

**MINUTES OF THE ORDINARY MEETING OF FIRLE PARISH COUNCIL** held on Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> April 2024, 7.04pm in Firle Village Hall.

**Members of the Public in Attendance:** None.

**Questions RECEIVED from the Public:** None.

**Members in Attendance:** Cllr Hill (Chair), Cllr Bolger, Cllr Lance, Cllr Symes.

**Members not in Attendance:** Cllr Barr (Vice-Chair).

**Others Present:** None.

**Questions RECEIVED from the Public:** None.

1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:** RECEIVED and ACCEPTED from Cllr Barr.
2. **NO DECLARATIONS OF ANY INTERESTS WERE RECEIVED AND NO REQUESTS WERE MADE FOR A DISPENSATION WITH RESPECT TO ITEMS ON THE AGENDA.**
3. **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING:** The minutes of the ordinary meeting of Firle Parish Council held on 12<sup>th</sup> March 2024 were RESOLVED to be a correct record and were SIGNED by the Chair.
4. **FINANCE/ADMIN:**
  - 4.1 Payments to be made in April were AUTHORISED and the bank reconciliation was RECEIVED and SIGNED.
  - 4.2 The date of the 2024 Internal Audit was RECEIVED as Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> May 2024.
  - 4.3 The Council RESOLVED that Firle Parish Council meets the criteria to declare itself exempt from the Annual Return 2023/24 (gross annual income or expenditure to not exceed £25,000).
  - 4.4 The end of year finance report of actual spend vs budget was RECEIVED.
  - 4.5 The agenda for the Annual Parish Meeting to be held on Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> May 2024 was AGREED and the date and details are to be published in the Parish Magazine; items for the presentation were AGREED as: responding to Local Government and Local Authority consultations; nominating of Assets of Community Value (ACV); responding as a consultee of planning applications; developing Parish Priority Statements for the SDNPA Local Plan; lobbying ESCC/ESH, the MP for Lewes and District and County Councillors for repairs to potholes and drains; initiating a project to develop a footpath to Firle Primary School; co-ordinating a visit and talk from the 20sPlenty campaign; undertaking new parish councillor and planning training; attending presentations on the Glynde Estate Local Plan and Lewes District Council Local Plan; maintaining effective working relationships particularly with Firle Estate, Firle Community Association, Firle Primary School, Firle Cricket Club, Local and District Councillors and the MP for Lewes; receiving and awarding grants from the Parish Council fund. Key priorities for 2024/5 are: projects including the footpath to the school and speed reduction in the village; liaising and engaging with the Firle Estate Plan; nominating further ACVs – The Ram Inn, Firle Allotments, Firle cricket field and playground; continuing to pursue the drainage and pothole issues in the village; engaging with the SDNPA Local Plan.
5. **GRANT AWARDS/S137.** None received.
6. **REPORT(S):**
  - 6.1 Reports from Local and District Councillors and the MP for Lewes were RECEIVED and NOTED: The Council AGREED to put the information on grants for heat source pumps in the Parish Magazine and to send the details to the Firle Estate Director.
  - 6.2 A summary from Cllr Liz Hill was RECEIVED on the workshop she attended on the future of the planning system: the Government aims to reform the planning system with the view that Local Plans take too long to produce and are only valid for 5 years; they also have to go through the planning inspection process before they can be adhered to and this can take a long time due to limited resources; the government is not achieving its aim to deliver 300k new houses per year; a key element is how housing is calculated for each district and the government want to revise the method for calculating housing; the new National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) has legislation for holiday lets (planning permission is now required); it places greater emphasis on Local Plans which will be easier to produce as infrastructure and achieving well-designed and beautiful places will be developed at national level; development must have a 10% increase in biodiversity gain; the Council NOTED that the PPS created by Firle Parish Council should be taken into account with the SDNP Local Plan (although this is not a legal obligation).
7. **FIRLE ESTATE:** The Council NOTED that a birthday card was sent to Lord Gage from the Parish Council.
8. **CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED:**
  - 8.1 SDNPA Renewable Energy Study: The Council AGREED it would meet at 6pm on Wed 17<sup>th</sup> April to complete the consultation.

- 8.2 Lease to Firle Parish Council and Sublease to Cricket Club: The Council NOTED that Cllr Hill hand delivered the correctly signed lease to Adams & Remers on 14<sup>th</sup> July 2023 and Firle Estate and Adams and Remers have been advised of this.
- 8.3 The Oaktree Federation: An email of thanks received from Firle Primary School was NOTED.
- 8.4 Lewes PCSO: Details of PCSO Alan Ash as the PCSO for Firle were NOTED.
- 8.5 Changing Chalk Community Grants Scheme: The Council AGREED to put details of the grant in the Parish Magazine.
- 8.6 SDNP Elections: The Council NOTED that there are 7 candidates for a parish representative for East Sussex and RESOLVED to agree the vote of Firle Parish Council when they meet on 17<sup>th</sup> April.

## 9. HIGHWAYS:

- 9.1 The latest communication on Wick Street signage was RECEIVED: National Highways have advised Ian Johnson, ESCC that the signs will be erected by the end of April.
- 9.2 To RECEIVE an update on the quote and repairs required to the bus shelter at Crossways – Cllr Barr. DEFER.
- 9.3 An update on drainage and potholes in the parish and further actions taken was RECEIVED: Cllr Hill has filmed the overflowing drain at the Bostal, but felt her video was of poor quality; Cllr Lance has offered to film again with the water overflows; the water that flows out of the drain could be due to a collapsed drain further down the road; the Council NOTED that the pothole opposite the allotments has been filled in and repaired with a strip of tarmac.
- 9.4 To RECEIVE an update on further actions taken regarding the dangerous verge-side potholes along Ripe Lane – Cllr Barr: DEFER; Cllr Lance suggested that these potholes could be reported as collapsed verges which in her experience might expedite matters.

## 10. MATTERS ARISING:

- 10.1 An update on the written permission of the owners of The Cottage granting permission to place a parking restriction sign on their wall was RECEIVED: This has now been received via email; the Council AGREED that 3 signs are required, 21cm x 40cm landscape, white background with black lettering; the Clerk was asked to contact Mike Hole, Chilli Graphics for a quote and to request advice for placing a sign on a flint wall (material type and hanging mechanism).
- 10.2 The outcome of the reporting of the surface of the road by Middle Farm to National Highways was RECEIVED: National Highways have inspected the carriageway and are happy that the works have been completed to standard although junctions may feel bumpy initially due to the new anti-skid surfacing laid; the Council RESOLVED to close the matter.

## 11. PROJECTS:

### 11.1 School Footpath

- 11.1.1 An update on the expression of interest form sent to the Firle Estate Director was RECEIVED from Cllr Hill: A discussion paper on 3 proposed routes has been written by Ian Pepe; the CIL Expression of Interest form was completed by Cllr Hill whilst pending the report, commissioned by Firle Estate, titled Firle Village Pedestrian Infrastructure Assessment with Reeves Transport Planning; the report was received by Cllr Hill just before the start of the parish council meeting and as such Council Members AGREED to read the report and discuss at the next meeting; the Council AGREED that it would not submit the CIL Expression of Interest at this stage.
- 11.1.2 To RECEIVE any further updates if available on the progress of the footpath including CIL funding/grant application and installation quotes and to AGREE next steps and actions: DEFERED until the report from Reeves Transport Planning had been read and discussed.

### 11.2 20sPlenty for Firle

- 11.2.1 A short report on logistics and costs associated with implementing 20mph zones vs installing road signage requesting slowing and speed/alerting drivers to other road users was RECEIVED from Cllr Symes: Cllr Symes shared the financial costs of implementing a 20mph scheme and his views on a Shared Space scheme; Cllr Symes has submitted an enquiry form to East Sussex Highways providing examples of the speed reduction options that Firle might be considering (shared space or 20mph limit); a response has not yet been received; Cllr Hill spoke to Glynde Parish Council about their 20sPlenty campaign – it is currently on hold but they have plans to re-start the work again soon.
- 11.2.2 Further actions AGREED: To DISCUSS next steps at the May parish council meeting when a response will have been received from the ESH Road Safety department and after the forthcoming elections.

**11.3 Assets of Community Value**

11.3.1 An update on the progress of nominating the Ram Inn as an Asset of Community Value was RECEIVED: Cllr Lance has not yet progressed the application due to her own commitments; DEFER to the next meeting.

**12. PLANNING APPLICATIONS:** Comments AGREED for applications received:

12.1.1 **Proposal:** Change of use and conversion of existing garage and log store to create annex and holiday accommodation **Location:** Gibraltar Farm, Gibraltar Farmhouse, Wick Street, Firle, East Sussex, BN8 6NB (deadline for comments 01 May 2024): Comments AGREED: The Council AGREED a response of NEUTRAL to the application.

**13. ITEMS AGREED FOR THE PARISH MAGAZINE:** As stated in these minutes.

**14. NO ADDITIONAL ITEMS FOR THE ANNUAL MEETING OF FIRLE PARISH COUNCIL WERE RECEIVED AND THE START TIME WAS AGREED AS 7.30PM AFTER THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING.**

**15. THE TIME AND DATE OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING WAS AGREED AS 7PM TUESDAY 14<sup>TH</sup> MAY IN FIRLE VILLAGE HALL FOLLOWED BY THE ANNUAL MEETING OF FIRLE PARISH COUNCIL AT 7.30PM**

**16. THE MEETING CLOSED AT 21.01.**