

# **FIRLE PARISH COUNCIL**

## **MINUTES OF THE ORDINARY MEETING OF FIRLE PARISH COUNCIL**

Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> March 2022, the meeting started at 7.09pm Firle Village Hall

**Members of the Public in Attendance:** 2

**Questions RECEIVED from the Public:** A member of the public in attendance spoke on his planning application SDNP/22/00238/HOUS and offered to provide any clarity during Council discussions on the application.

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

**Others Present:** Clerk and RFO Lorna Thwaites attended remotely.

Cllr Denis arrived 20.11

1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:** Apologies for absence were RECEIVED and ACCEPTED from Cllr Symes.
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 8<sup>th</sup> February 2022 and the extraordinary meeting held on 21<sup>st</sup> February 2022 were RESOLVED as correct records; the Council AGREED to sign the minutes at the next meeting of the Council as no paper copies to sign were available.
4. **REPORT(S)**
  - 4.1 Reports from Local and District Councillors and the MP for Lewes were RECEIVED: A written report was RECEIVED from Maria Caulfield MP and had been circulated to the Council; a report was RECEIVED from Cllr Denis via email prior to the meeting and Cllr O'Brien sent her apologies and her update via Cllr Denis; A £500k hardship fund has been created; ESCC have offered a discount of £150 for council tax payment via direct debit; investment in public toilets – Cllr Denis has not yet had the opportunity to follow up on the question raised by the Council over the toilets at the Ram Inn; Cllr Denis has met with Firle Estate and a written update has been sent to the Clerk; Cllr O'Brien is undertaking work on water quality; Cllr Denis AGREED to follow up on drainage issues with Southern Water;
  - 4.2 A brief report on the Cllr Planning Training attended was RECEIVED: The training had been cancelled by ESALC due to technical issues; the training is now booked for March 15<sup>th</sup> 7pm and Cllrs Hill and Symes are attending.
5. **HIGHWAYS:**
  - 5.1 An update from Cllr Denis on the FPC signage review was RECEIVED: Cllr Denis has contacted relevant people via email but not yet received responses; the Council could not resolve to request a signage review and AGREED to DEFER a decision to the next meeting.
  - 5.2 An update on the request for new school signs was RECEIVED from East Sussex Highways (ESH): ESH have inspected the sign and do not feel it is at a level which meets their safety criteria for repair so at this time no works will take place; the Council believe they must have looked at the wrong sign; the Clerk has contacted the Customer Service Manager to discuss this but as yet had no response; Cllr Denis and the Clerk were asked to continue to follow this up.
  - 5.3 An update from Cllr Denis on his discussions with the Parking Review team was RECEIVED: Cllr Denis is in the process of following this up and will report back to the Council; the Council could not resolve to request a review and AGREED to DEFER the decision to the next meeting.
  - 5.4 Information on Black Cat Speed Data from ESALC was RECEIVED; a report has been circulated by Cllr Hill; a speed box can be bought for £2500 or hired for £400 as an alternative to undertaking a Speed Survey with ESCC; a license (costing £57) is required by ESCC to operate the unit; the speed data gathered can be downloaded onto a computer; the purchase of a speed data unit will allow various locations and dates to be monitored; the Clerk was asked to contact local parish councils about the purchase of a shared unit;
  - 5.5 The Council did not resolve to request Speed Traffic Surveys with ESCC at this stage as it wished to investigate the purchase of a speed data box before reaching a decision.
  - 5.6 An update on the compilation of information on public transport options for visiting Firle was RECEIVED: Cllr Bolger has been in touch with the digital contact of the SDNP website; they are endeavouring to improve the information on their website but as yet nothing has been included on the local Firle area; Cllr Bolger will ask them to link to maps and will remain in contact.
  - 5.7 The Council AGREED not to arrange a meeting with SLR at this time but to continuing to progress the Highways projects it is currently working on; this will be reviewed at the next meeting.

# **FIRLE PARISH COUNCIL**

- 5.8 The Council discussed a strategy for restricting parking in the Parish; the Council AGREED that they are concerned by the unrestricted parking in the village which can prevent traffic flowing through and cause problems to emergency vehicles; the Firle Estate Manager was asked for his views and the possibility for enlarging the village car park.
- 5.9 An update from the communication with VolkerFitzpatrick with regards to the construction of an embankment and tree planting at the A27 toucan crossing was not received; The Clerk had contacted Rachel Grove of Volker Fitzpatrick but had not received an update; Cllr Barr has been in contact with Andy Pilbeam of Volker Fitzpatrick who has advised the embankment has been raised and approx. 1100 trees have been planted including some large trees; Cllr Barr raised a concern that the island in the middle of the road (Lewes side) might have been removed; concerns were expressed over the danger presented by not having this island; the Council AGREED to contact Tom Beasley of ESH to enquire if the safety area would be re-instated ESH; Cllr Denis suggested the Council ask the question over the safety of vehicles turning to Firle from the West; Cllr Hill shared her frustration that no information has been received on the landscaping work being done and this was NOTED by the Council.
- 5.10 The Council CONSIDERED hedgehog crossing signs: Hedgehogs and frogs have been seen crossing the roads particularly The Street; the Council noted there had been some handmade signs in the Parish in the past which were considered effective; the Council AGREED to request two wildlife protection signs – one by the pub and one between the village hall and the shop; the Council AGREED to ask parishioners to consider placing their own signs.

## **6. PLANNING APPLICATIONS**

6.1 To AGREE comments for any applications received:

6.1.1 SDNP/22/00713/HOUS (deadline for comments 15 Mar 22)

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 halfround coping and reverse curve abutment at rear of Number 51

The Council AGREED to SUPPORT this application.

6.1.2 SDNP/22/00238/HOUS (deadline for comments 14 Mar 22)

Trosley Lodge The Street Firle BN8 6LQ Proposal: Erection of single storey rear extension, alteration to existing fenestration and external surface treatment to ground floor walling, conversion of existing attic space for accommodation. Installation of Solar Panels to West facing roofline.

Demolition of existing conservatory. (Amendment to previously approved scheme Ref: SDNP/16/00459/HOUS- Not implemented)

The Council AGREED to SUPPORT this application with a concern raised regarding the ground to ceiling south facing windows and any possible light pollution resulting from them.

Cllr Denis joined the meeting at 20.11

## **7. PLAYING FIELDS LEASE**

7.1 An update on the signing of the Headlease for the Playing Fields was RECEIVED: the Lease has been signed by the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Parish Council and the Trustees of Firle Estate; a copy of the Lease has now been sent to the Viola Trust; thanks were expressed to Bob Baines, Firle Estate Director and the Trustees for co-ordinating the signing of the Lease and to the Council Members and Clerk for their additional work and efforts; Cllr Gravett was particularly thanked for his efforts with regards to the Lease.

7.2 An update on the Sublease with Firle Cricket Club was RECEIVED: The Cricket Club have agreed in principle to the Sublease; Council Members will now meet with the Cricket Club and Bob Baines, Firle Estate Director AGREED to attend this meeting; Cllr Gravett AGREED to circulate meeting dates.

7.3 To RESOLVE to adopt the Sublease for Firle Cricket Club: the Sublease cannot yet be resolved until the meeting has been held with Firle Cricket Club.

*Cllr Denis left the meeting at 20.39*

## **8. FINANCE:**

8.1 The Council RESOLVED to pay the Clerk for the additional hours worked in February 2022.

8.2 Payments for March were AUTHORISED and the monthly finance report and bank reconciliation were RECEIVED.

8.3 An update on hire charges for the Village Hall by the Parish Council was RECEIVED: The Affiliated Membership fee paid by the Parish Council includes the use of the hall for Council Meetings.

# **FIRLE PARISH COUNCIL**

- 8.4 To RECEIVE a report on the change to bank signatories and registering the Clerk as an account user with Lloyds Bank. DEFERRED to next meeting.
- 8.5 Councillor specific email addresses were RECEIVED and the Council RESOLVED to use the addresses for all Parish Council communications:

## **9. GRANTS**

9.1 Grant awards for the following applications were RECEIVED:

- 9.1.1 Children's Air Ambulance: The Council NOTED they already have a clothes bank in the village car park and could not support another; the Council AGREED it would welcome an application for a small grant from the Children's Air Ambulance.
- 9.1.2 Village Hall: The Council AGREED to support the application and made an award of £600.

## **10. POLICIES**

- 10.1 The SOCIAL MEDIA Policy for Firle was AGREED and ADOPTED.
- 10.2 To CONSIDER implementing a PLANNING PROTOCOL for Firle: The Council AGREED to DEFER this discussion to the next meeting after planning training has been attended by Cllrs Hill and Symes.

## **11. MATTERS ARISING:**

- 11.1 An update on the meeting between Cllrs Symes, Tim Bartlett and Ellen Yardley with respect to flooding and possible defence measures was RECEIVED via email from Cllr Symes who was not in attendance: The Council AGREED to ask Cllr Symes to set up a meeting with Firle Estate to discuss storage for sandbags.
- 11.2 An update on discussions with Glynde Forge regarding the Hugh Barnes Memorial Award for 2021 was RECEIVED: Cllr Barr has spoken to Glynde Forge; Cllr Gravett AGREED to pass the template to Cllr Barr who will request an estimate from Glynde Forge.
- 11.3 Costs for the Playing Field boundary Fence were not received at this meeting: The Council discussed the boundaries stated in the new Playing Field Lease; the Council AGREED it would discuss the fence with Firle Estate at the forthcoming meeting with Firle Cricket Club.
- 11.4 An update on the 50mile running race was RECEIVED: The email correspondence has been sent to Bob Baines, Firle Estate Director who has in turn emailed Brian Adcock; no further response has yet been received.
- 11.5 The Council RESOLVED to set up a Firle Parish Council Facebook Page.
- 11.6 An update on the Village Hall Defibrillator checks was RECEIVED: The Village Hall are responsible for the maintenance and checks of the defibrillator.
- 11.7 The date for the Annual Parish Meeting was AGREED as 10<sup>th</sup> May 2022: The Council NOTED that Annual Parish Meeting is open to all electors of the Parish who have the right to attend and to speak on any matters of local interest; it is not a parish council meeting, but it is an opportunity to highlight the work of the Parish Council over the last year.
- 11.8 The Council AGREED to repair the damaged post protecting the village carpark litter bin: Council Members will install two other posts and reflectors to make the litter bin more visible; Cllr Barr AGREED to provide the posts and a date will be agreed subject to weather conditions.

## **12. CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED:**

To RECEIVE the following correspondence and AGREE any actions:

- 12.1 Funded Habitat Creation Scheme – Newt Conservation Partnership Scheme. RECEIVED with no actions agreed.
- 12.2 The Glover Landscape Review: Government Response and Consultation (ends 9<sup>th</sup> April 2022): Cllr Hill is attending a remote meeting and will report to the Council after the meeting; Cllr Hill AGREED to propose a response on behalf of the Parish Council which she will circulate by email; the Council AGREED it would meet before the deadline to complete the consultation.
- 12.3 NALC Policy Consultation Briefing: DEFRA Consultation on its Response to the Landscape Review: RECEIVED and NOTED.
- 12.4 An opportunity to end the use of green lanes by recreational motor vehicles in South Downs National Park. RECEIVED and NOTED.
- 12.5 Boundary for England Public Consultation (22<sup>nd</sup> Feb – 4<sup>th</sup> April): RECEIVED; the Council AGREED there was no impact for Firle and no further action required.
- 12.6 Great Tommy Sleepout: RECEIVED; the Council asked the Clerk to forward the correspondence to the Firle Estate
- 12.7 Lantra Basic Tree Survey and Inspection Course (Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> May, £185 + VAT, Ardingly): RECEIVED; the Council AGREED that this training was not currently required.

## ***FIRLE PARISH COUNCIL***

12.8 Email from the Chairman of Selmeston Parish Council: RECEIVED by the Council after the agenda had been published; the Council AGREED to ask to be included on communications sent to Highways England regarding the A27 Lewes to Polegate.

**13. QUEEN'S PLATINUM JUBILEE CELEBRATIONS:**

13.1 Information on the Queen's Green Canopy Platinum Jubilee Beacons was RECEIVED: Council Members AGREED to discuss this at the meeting being held on Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> March.

13.2 An update on the meeting to be held to discuss plans in the Parish was RECEIVED: The meeting is to be held on Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> March, 7pm in the Village Hall.

**14. AGENDA ITEMS FOR THE NEXT ORDINARY MEETING OF FIRLE PARISH COUNCIL:** To be emailed to the Clerk.

**15. TO RECEIVE THE TIME AND DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING OF FIRLE PARISH COUNCIL.** Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> April, 7pm Firle Village Hall.

**16. THE MEETING CLOSED** at 21.35.