

FIRLE PARISH COUNCIL

DRAFT MINUTES OF THE ORDINARY MEETING OF FIRLE PARISH COUNCIL

Tuesday 27th Sept 2022, 7.00pm in Firle Village Hall

Members of the Public in Attendance: 1 – Estate Director, Firle Estate

Questions RECEIVED from the Public: None

Members in Attendance: Cllrs Gravett (Chairman), Cllr Barr (Vice-Chair), Cllr Hill and Cllr Bolger.

Others Present: Clerk and RFO Lorna Thwaites.

Questions received from the Public: None

1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:** Apologies for absence were RECEIVED and ACCEPTED from Cllr Symes who was attending a 20's Plenty online seminar.
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 12th July 2022 were RESOLVED to be a correct record and were signed by the Chairman.
4. **REPORT(S)**
 - 4.1 A report from the MP for Lewes, Maria Caulfield was RECEIVED and NOTED.
 - 4.2 A report on the meeting attended with Maria Caulfield MP to discuss the A27 scheme proposals was RECEIVED from Cllr Bolger and Cllr Hill: The meeting was chaired by Selmeston Parish Council and members from local Parish Councils were in attendance; Maria Caulfield gave a brief update – the proposed improvements to the A27 (dualling or offline) are being assessed as part of the Government's Road Investment Strategy RIS 3; the A27 improvements are one of 32 schemes in the National Highways pipeline but only approx. 28 will be selected to go ahead; there will be a public consultation in 2023 and a decision reached in 2024; the A27, as part of the strategic road network, is of concern due to its high accident rate; building a new road is considered cheaper than upgrading an existing one; Maria Caulfield is supportive of some of the improvements going into the SDNP area; she felt a reduction in speed limit is unlikely; Transport for South East have a role to ensure improvements are joined up with other areas of transport inc. rail; the view was held by all at the meeting that a collective multi-parish view would be beneficial.
5. **AN OVERVIEW OF THE DIALECT PROJECT FROM AMY STONE:** Amy was unable to attend the amended date of the meeting; the Council AGREED to invite Amy to the next meeting.
6. **POLICIES AND PROTOCOL**
 - 6.1 The first draft of the Firle Estate Protocol was RECEIVED and DISCUSSED; the Council AGREED to defer the decision to adopt the protocol to the next meeting.
7. **REVIEW OF ARRANGEMENTS AND LEGAL AGREEMENT WITH FIRLE VILLAGE HALL AND PLAYING FIELDS**
 - 7.1 The Firle Village Hall and Playing Fields Legal Agreement was DISCUSSED: the Clerk was asked to undertake the following: request confirmation that FVHPFC had insurance for the playground in place; request a copy of their schedule of insurance; request the opening date for the playground; establish from the Firle Parish Council insurer (BHIB) who is liable if a child is injured on the play equipment which is owned by FVHPF Ltd; gain a quote from a solicitor to prepare a Legal Agreement between FPC and FVHPFC; the Council discussed the ongoing liability and maintenance of equipment.
 - 7.2 An update on the installation of the play equipment and fencing requirements was RECEIVED: the Council understands the equipment is currently being insured by FVHPFC; some of the fencing is being taken down and FVHPFC is pending a quote for new fencing and gates; Cllr Hill was in contact with Lewes District Council regarding the safety requirements of the gate and fencing; the Clerk to request a progress update and to invite the Chair of FVHPFC to the next meeting of Firle Parish Council.
 - 7.3 To RECEIVE information on playpark inspections and to AGREE a schedule for inspections at Firle. DEFERRED.
8. **SUB LEASE OF PLAYING FIELDS TO FIRLE CRICKET CLUB**
 - 8.1 An update on the Sublease with Firle Cricket Club was RECEIVED: Cllr Gravett will arrange a meeting with Firle Cricket Club; a concern was raised about a wedding being held on a Sunday before the Bank Holiday which created an issue with the preparations for the Fete; the Council AGREED to remind the Cricket Club that they should advise FPC of any events planned.
 - 8.2 To RESOLVE to adopt the Sublease for Firle Cricket Club. DEFERRED.

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9. FINANCE

- 9.1 Payments to be made in September were AUTHORISED and the bank reconciliation was APPROVED and SIGNED.
- 9.2 The Council RESOLVED to claim exemption from having a review performed under the limited assurance regime.
- 9.3 The Chairman and Clerk SIGNED and DATED the AGAR form 3.

10. CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED:

- 10.1 Grass Cutting Schedule. RECEIVED and NOTED
- 10.2 Complaint – Lights on A27 at Firle Junction – response from Firle Estate. RECEIVED and NOTED.
- 10.3 Shades on lighting: RECEIVED and NOTED; the Council AGREED to contact VolkerFitzpatrick for an update.
- 10.4 Memorial Bench: The Council RECEIVED a request to place a memorial bench on the new cycle track between Heighton Street and Wick Street; the Council AGREED that they could not authorise a bench as they do not own the land; they believe the land belongs to East Sussex County Council; the Clerk was asked to contact the correspondent.
- 10.5 Rally Event: RECEIVED and NOTED: the Council AGREED to forward the correspondence to Firle Estate.
- 10.6 Missing Bus Stop Firle Bostal Lewes/Brighton bound site: RECEIVED and NOTED; the Clerk was asked to contact East Sussex Highways.
- 10.7 SAAA 2022 – Opt Out Communication: RECEIVED; The Council RESOLVED to remain as part of the central scheme and no further action was required.
- 10.8 20s plenty – ZOOM invitations: Cllr Symes was attending the meeting on 27th September on behalf of the Council.
- 10.9 A27 Meeting - Maria Caulfield MP: RECEIVED; the Council discussed the views that had been shared by Maria Caulfield which had also been discussed under agenda item 4.2; the Council AGREED that as it is a stakeholder, it is very important to be included and to keep abreast of all communications regarding the A27 project.
- 10.10 A27 Lewes to Polegate improvements: RECEIVED; the Council AGREED that Council Members would circulate their comments under the 6 objectives of RIS3 and asked the Clerk to collate a response to return to Chris Harris.
- 10.11 CPRE Sussex – Opportunity regarding the South Downs Local Plan Review. RECEIVED; no action agreed.
- 10.12 SouthDowns National Park East Sussex Parish Workshop: RECEIVED; if any Council Members wish to attend the workshop on 11th October, they will email the Clerk by Monday 3rd October to confirm their space.
- 10.13 Removal of Publicity for Submitted Pre-Application Enquiries. RECEIVED and NOTED.
- 10.14 Road Closure Consultation – Firle Bonfire. RECEIVED and NOTED.
- 10.15 Defibrillator: RECEIVED and the recall of the Village Hall defibrillator was NOTED.
- 10.16 Maria Caulfield – Remembrance Sunday Plans: RECEIVED; the Council NOTED that the service is held in Glynde but plans for Firle are yet to be finalised.
- 10.17 Election costs: RECEIVED and NOTED.
- 10.18 Credit Card for Website: Cllr Gravett AGREED to use his credit card and to reclaim from the Parish Council.

11. MATTERS ARISING:

- 11.1 An update on the Hugh Barnes Memorial Award for 2021 was RECEIVED: the recipients were delighted to have received the Award.
- 11.2 The state of the Bostal Road at the bottom of the hill by New Elms was DISCUSSED; the Council AGREED no further action to be taken.
- 11.3 To RECIEVE an update on the restoration of the village sign. DEFERRED to the next meeting.
- 11.4 An update on the overhanging hedges and branches around the Parish was RECEIVED: The work has been undertaken as requested; the pavement from the shop down to the wishing well at the bottom of the Dock is covered by brambles and is difficult to use; the pathway is also in a bad state of repair; the Clerk was asked to contact Firle Estate.

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11.5 An update regarding the blocking of the Highway at Burning Sky Brewery by repeated loading and unloading of delivery vehicles was RECEIVED: Cllr Barr explained the issue with the number of lorries and how they are not able to unload at the side of the road due to parked cars and so cause an obstruction; the Council AGREED there was little that could be done to stop cars parking as it is a public highway.

12. HIGHWAYS:

12.1 To RECEIVE an update from Cllr Denis on the question raised over opening the public toilets at the Ram Inn. DEFERRED.

12.2 The response from Nick Skelton – Asst. Director, Communities, ESCC was RECEIVED: The Council discussed the issues that exist within the Parish and the Community Match Scheme mentioned in the letter from Nick Skelton; the Council AGREED to wait to hear an update from the '20s plenty' meeting that Cllr Symes was attending before agreeing any action.

12.3 To RECEIVE an update on the removal of the traffic island. DEFERRED; issues with the new Pedestrian Crossing on the A27 were highlighted by Members of the Council – they have experienced no warning alert sound; motorists driving through the red lights; insufficient time allowed for pedestrians to cross the road particularly the less able.

12.4 The problem of surface water getting into the sewers was DISCUSSED: Cllr Barr advised that when large quantities of surface water flow into the sewer on north side of The Drive, sewage overflows by Gibraltar Farm; Cllr Barr AGREED to show Bob Baines, Firle Estate Director where the issue exists, and the Clerk was asked to contact South East water.

12.5 An update on the work undertaken by ESH further to the signage review and the request for warning signs for pedestrians in the road, along the Bostal Road was RECEIVED from Cllr Hill: A signage review has been undertaken and the Clerk was contacted by the East Sussex Road Safety team; the Council AGREED locations between Crossways and the School for warning signs and Cllr Hill marked them on a map; the Council NOTED the placement of new bollards between the school crossing and the village car park which the Council were unaware of their installation; as there are none between the car park and the pub corner it was felt they have not been placed in the most suitable location; the Council also raised the concern that parents are parking on the new hatchings by the school at drop off and pick up times.

13. PLANNING APPLICATIONS

13.1 To AGREE comments for any applications received: None received.

14. **NO AGENDA ITEMS FOR THE NEXT ORDINARY MEETING OF FIRLE PARISH COUNCIL** were proposed at the meeting.

15. **THE TIME AND DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING OF FIRLE PARISH COUNCIL was AGREED** as Tuesday 8 Nov, 7pm in Firle Village Hall.

16. **THE MEETING CLOSED** at 21.53