

DRAFT Minutes of the Firsdown Parish Council meeting held on Thursday 10th
September 2026 at 7.30pm in the Meeting Room of Winterslow Village Hall

Present

Cllr Simon Brown (Chairman)

Cllr Jim Buckley

Cllr Nigel Walsh

In attendance: Catherine Purves (Clerk)

Also present: Wiltshire Councillor Rich Rogers, 2 x police officers

Public Session:

The police gave their report:

- PC Kelvin Ramsey has been transferred, and has not yet been replaced, however officers with a good local knowledge are covering his rural area meanwhile.
- No reported crimes for Firsdown in July and August.

Wiltshire Councillor Rich Rogers gave his report:

- Wiltshire Council has started its consultations for its new Local Plan, beginning with a call for and identification of potential sites suitable for development.
- Household Recycling Centres – the Salisbury depot at Churchfields is part of a scheme trialling booking arrangements for 30-minute slots. This is to be done one week in advance either online or by phone to WC Customer services. There are concerns that this will lead to an increase in flytipping.
- Parish Emergency Assistance Scheme – this scheme which provides grit for grit bins, sandbags and gel sacs will end on 31st March 2027, and Parish Councils will need to pay for these if their parishes need them. To be included in the 2027/2028 budget if required.
- Southern Area Board – the next meeting is scheduled for 15th October, but this could be deferred to 27th October.

COUNCIL BUSINESS

The meeting started at 7.42pm

53.26 Apologies

Apologies were received and noted from Cllr Beavan, who had a previous engagement.

54.26 To receive any Declarations of Interest from Members

a. **Resolved:** to note there were no Declarations of Interest

b. **Resolved:** to note that no Dispensation Requests had been received.

55.26 Minutes

- a. **Resolved:** To approve and sign as a correct record without amendment the minutes of the extra ordinary Firsdown Parish Council meeting held on 22nd June 2026
- b. **Resolved:** To note that the meeting scheduled to be held on 2nd July 2026 was inquorate.

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

57.26 To receive reports from:

a. *The Chairman:* Cllr Brown advised that Pitton Community Shop would be open at the beginning of October. He had attended the WALC Road Safety Seminar in July, where Wiltshire Council revealed a 5-point initiative to reduce road accidents and injuries in the county. Data showed that driver behaviour was the most common cause of accidents.

- b. *The Parish Clerk* – the Clerk advised she had nothing to report.
- c. *The Council's representative to the Southern Area Board*: Cllr Brown advised that at the June meeting, there had been presentations about fly tipping, abandoned vehicles and the Men's Shed in Winterslow.
- d. *Firsdown Conservation Group*: Cllr Walsh advised there was nothing to report.
- e. *Community Speed Watch*: Cllr Buckley advised that sessions had restarted now the weather was cooler.

58.26 Finance

- a. **Resolved:** To note the bank balances as of 31st August 2026:
Current: £426.67, Deposit: £42,460.34
- b. **Resolved:** to approve the following internal bank transfers undertaken by the Clerk:
 - i. 8th May 2026 – £700.00 from deposit to current
 - ii. 10th July 2026 - £1250.00 from deposit to current
 - iii. 4th August 2026 - £1000.00 from deposit to current
- c. **Resolved:** To confirm retrospectively for payment a schedule of accounts for June 2026 in the sum of £1168.13
- d. **Resolved:** To confirm retrospectively for payment a schedule of accounts for July 2026 in the sum of £1395.53
- e. **Resolved:** To confirm retrospectively for payment a schedule of accounts for August in the sum of £998.75
- f. **Resolved:** To confirm for payment a schedule of accounts for September in the sum of £867.70, with two additional invoices of £42.00 and £307.27. Total for payment £1216.97
- g. **Resolved:** To note the August 2025/2026 Budget Monitoring form
- h. **Resolved:** To note the August 2025 bank reconciliation
- i. To consider the earmarked reserves for 2026/2027 – after a short discussion, it was **Resolved:** that the following Earmarked Reserves should apply for 2026/2027:

A30 50mph speed project work	£7,000.00
Smaller LHFIFG contributions	£750.00
Dropped kerbs	£1,500.00
Dunstable Crossroads	£6,000.00
A30/Malthouse Lane signing and lining	£2,500.00
	£17,750.00
- j. **Resolved:** To note the 3.3% increase in the National Joint Council's Spinal Column Points pay rates which applies with immediate effect backdated to 1st April 2026.

59.26 Governance

- a. To note and action as appropriate the recommendations from the Internal Audit Report:
 - R1 – ensure hyperlink to Wiltshire Council's Members' Registers of Interest is published on the Councillors' Profile Page **Resolved:** to note this had been actioned
 - R2 – consider reviewing and adopting the Local Government Association's Model Code of Conduct and the Society of Local Council's Civility & Respect Pledge **Resolved:** to bring draft documents to the November meeting for consideration and adoption. **Action:** The Clerk
 - R3 - Include cyber security and IT policies in the General Risk Register **Action:** The Clerk
 - R4 – Issue Clerk with new National Association of Local Council's model contract of employment reflecting her continuous terms of employment from 2018 **Resolved:** to agree and note this is to be done. **Action:** The Clerk
 - R5 – Underpayment of Clerk for FY2025/2026 **Resolved:** to note the Clerk had been paid correctly for FY 2025/2026
 - R6 – Formal notification of annual increase in the nationally agreed National Joint Council's Spinal Column Points pay rates to the Parish Council to the next formal meeting after receipt

by the Clerk **Resolved:** to note this had been done – see item 58.26j above.

R7 – Adopt and upload the latest Information Commissioner's Office Publication Scheme to the website. See item 59.26d below.

R8 – Adopt a policy giving clear instructions about submitting a Freedom of Information Request to the Parish Council See item 59.26e below

R9 – Ensure the Parish Council website is fully compliant with current accessibility legislation as amended from time to time. **Resolved:** to note this had been done, and that the webmaster had confirmed compliance.

- c. **Resolved:** to adopt the ICO recommended Data Protection Complaints Procedure and upload to the website. **Action:** The Clerk and Cllr Brown
- d. **Resolved:** to adopt the ICO recommended Publication Scheme and upload to the website. **Action:** The Clerk and Cllr Brown
- e. **Resolved:** To adopt instructions about submitting an FOI request to the Parish Council and upload to the website. **Action:** The Clerk and Cllr Brown

60.26 New Issues raised for consideration and action as necessary

a. To consider a request for possible additional signing and lining on the A30/London Road in the Figsbury Ring area. Cllr Brown advised he had spoken to Highways about the likelihood of an application from the Parish Council for this work being approved and actioned and had been told it would not be taken forward. In the circumstances, it was

Resolved: not to take the matter further

b. **Resolved:** To note receipt and recommended actions from the 2026 Annual Play Inspection. Councillors noted that the recommendations were minor and will be attended to.

Action: The Clerk and Cllr Brown

c. To consider electronic communication within the parish. After a short discussion, during which it was noted that residents can subscribe to news from the Parish Council via the Parish Council website, and that residents may create their own WhatsApp group without Parish Council input, it was **Resolved:** not to take the matter further.

d. To consider and respond to Wiltshire Council's Community Governance Review – it was noted that Wiltshire Council was undertaking one of its periodic reviews of parish boundaries and councillor numbers. After a short discussion, it was **Resolved:** there was no need to change the Parish boundary, nor amend the number of councillors required. **Action:** The Clerk

61.26 Highway/Parish Steward/Footpath matters.

a. *To note any new Highways issues:* No new issues

b. *To note any new tasks for the Parish Steward:* no new tasks

c. *To note any new footpath matters:* it was reported that a branch had fallen across footpath FIRS 6 (from Firs Road to the play area) from the neighbouring property, and that the hedge from 99 Firs Road to the A30/London Road junction needs cutting back again. **Resolved:** for Cllr Brown to contact the resident to request the removal of the branch, and to cut back the hedge. **Action:** Cllr Brown

d. *To note any other updates:*

i. *Dropped kerb at Firs Road/A30 junction* – the Clerk and Chairman had raised the 4-year delay with Highways. The identification of ownership had been considered as background work for Wiltshire Council's Legal Team and so had not been considered a priority. However, it seems that different landowners own different small areas of land in the location. After a short discussion, it was **Resolved:** to consider a financial contribution towards the dropped kerb project in the 2027/2028 budget. **Action:** The Clerk

It was noted that Cllr Brown has a meeting with Highways to discuss the way ahead on 11th September and will report the outcome at the next meeting.

ii. *Proposed works at Dunstable Crossroads:* the proposed scheme is still being worked on

iii *Proposed additional lining and signage at Old Malthouse Lane/White Way/A30 junctions:* with Wiltshire Council's contractor M Group to be implemented before March 2027

62.26 Planning

a. *To consider a response to planning applications received:* None

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

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

i. PL/2026/03622 – Certificate of Lawfulness re the existing use of the container, container area and associated access, confirming they have been in continuous existence for more than 10 years at The Old Chalk Pit, Old Malthouse Lane, Ford – **Resolved: To object** on the basis the site has already been refused permission for B8 storage. The applicant has not demonstrated the continued need exists for the existing container to support the agricultural holding, nor addressed the frequency of use/access to the existing container, nor shown how the continued use of the container will address the highway/noise and environmental aspects which were reasons for the refusal of the site to be used for B8 storage in 2023.

ii. PL/2026/04371 – Certificate of Lawfulness for existing continued use of land with timber lodge as a separate residential dwelling at Lodge, Clearway House, Firsdwn: **Resolved: to object**. The applicant has not made clear what the original planning application was for the erection of the dwelling and what conditions were attached.

Firsdwn PC objects to the continuing placement/erection of temporary dwellings on this site without prior planning permissions being sought and granted. Certificate of lawfulness applications are being sought retrospectively after the appropriate period of time has passed to make the dwellings legal.

In 2014, an application for the erection of 2 mobile homes (14/06525/FUL, dated 27 June 2014), was refused by notice dated 9 September 2014) which stated that:

The proposed development constitutes an unjustified form of residential development in the countryside that does not relate to a clearly established existing/essential need for rural worker(s) to be accommodated on or near an agricultural holding.

The proposal is thereby considered contrary to Policies C2, H23, H27, H28 & H32 of the adopted Local Plan (constituting saved policies listed in Appendix C, of the adopted South Wiltshire Core Strategy), and also contrary to Core Policy 3 of the adopted South Wiltshire Core Strategy and Core Policy 48 of the emerging Wiltshire Core Strategy, and also contrary to the guidance contained within the NPPF & NPPG.

It is Firsdwn PC's view that the same situation applies here, the applicant is not using the accommodation to provide dwellings for rural workers, nor has provided the evidence required that such facilities are needed.

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

i. PL/2026/01441 – lawful development/existing use of the positioning and use of a twin unit as a residential dwelling at Lodge, Clearway Garage House, Firsdwn. Approved 18th May 2026

ii. PL/2026/02187 – single storey front extension to form enclosed porch/entrance at 77 Firs Road Firsdwn. Approved 3rd June 2026

iii PL/2026/02421 – variation of Condition 2 of PL/2024/06074 – reduction in dwelling size and removal of rear balcony and single storey element to front of 7 Firs Road, Firsdwn. Approved 23rd June 2026.

e To note that Wiltshire Council is calling for sites for development for possible inclusion in its new Local Development Plan.

Resolved: to note these updates.

63.26 To review and note other ongoing matters or decide on further action. As appropriate

a. Purchase of second replacement bench – to be delayed to November.

b. Hedge/trees and grass cutting on the byway – the trees are to be cut week beginning 14th September. The contractor has been instructed about the annual grass cut and one third of the hedge cutting.

c. Benchmarking of the Council and Clerk's role – this had been previously circulated and

was accepted and adopted. **Resolved:** to implement the recommendations made. **Action:** The Clerk

d. Joint gully emptying project with Grimstead, Idmiston and Pitton & Farley Parish Councils – it was noted that Wiltshire Council is to consider its updated Service and Asset Devolution Policy at its Full Council meeting in October. Alderbury Parish Council has also been asked to join the project.

64.26 Items for the next agenda

None noted. Clerk to be advised of any items by Wednesday 28th October

65.26 To note the date and time of the next ordinary meetings of the Council

Thursday 5th November 2026 at 7.30pm in the Meeting Room of Winterslow Village Hall

66.26 To close the meeting

The meeting closed at 9.11pm

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