.
It was NOTED that whilst not relating to the SDNPA workshop, Cllr Bolger gave an update on a live map which shows local transport and walking routes; she felt this tool was not yet user friendly.
 - 4.5 An update on the FPC response to the Glover Landscape Review Consultation was RECEIVED from Cllr Hill: 3 Members of Firle Parish Council reviewed the questions and have circulated their response to the Full Council; thanks were expressed to Cllr Hill for her work in drafting the FPC response; the Council AGREED to send the response sent to Maria Caulfield MP, District Councillors and the SDNPA.
5. **HIGHWAYS:**
 - 5.1 An update from Cllr Denis on the FPC signage review was not yet received. The Council AGREED to request a signage review via the ESH website as the lack of pavements means pedestrians are often in the road; signs are required for access to Firle Primary School.
 - 5.2 An update on the follow up to the request for replacement school signs was RECEIVED: The ESH Customer Services Manager has been emailed directly but the Clerk has received no response; the case seems to have been allocated another case number with a response time of 10 days; the Clerk was asked to follow up again.
 - 5.3 An update from Cllr Denis on his discussions with the Parking Review team has not yet been received. The Council RESOLVED to request a review on section of road opposite the village car park; Council Members AGREED they would like No Parking signs opposite the village car park and not double yellow lines.

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- 5.4 To RECEIVE an update from Cllr Denis on the question raised over opening the public toilets at the Ram Inn: DEFERRED
- 5.5 Responses to the potential of sharing a speed radar camera were RECEIVED: 6 Parish Councils have responded to the Clerk and are discussing at their next Parish Council meetings; Members of the Council considered the response from ESALC re the trialling of speed radar by JAGs in the Wealden District; the Council AGREED that it could not resolve to rent or purchase a speed traffic monitor at this stage and will discuss further at the next meeting.
- 5.6 To RESOLVE to request Speed Traffic Surveys with ESCC: DEFERRED until a decision has been reached regarding the purchase or hire of a speed radar camera (minute 5.5).
- 5.7 A response from Tom Beasley re the removal of the traffic island has not yet been received. The Clerk was asked to follow up again.
- 5.8 The Council AGREED not to request a SLR meeting at this stage as one was not currently required.
- 5.9 An update on the hedgehog crossing signs requested from ESH was RECEIVED: This has been logged with ESH, case number 00672388; the Council AGREED that individuals could put up their own signs should they wish; Cllr Symes AGREED to contact the parishioner who had made the initial request.

6. PLANNING APPLICATIONS

- 6.1 To AGREE comments for any applications received:
- 6.1.1 **SDNP/22/00714/ LIS 48 Polecat Cottages The Street Firle East Sussex BN8 6LQ**
Proposal: Repair and raise the height of flint and brick garden walls with gate and correct half-round coping and reverse curve abutment at rear of Number 51
The Council AGREED they have no further comments to make in addition to the comments agreed at the meeting of 8th March 2022.

7. PLAYING FIELDS LEASE

- 7.1 An update on the Sublease with Firle Cricket Club was RECEIVED: A meeting date has yet to be agreed but will be planned for after Easter.
- 7.2 To RESOLVE to adopt the Sublease for Firle Cricket Club: DEFERRED

8. FINANCE:

- 8.1 Payments for April were AUTHORISED, and the monthly finance report and bank reconciliation were RECEIVED.
- 8.2 The end of year budget vs actual spend report for 2021-22 was RECEIVED.
- 8.3 To RECEIVE a report on the change to bank signatories and registering the Clerk as an account user with Lloyds Bank – Cllr Gravett: DEFERRED
- 8.4 The Fixed Asset Register of Firle Parish Council was RESOLVED to be a correct record of assets held.
- 8.5 The Financial Regulations Policy was ADOPTED.
- 8.6 The Firle Parish Council Standing Orders were ADOPTED

9. GRANTS

- 9.1 To RECEIVE and RESOLVE grant awards for the following applications:
- 9.1.1 Firle School Playground: The Clerk was asked to contact the correspondent and invite them to send a formal application and to attend the next meeting of the Council in May.

10. POLICIES

- 10.1 The draft PLANNING PROTOCOL for Firle was REVIEWED. The Council AGREED that Cllr Hill would circulate a revised protocol including the following amendments: comments and decisions are referenced to the SDNP Local Plan and the Firle Neighbourhood Plan (when adopted); that individual councillors circulate any comments they may have on planning applications prior to the meeting of the Council; comments agreed by Firle Parish Council are agreed in a closed session of the meeting if the applicant is present at the meeting as a member of the public. The second draft of the Planning Protocol will be received at the next meeting.
- 10.2 The Pensions Discretions Policy for Firle Parish Council was ADOPTED.

11. MATTERS ARISING:

- 11.1 To RECEIVE an update on discussions with Glynde Forge and the Hugh Barnes Memorial Award for 2021 and agree any actions – Cllr Barr. DEFERRED
- 11.2 An update on the potential storage of sandbags at Firle Estate was RECEIVED: Cllr Symes has been in contact with Firle Estate who unfortunately have no storage area able to accommodate the sandbags; Firle Estate

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suggested that the corner of Firle Village car park as a potential site; Cllr Symes AGREED to calculate the number of sandbags required; Cllr Symes AGREED to discuss a possible storage location with Cllr Barr.

11.3 The agenda for the Annual Parish Meeting, 10th May 2022 was AGREED.

11.4 To RECEIVE an update on the repair to the damaged post protecting the village carpark litter bin: This work has not yet been completed but will be done in May.

12. CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED:

12.1 Claimed Right of Way from Firle to the Downs: The Council AGREED to respond individually.

12.2 A27 Lewes to Polegate – Parish Council Stakeholder Group: It was AGREED that Cllr Hill would attend the meeting on 27th April and Cllr Barr would be asked if he would also like to attend.

12.3 A27 Stakeholders: The Council AGREED that Cllr Hill would attend the Parish Council meeting in Selveston.

12.4 £1bn offline dual carriageway between Lewes and Polegate: The Council AGREED to sign up for the newsletters.

12.5 Playground Grant Award from the Veolia Trust: The Council asked the Clerk to review past minutes regarding the agreement and insurance responsibilities between the Parish Council and FVHPFC.

12.6 NALC Smaller Councils Committee – Letter to Smaller Councils: The Council AGREED to raise the issue of the number of council seats on a smaller council and the practical issues that can arise from this.

12.7 Invite to East Sussex Online Training: Cllr Gravett AGREED to ask Cllr Barr if he would like to attend the session on 26 April at 1pm

12.8 Sussex Nature Partnership's Local Authority Network: The Council AGREED that they are interested in participating in these sessions and the Clerk was asked to request the date for the meetings.

13. QUEEN'S PLATINUM JUBILEE CELEBRATIONS:

13.1 The Council RESOLVED to support the proposed road closure of The Street.

13.2 An update on the meeting held to discuss plans in the Parish was RECEIVED: Two meetings have now been held with representatives from the Firle Village Hall and Playing Fields Committee (FVHPFC) and Firle Community Association (FCA); initial ideas have been discussed; there is a further meeting in two weeks' time to allocate people to event roles: events proposed include the lighting of the Beacon (Thursday 2nd June); a treasure hunt in the churchyard for children of Firle Primary School; Firle's Got Talent (Friday 3rd June); a display of Artwork projects in the village hall; a village party in the marquee and a street party (Sunday 5th June).

13.3 No further actions required for the Queen's Platinum Jubilee Celebrations were agreed at this stage.

14. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC:

14.1 The Council RESOLVED to confirm that under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the public and representatives of the press and broadcast media be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of the following items of business as publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest because of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

15. HR Matters

15.1 The Council RESOLVED to accept and implement the Pay Award for Local Government Services and Employees and to back date to the start of the Clerk's employment.

16. **TO PROPOSE AGENDA ITEMS FOR THE NEXT ORDINARY MEETING OF FIRLE PARISH COUNCIL:** The Council AGREED to send any items to the Clerk.

17. **TO RECEIVE THE TIME AND DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING OF FIRLE PARISH COUNCIL.** Tuesday 10th May, 7pm
Firle Village Hall

18. **THE MEETING CLOSED at 21.34.**