

**DRAFT Minutes of the Annual Meeting of Firsdown Parish Council held on Thursday  
7<sup>th</sup> May 2026 at 7.45pm in the Meeting Room of Winterslow Village Hall**

**Present**

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

**In attendance:** Catherine Purves (Clerk)

**Also present:** Wiltshire Councillor Rich Rogers, PC Kelvin Ramsey, Sgt Susan Brown

**Public Session:**

PC Ramsey gave his report:

- PC Ramsey reassured the meeting that the culprit involved in the recent domestic incident had been arrested and remanded in custody, there was no threat to the wider community.
- Rogue traders remain a problem in the area.

Wiltshire Councillor Rich Rogers gave his report:

- Wiltshire Council's Local Plan – this has now been withdrawn, and officers are beginning work on a completely new plan which will take account of the additional number of houses required to be built by the Government, this will take approximately three years to complete.
- Parking Consultation for Salisbury – if the proposed changes are not implemented, savings will have to be found elsewhere in Wiltshire Council's budget.
- A30 Pheasant to Lopcombe Corner resurfacing – delayed to August 2026
- Local Highways & Footpath Improvement Group – will now meet three times a year to align with the area Boards, and its funding has been cut by approximately 50%. Any agreed schemes will still progress.
- Dunstable Crossroads – Cllr Rogers is pushing for early prioritising of this work.
- Proposed development at the Clearway – WC Enforcement is involved; Cllr Rogers is chasing this.
- Car wash at A30/Firs Road junction – WC Enforcement has been involved, and considers the matter is closed, but Cllr Rogers is not satisfied and is pursuing this.
- Area Board Digital Support Session – at Winterslow Village Hall on Monday 15<sup>th</sup> June from 1.00pm to 3.30pm.

**COUNCIL BUSINESS**

**27.26 To elect the Chairman of the Council and to receive the Chairman's Declaration of Acceptance of Office**

Cllr Brown was nominated by Cllr Walsh and seconded by Cllr Buckley. He accepted the nomination, and there were no other candidates.

**Resolved:** to elect Cllr Brown as Chairman for 2026/2027

Cllr Brown signed the Declaration of Acceptance of the Office of Chairman

**28.26 To elect the Vice Chairman and to receive the Vice Chairman's Declaration of Acceptance of Office**

**Resolved:** not to elect a Vice Chairman.

**29.26 To receive apologies for absence**

None received, all councillors present.

### **30.26 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, and that no requests for Dispensation had been received.

Councillors were reminded that it is their responsibility to ensure their Register of Interests is up to date

### **31.26 Minutes**

- a. Resolved: To approve and sign as a correct record without amendment the minutes of the ordinary Parish Council meeting held on 5th March 2026

### **32.26 Governance**

a. *To review and update/approve the following governance documents as necessary:*

- i. Internal Control Policy, ii General Risk Assessment, iii Effectiveness of Internal Audit Policy, iv Asset Register, v Standing Orders, vi Financial Regulations.

After a short discussion, the following was

**Resolved:** To approve the six documents, noting that there were new Standing Orders and Financial Regulations to be considered, and that Martyn's Law and cyber security should be referenced in the General Risk Assessment. To be brought to the next meeting in July

b. *To review and confirm the banking arrangements and bank signatories*

**Resolved:** to confirm that the FPC holds a current and deposit account with Unity Trust Bank.  
**Resolved:** to confirm that Cllr Brown, Cllr Beavan, Cllr Buckley and Cllr Walsh are all bank signatories.

**Resolved:** to appoint Cllr Buckley to check the bank accounts and reconciliations on a quarterly basis.

c. *To review and confirm payments made by direct debit*

**Resolved:** to confirm there were two direct debit payments on the current account, the annual one claimed by the Information Commissioners Office and the monthly one claimed by Tesco Mobile

d. *To adopt the Data Mapping Assessment as part of the GDPR suite of documents*

**Resolved:** to adopt

### **33.26 To confirm the Internal Auditor for 2026/2027, the second year of the three-year agreement with Working the Greener Way.**

**Resolved:** to confirm Claire Lingard of Working the Greener Way as the Internal auditor for 2026/2027

### **34.26 To appoint representatives to the under mentioned bodies as required:**

- a) Wiltshire Council's Southern Area Board - **Resolved:** to appoint Cllr Simon Brown
- b) Wiltshire Council's Local Highways and Footpaths Improvement Group – **Resolved:** to appoint Cllr Simon Brown

### **35.26 To consider any items raised in the public session (Note no decision can be made) None raised.**

### **36.26 To receive reports from:**

- a. *The Chairman* – Cllr Brown advised he had attended the Planning Seminar in March, the safety pads in the play area had been scrubbed, and the benches treated. Scaffolding had been removed from Pitton shop and was currently being finished prior to being fitted out ready for the planned opening in September 2026.

- b. The Parish Clerk – Youth Service – the current funding was sufficient to finance the current provision to November, and an application to the Lottery is being made to enhance and develop the service. The 2025/2026 Internal Audit will take place on Friday 9<sup>th</sup> May 2026*
- c. The Council's representative to the Southern Area Board – Area Board meetings are reduced to three per year. There was an interesting presentation given on the wide range of services provided by Wiltshire Council's Public Protection Service.*

### **37.26 Finance**

- a. **Resolved:** To confirm the payment of a schedule of accounts for May 2026 in the sum of £573.60
- b. **Resolved:** To confirm retrospectively the payment of a schedule of accounts for April in the sum of £1,411.24
- c. **Resolved:** To note the receipt of the half year precept – £10,000.00
- d. **Resolved:** To note the bank balances as of 30<sup>th</sup> April 2026 – current £93.00, deposit £45,202.91
- e. **Resolved:** To note the internal bank transfers undertaken by the Clerk during March and April:
- i. 6<sup>th</sup> March 2026 - £2000.00 from deposit to current
  - ii. 9<sup>th</sup> April 2026 - £5000 from deposit to current
  - ii. 27<sup>th</sup> April 2026 - £136.79 from deposit to current
- f. **Resolved:** to defer the review of the general and ear marked reserves pending the results of the Internal Audit for 2025/2026
- g. To consider quotes for cyber security insurance – after a short discussion, during which it was noted that the Council's laptop had anti-virus protection and that the email facility and website were provided by third parties that would take the risk, it was nevertheless thought wise to take out such insurance. The Council's insurance broker Gallaghers had provided a quote from for £374.80 for 2026/2027  
**Resolved:** to accept the quote. Action: The Clerk
- h. To consider a quote for the evaluation of the Clerk's role – the Clerk had obtained a quote of £455.00 plus VAT from the Local Council Consultancy for this work.  
**Resolved:** to accept the quote. **Action:** The Clerk
- i. To consider quotes for the new dog bin emptying contract – the current contractor had withdrawn from its dog bin emptying contract with the FPC without notice on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2026, and a local contractor had stepped into the breach, continuing to empty the five dog bins on a weekly basis. A quote had been obtained from them of £3749.20 plus VAT for 12 months to continue emptying on a weekly basis. After a short discussion, during which it was noted that £2500 had been included in the budget for this purpose, and that time was of the essence, it was  
**Resolved:** to accept the quote from Bawdens for £3749.20 using £1250 from reserves to cover the balance for 12 months to May 31<sup>st</sup> 2027, and to obtain quotes for the 2027/2028 budget setting in the autumn. **Action:** The Clerk

### **38.26 New Issues raised for consideration and action as necessary**

- a. **Resolved:** To note the Wiltshire Council briefing paper on its Devolved Services & Assets policy, and for the FPC to explore the possibility of taking on gully emptying in the parish on its own or in conjunction with other parishes. **Action:** The Clerk

### **39.26 Highway/Parish Steward/Footpath matters.**

- a. *To note any new Highways issues:* - none noted. Cllr Brown updated the meeting on the potholes that had already been repaired.
- b. *To note any new tasks for the Parish Steward:* none noted
- c. *To note any new footpath matters:* none noted
- d. *To note any updates, particularly from the Local Highways & Footways Improvement Group:*
- i. Dunstable Crossroads safety improvements – it was noted that Wilts Cllr Rich Rogers was

pushing for this work to be given early priority for 2026/2027

ii. Dropped kerb at Firs Road/A30 junction – nothing further to report.

iii. Amendments to the B.O.A.T. designation – it was noted that it was unlikely this would be considered, and so after a short discussion, it was **Resolved**: to close this item and advise the LHFIFG. Action: The Clerk

iv 50mph limit on A30/London Road – all the legal work had been done, the signs installed and the vegetation will be removed shortly. 50mph roundels are to be painted on the A30.

v. Lining and signage at Old Malthouse Lane/A30 junction – this will be actioned in 2026/2027

Cllr Brown advised he had widened the Firs Road footpath from the woods towards the A30 and would complete the work in the autumn.

Cllr Walsh reported on the works undertaken by the Footpaths Group

#### **40.26 Planning**

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

PL/2026/02187 – single storey front extension to form enclosed porch/entrance at 77 Firs Road Firsdown. **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:*

PL/2026/29421 – variation of Condition 2 of PL/2024/06074 – reduction in size of dwelling and removal of rear balcony and single storey element to the front at 7 Firs Road, Firsdown. **Resolved**: No objection.

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

PL/2026/011441 – lawful development/existing use of the positioning and use of a twin unit as a residential dwelling at Lodge, Clearway Garage House, Firsdown. Object - A similar planning application was made by the applicant in 2014, which was refused and a subsequent appeal dismissed. The current application circumstances are no different to those of 2014. **Resolved**: to confirm Firsdown PC's objection to this application.

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

#### **41.26 To review other ongoing matters**

a. Cutting of the hedge/trees on the Byway – this will now be actioned in the early autumn.

#### **42.26 Items for the next meeting agenda in July 2026**

- Possible signing and lining on the A30 in the Figsbury Ring area
- Recommendations from the Internal auditor's report for 2025/2026

#### **43.26 To note the date and time of the next ordinary meetings of the Council and decide on an extra meeting for End of Year accounts and AGAR approval**

Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> June 2026 – End of Year accounts and 2025/2026 AGAR approval only

Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> July 2026

Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> September 2026

Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> November 2026

All at 7.30pm in the Meeting Room of Winterslow Village Hall

#### **44.26 To close the meeting**

The meeting closed at 9.15pm

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