

**Minutes of the Firsdown Parish Council meeting held on Thursday 14th
November 2024 at 7.30pm pm in Winterslow Village Hall**

Present

Cllr Simon Brown (Chairman)
Cllr Jeremy Beavan (Vice Chairman)
Cllr Jim Buckley
Cllr Nigel Walsh
Cllr Alan Snook

In attendance: Catherine Purves (Clerk)

Also present: One member of the public

Public Session

In their absence, there were no reports from Wiltshire Councillor Rich Rogers or PC Kelvin Ramsey.
No issues were raised.

COUNCIL BUSINESS

The meeting began at 7.31 pm

73.24 To receive apologies for absence.

Resolved: to receive apologies from Cllr Stewart. Cllr Smith's absence was noted.

74.24 To receive any Declarations of Interest from Members

- a. To receive any **Declarations of Interest** in respect of matters contained in this agenda.
- b. To consider any **Dispensation Requests** received by the Parish Clerk and not previously considered.

Resolved: to note there were no Declarations of Interest, or requests for dispensations.

75.24 Minutes

Resolved: To approve and sign as a correct record without amendment the minutes of the ordinary Firsdown Parish Council meeting held on 19th September 2024

76.24 Co-option

Alan Snook had submitted his application for co-option, which had been circulated to all. Following a short discussion, it was:

Resolved: to co-opt Alan Snook to Firsdown Parish Council.

The Declaration of Acceptance of office was signed, and Cllr snook took his place at the Council table.

77.24 To consider any items raised in the public session (Note no decision can be made) No issues raised.

78.24 To receive reports from:

- a. *The Chairman* – Cllr Brown advised that he had nothing to report that wasn't covered elsewhere.
- b. *The Parish Clerk* – the Clerk advised she had nothing to report.
- c. *The Council's representative to the Southern Area Board* – Cllr Brown reported that those present at the meeting heard presentations from the police on hare coursing, tool thefts from vans and off roading bikes on farmland, and from Wiltshire Council on its new youth activities and support initiative. There was also an update on flooding/drainage issues, and it was made clear that the onus is on the homeowner to protect their property. The next

meeting will be held on Thursday 13th February 2025 at Morgans Vale & Woodfalls Village Hall.

d. Firsdawn Conservation Group – Cllr Walsh advised he had nothing to report. Cllr Brown advised he'd planted 100 native daffodils plus wildflower seeds in the disturbed earth around Wiltshire Council's new outfall pipe.

79.24 Highway/Parish Steward/Footpath matters.

a. **Resolved:** To note there were no new Highways issues

b. **Resolved:** there were no new tasks for the Parish Steward.

c. **Resolved:** To include Cllr Walsh's request for the byway paths to be surfaced with scalpings on the next meeting agenda. **Action:** The Clerk

d. **Resolved:** to note the following updates.

i Issue at Dunstable Crossroads – the results of the topographical survey were displayed, and Cllr Brown confirmed that Wiltshire Council was already working on an improved signing and lining scheme. In the longer term, it was intended to realign the kerb lines to improve the sight lines, but this would be expensive, and require a bid for Substantive funding

ii. Wiltshire Council's Firs Road drainage solution – the proposed road closures were not required, and the scheme is now complete. The FPC will maintain the area around the new outfall pipe. Item closed.

iii. A30/London Road speed reduction project – in hand, the works order had been sent to the contractor. Nothing further to report.

iv. Proposed downgrading of BOAT status – in hand. The Clerk advised this will take some years to achieve. Nothing further to report.

v Proposed dropped kerb at Firs Road/A30 junction – this issue is still with Wiltshire Council's legal team regarding the process of taking legal ownership of the verge in question. Nothing further to report.

vi Community Speed Watch Team – Cllr Buckley reported the Team are still active, and that fewer drivers were being caught.

80.24 Finance

a. **Resolved:** to note and apply the new nationally agreed pay scales for 2024/2025

b. **Resolved:** To confirm the payment of a schedule of accounts for November 2024 in the sum of £1,920.48

c. **Resolved:** To note the 2023.2024 Budget Monitoring form for November 2024. No questions were raised.

d. **Resolved:** To note the bank balances as of 31st October 2024:

Current - £546.13, Deposit - £38,958.20

e To consider and agree the draft budget recommendations for 2025/2026 - The Clerk and Chairman presented the draft budget for 2025/2026 which had previously been circulated to all councillors, and which the FPC considered. After some discussion it was:

Resolved: To agree to a reduced budget of £19,552.05 for 2025/2026, and to earmark reserves of £5000 for the eventual replacement of the play area fencing, £557 for smaller LHFIF projects, £6100 for the A30 speed reduction implementation project and £3332 towards the Local Government election costs in May 2025. It was noted that the grant of £2500 to Pitton Community Shop had been found from the exceptional funds raised in 2024/2025 which were more than eventually will be required.

f. To consider and agree the precept recommendation for 2025/2026 - Wiltshire Council had advised the FPC that the estimated tax base figure for 2025/2026 would be 273.83 (previous year 277.66). Having agreed the budget, the FPC considered the precept, and it was:

Resolved: to agree a decrease of £8,725.00 on the previous year to £19,000 for 2025/2026 The annual cost to a Band D household would be £69.39 (£6.40 per month) a decrease of £30.46 on the whole year. **Action:** Clerk to inform Wiltshire Council.

81.24 New Issues raised for consideration and action as necessary.

To consider a response to the Government's current consultation on enabling remote attendance and proxy voting at local authority meetings in England

After a short discussion, it was

Resolved: to support the enablement of remote attendance, but not proxy voting, which was consider inappropriate for the town and parish council sector. **Action:** The Clerk

82.24 To review other ongoing matters.

- a. *Roundbarrow Farm* – new right of way and talk by RSPB on the proposed land management – the installation of the new right of way is understood to be imminent, and the RSPB now have a long-term lease from Wiltshire Council in place for the land management. It is proposed to return the land to chalk downland over 5 years.
- b. *Tree/hedge cutting from 99 Firs Road to A30/London Road junction* – the land agent has acknowledged the FPC's requests and will action as soon as practicable.
- c. *Bank card* – in hand.

83.24 Planning

a. *To consider a response to planning applications received:*

i. **PL/2024/07899** – front & rear single storey extension plus a garage conversion at 16 Firs Close, Firsdawn. **Resolved:** No objection

ii. **PL/2024/09630** – restructure and raise roof by 675mm and form extension to southwest elevation at 67 Firs Road, Firsdawn **Resolved:** No objection

iii. **PL/2024/09714** – new rear extension, loft conversion with full width dormer window and associated works at 17 Great Croft, Firsdawn. **Resolved:** No objection

iv **PL/2024/09605** – single storey rear extension at 48 Firs Road, Firsdawn **Resolved:** No objection

b. *To consider a response to applications notified between the publication date of the agenda and the date of the meeting, if necessary:* None received

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

PL/2024/06074 – demolition of existing chalet bungalow and construction of replacement chalet bungalow with detached garage/car port at 7 Firs Road, Firsdawn. **Response:** No objection. **Resolved:** to confirm the response given

d. *To note planning decisions made by Wiltshire Council since the last meeting:* None received.

84.24 Items for the next agenda

To note any items for the next agenda

- Scalpings on the B.O.A.T pathways

85.24 To note the dates and times of the next ordinary meetings of the Council.

Thursday 16th January 2025 at 7.30pm in the Meeting Room of Winterslow Village Hall

Thursday 6th March 2025 at 7.30pm in the Meeting Room of Winterslow Village Hall

86.24 To close the meeting.

The meeting closed at 8.45pm

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; Biodiversity.