

**DRAFT Minutes of the ordinary Firsdown Parish Council meeting held on Wednesday
13th January 2022 at 7.15pm in Winterslow Village Hall**

Present

Cllr Simon Brown (Chairman)
Cllr Jeremy Beavan (Vice Chairman)
Cllr Paul Kennedy
Cllr Rich Rogers
Cllr Ginette Stewart
Cllr Steve Smith
Cllr Nigel Walsh

In attendance: Catherine Purves (Clerk)

Also present

Four members of the public, Wiltshire Councillor Rich Rogers, PC Pete Jung, Neighbourhood Police Officer

Public Session

Picnic Bench – concerns were again raised about the need for permission from Wiltshire Council, as it could be considered an obstruction, the concerns of the immediate neighbours, maintenance, the generation of rubbish and litter, and possible need for toilet facilities.

Wiltshire Council Rich Rogers gave his report

- Wiltshire Council budget 2022/23 – currently being finalised, it will be challenging.
- The Police & Crime Commissioner - has published his draft plan, including increased support for Speedwatch teams and improved response to speeding incidents with tougher enforcement.
- Area Board – discussed improved communications between Councils, and promoted the “Our Community Matters” website. The Board will continue to support Youth Activities and Health & Wellbeing initiatives
- Highways – he has invited the new Highways Technical Officer to visit the parish on 31st January.

Neighbourhood Policing – PC Pete Jung introduced himself as the new Neighbourhood Police Officer. He will attend each meeting, operational commitments allowing. He urged all residents to report incidents via the police website or by phoning 101, using 999 only in an emergency. If an incident isn't reported, it hasn't happened.

COUNCIL BUSINESS

1.22 To receive apologies for absence

None, all councillors present

2.22 To receive any Declarations of Interest from Members

a. To receive any **Declarations of Interest** in respect of matters contained in this agenda

Resolved: to note no interests declared

b. To consider any **Dispensation Requests** received by the Parish Clerk and not previously considered.

Resolved: to note none received

3.22 Minutes

- a. **Resolved:** to approve and sign as a correct record without amendment the minutes of the ordinary Firsdown Parish Council Meeting held on 11th November 2021

4.22 To receive reports from:

a. *The Chairman* – nothing to report that wasn't covered elsewhere.

b. The Parish Clerk - Climate Change – The Clerk had attended the recent Society of Local Council Clerks branch meeting in November, where a presentation was given on Climate Change, and what practical steps Parish Council can take to help themselves and their communities to mitigate their impact on this. This will be an item for a future agenda.

c. The Council's representative to the Southern Area Board –The Clerk had attended an informal online meeting of parishes in the area on 18th November, and the most recent Area Board held face to face on 9th December. Parishes were encouraged to be more ambitious, self-reliant, and proactive, anticipating projects (especially around climate change) and precepting accordingly. The next meeting will be held online on Thursday February 10th.

Resolved: to note

5.22 Finance

a. **Resolved:** to note the bank balance as at 31st December 2021 stood at £23,193.36

b. **Resolved:** to agree a donation of £200.00 to Community Transport South West

c. **Resolved:** to confirm and authorise a schedule of accounts in the sum of £1221.06, with additional payments of cheque no 340 for £598.60 to Arthur J Gallagher Insurance Brokers for the annual insurance premium, and cheque no 341 for £200.00 to Community Transport South Wiltshire as a donation.

d. **Resolved:** to note the updated 2021/2022 Budget Monitoring form

e. *To consider and agree the draft budget proposals for 2022/2023*

The Clerk & Responsible Financial Officer presented the proposed draft budget which the FPC considered.

Resolved: to agree a budget of £18,706.00 for 2022/2023

f. *To consider and agree the Clerk & Responsible Financial Officer's precept recommendation for 2022/2023*

Wiltshire Council had informed the FPC that the estimated tax base figure for 2022/2023 would be 281.70 (previous year 277.79). Having agreed the budget, the FPC considered the precept and

Resolved: to agree an increase of £1110.00 on the previous year to £18710.00. The annual cost to a Band D household would be £66.42, an increase of £3.07 on the whole year.

Action: Clerk to inform Wiltshire Council

Item 9.22 Planning was brought forward to this point. The consequent Minute numbers will be amended accordingly.

6.22 Planning

a. *To consider a response to the following planning applications received from Wiltshire Council:*

Resolved: to note none have been received

b. *To consider a response to applications notified between the publication date of the agenda and the date of the meeting, if necessary.*

Resolved: to note none had been received

c. *To confirm the response determined by email for applications received since the last meeting*

Resolved: to note none had been received, and so no responses required confirming.

d. *To note planning decisions made by Wiltshire Council since the last meeting:*

Resolved: to note none received.

e. *To note any update regarding the outline planning application for development at 6 Firs Road, PL/2021/07895*

The Chairman advised that the public open space is now formally included within the planning application site, which was welcomed by members, as it gave an opportunity for the space to be improved, perhaps including seating, picnic benches, dog waste and litter bins. Members also noted that the ownership/responsibility for the open space had yet to be decided, and that the Highways issues raised had yet to be addressed.

Resolved: to note, and promote the update to the parish. **Action:** The Clerk

7.22 Highway/Parish Steward/Footpath matters.

a. *To note any Highways issues for reporting to Wiltshire Council*

i. *Surface water drainage* – Cllr Brown was thanked for producing such a detailed report and recommendations concerning the surface water drainage of Firs Road.

Resolved: to note and receive Cllr Brown's report and recommendations, and to forward it to Wiltshire Council's Highways and Drainage Teams with the Parish Council's support. **Action;** The

Clerk

b. To note any tasks for the Parish Steward – No tasks advised. The next dates for visits are 7th February, 3rd & 31st March.

c. To discuss and resolve any action possible and required concerning any footpath matters:

i. Proposed picnic benches – the survey results showed that 80% of the 124 residents who responded wanted to see a picnic table/bench, either in the corner of the play area and field, or within an extended section of the play area. After a short discussion, during which the concerns of the neighbouring property owners were acknowledged and noted, it was

Resolved: to refer the matter to the Wiltshire Council Estates Team for guidance about obtaining permission/consent to install a table on its land, and to apply for the same. **Action:** The Clerk

ii. Motor cycles on the Byway and their impact on paths in the wood – concerns had been raised about the increased number of motor cycles straying off the byway and using the permissive paths in the woods (private land), which has resulted in a churned surface and an increase potential for accidents. Cllr Rogers recommended the use of Voluntary Restraint Notices, which could be provided by Wiltshire Council, which, whilst not enforceable, might give users pause for thought. After a short discussion, it was

Resolved: to obtain and display appropriate Voluntary Restraint Notices. **Action:** The Clerk

iii. Byway signage – the design had been finalised and agreed, and quotes were being obtained.

iv Frequency of grass cutting of the Byway, and height of hedge for 2022 onwards – after a short discussion, it was

Resolved: not to conduct another survey, but to agree to continue cutting 2 narrow straight paths along the entire length of the byway – this was the approach used in 2021 – and in addition, 4 paths cut diagonally across, linking the two straight paths. This to be done in May and late August, with the entire width from residents' fences to the field hedge cut in October. A third of the field side hedge is to be cut each year in accordance with RSPB guidelines. Residents will be advised via the Parish Council website. **Action:** The Clerk

8.22 – To consider new issues and decide on appropriate action, if any

a. Speedwatch – Cllr Rogers advised members of an automatic Speedwatch camera which incorporated number plate recognition, which could assist the police with enforcement action against speeding motorists.

Resolved: to explore the legality and viability of this piece of equipment with a view to buying and deploying it in the future. **Action:** The Clerk & Cllr Rogers

b. To adopt a proposed Emergency Assistance Advice & Recommendations paper – Cllr Brown had drawn this up following his attendance at the Wiltshire Council training seminar, and the recent incident in the woods.

Resolved: to adopt the papers, and for it to be loaded to the Parish Council website. **Action:** The Clerk & Cllr Brown

9.22 To review and note other ongoing matters, and decide upon further action, if required.

a. Play Area

i. To note update re the play area report actions – in hand, the annual inspection, due in December 2021 has yet to be undertaken

ii. To approve new signage.

Resolved: to approve, lettering to be in lower case, plus 2 x "Please close gate" for the inside of each gate. **Action:** The Clerk

iii. Fencing – the plastic uprights had been ordered, awaiting delivery and it was

Resolved: to delegate a budget of upto £500 for the Clerk to proceed with the purchase of the 4 horizontal lengths required. **Action:** The Clerk

b. Communication methods with residents – a recent social media review had been undertaken by Breakthrough Communications.

Resolved: to note, and a draft communications policy both internally and externally to be produced for consideration at the March meeting. **Action:** The Clerk & Cllr Brown

c. Map lecterns – noting that the project is progressing, and that Cllrs Beavan and Walsh will liaise on the contents of the display, after a short discussion, it was

Resolved: to withdraw the application for Area Board funding for £1239.01 for one lectern, and apply for a Paths Improvement Grant from Wiltshire Council, which was felt to be a more appropriate source of funding. **Action:** The Clerk

d. *Village Design statement* – it was noted that the invitation to look at this has yet to be posted to Facebook. After a short discussion, it was

Resolved: to rename the document to Parish Profile, which it was felt better reflected the contents, and to invite residents to comment **Action:** The Clerk & Cllrs Brown and Beavan

e. *Access for maintenance & emergency services onto the Byway* – funds had been included in the 2022/23 budget, but moving the pole and stay wire will be expensive. Alternative options will be explored. **Action:** The Clerk

f. *Emergency contact signage within the woods* - permission has been requested, but no response yet received.

10.22 To note the dates of the next ordinary meetings of the Council

a. Wednesday March 2nd 2022 at 7.15pm in Winterslow Village Hall

b. Wednesday May 4th 2022 at 7.15pm in Winterslow Village Hall

11.22 To close the meeting

The meeting closed at 8.57pm

Councillors considered the following when discharging their duties: Equal Opportunities (Race, Gender, Sexual Orientation, Marital Status, and any Disability), Crime & Disorder; Health & Safety; Human Rights; Bio-Diversity