

**DRAFT Minutes of the ordinary Firsdown Parish Council meeting held on Wednesday
6th July 2022 at 7.15pm in Winterslow Village Hall**

Present

Cllr Simon Brown (Chairman)
Cllr Paul Kennedy
Cllr Steve Smith
Cllr Nigel Walsh

In attendance: Catherine Purves (Clerk)

Also present

One member of the public, Wiltshire Councillor Rich Rogers, PC Pete Jung

Public Session

Wiltshire Council Rich Rogers gave his report

- Q1 Financial news - Wiltshire Council finances are in a much stronger position than expected, and as a result £200k has been allocated to the white lining programme, £350k towards the purchase of an additional gully emptier and £150k towards litter/fly tipping enforcement and the employment of additional surveillance officers. It is also possible that the Parish Steward scheme will receive a boost too
- Youth Support services – there will be another pop-up event at Barry's Field Winterslow on 27th July.
- Local Highways and Footways Improvement Group – next meets online on August 17th, and will discuss a possible Dunstable Cross Roads Improvement Scheme
- Partnership working – the area Board is contacting local partners with a view to collaborating on delivering the Area Board's theme's on Youth Outreach work, environmentally friendly villages.
- Proposed development at 6 Firs Road – nothing further to report

PC Pete Jung gave his report

- Although there was nothing specific to report on Firsdown, a recent spate of opportunist thefts had led to increased late night/early morning patrols, and he reminded all to ensure sheds and outbuildings were secure.
- Support was being provided to Speedwatch Groups.
- Neighbourhood watch schemes had been replaced by the Community Messaging system, where residents could sign up to and select which issues they wished to be notified about. Facebook Village Groups are also useful too for alerting residents to suspicious behaviour.

COUNCIL BUSINESS

52.22 To receive apologies for absence

Resolved: to receive apologies from Cllr Beavan and Cllr Stewart for family reasons, and to accept the reasons given

53.22 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 none declared

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

Resolved: to note there were none.

54.22 Minutes

Resolved: To approve and sign as a correct record without amendment the minutes of the Annual Parish Council meeting held on 4th May 2022

55.22 To consider any items raised in the public session (Note no decision can be made)

Resolved: to note none raised

56.22 To receive reports from:

a. The Chairman – Cllr Brown advised he had nothing to report

b. The Parish Clerk – The Clerk advised she will be attending the Wiltshire branch meeting of the Society of Local Council Clerks on Friday 15th July, and that Wiltshire Council Elections had confirmed that it has not received any requests for a by-election, and so the FPC is able to co-opt to replace Rich Rogers. She would be on leave from Monday 15th August to Friday 26th August.

c. The Council's representative to the Southern Area Board – The Clerk advised Wiltshire Cllr Rich Rogers was elected as Chairman of the Southern Area Board. The Board had discussed setting its projects for the next year, including a youth outreach programme, the establishment of a new environmental group and a range of projects and activities to help tackle the loneliness and isolation of the elderly. Applications for Area Board community funding will no longer be accepted from town and parish councils, although they can still apply for Health & Wellbeing, and Youth funding. All applications must now demonstrate compliance with Wiltshire Council's new Business Plan. The next meeting will be held on Thursday 8th September in the Whiteparish Memorial Hall.

Resolved: to note these reports.

57.22 Finance

a. Schedule of Payments - **Resolved:** To confirm the payment of a schedule of payments for July in the sum of £3837.55, plus an additional payment of £214.20 (cheque no 409) to HMRC for the quarterly PAYE tax due.

b. Budget Monitoring 2022.2023. No questions were raised. **Resolved:** to note the 2022.2023 Budget Monitoring form

58.22 New Issues raised for consideration and action as necessary

a. Councillor training –

i. General training - Cllr Brown, Cllr Smith and Cllr Walsh expressed an interest in principle in attending Councillor training to be arranged in October at a cost of no more than £50.00 per head

ii. Play Inspection Training – Councillors noted that the Wiltshire Association of Local Councils has organised a training day on Wednesday 21st September at an approximate net cost of £130.00 per person. Firsdow PC's play area is likely to be used. Cllr Brown expressed an interest in attending this. **Resolved:** to progress **Action:** The Clerk

b. Retention of mown area on byway as community space – after a short discussion, and contrary to the Clerk's advice it was

Resolved: to keep short the mown area used for the Jubilee event. **Action:** The Clerk and Cllr Walsh

c. Cycle stands at play area – after a short discussion, it was

Resolved: not to install cycle stands

d. Jubilee legacy flag design and flagpole – after a short discussion, during which it was noted that the estimated costs for a suitable pole and installation were approximately £4,500.00, it was

Resolved: not to continue with this project.

e. Refurbishment of play area – after a short discussion, during which it was noted that the fencing was due to be replaced, and that the swings were coming to the end of life, it was

Resolved: to obtain quotes for a replacement bird's nest swing that would provide more inclusive use. **Action:** The Clerk

f. Proposed Pitton/Firsdow footpath – Councillors noted that Wiltshire Council has agreed to look into extending Footpath PIFA43 (an extension of FIRS2, The Monarchs Way) from its current end in the middle of a field, so that the two villages are linked, and after a short discussion, it was

Resolved: to welcome and support this project and advise both Pitton & Farley Parish Council and Wiltshire Council. **Action:** Clerk

g. Future of Wiltshire Council's Roundbarrow Farm, Pitton – the Clerk advised that under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) ('Habitats Regulations') planning applications in the River Test catchment in Wiltshire are required to be nitrogen neutral. Some planning applications have been held up for over 18 months but now a mitigation solution is available on Council land at Roundbarrow Farm, Pitton, which was previously managed as a dairy farm and was returned to Wiltshire Council in September 2021. Managing the land to enhance the natural capital and for conservation purposes, rather than as an intensive dairy farm, creates nitrogen

'credits' that can be traded to counterbalance the nitrogen burdens from new development. Wiltshire Council has agreed to bring forward Council land at Roundbarrow Farm for nitrogen offsetting, and a separate strategy is being progressed for the potential repurposing of the farm buildings.

Resolved: to note

h. Suitable environmentally friendly projects – after a short discussion, during which Cllr Walsh offered to form a Conservation Group, it was

Resolved: to start by raising awareness and drawing attention to the Wiltshire Council Community Environmental Toolkit which will be uploaded to the Parish Council website. **Action:** The Clerk and Cllr Walsh

i. Recording/streaming of Parish Council meetings – after a short discussion, during which it was thought wise to record the Parish Council meetings and post them to the Parish website for the next 3 meetings rather than to stream them live, it was

Resolved: to allocate £200.00 to this project and to research a suitable camera and tripod system.

Action: The Clerk/Cllr Brown

j. Clerk's attendance at the Society of Local Council Clerks' National Conference – **Resolved:** that the Clerk should attend this in November, at a cost of £50.25

k. Safe vehicular access from Firs Road to the Byway – councillors noted that the main barrier to widening the existing track was the cost of relocating the telegraph pole stay wire, which narrowed the track at the Firs Road end. Cllr Walsh circulated a plan of a proposed new lay-out at the Firs Road end, whereby the gate access and short line of fencing to the neighbouring landowner's field would be swung around to the diagonal, so allowing tractors and emergency services to access the field and track safely. The metal barriers at the play area end of the track would be replaced with removable barriers. After a short discussion, it was

Resolved: to explore the matter further, and obtain quotes for the work from local fencing contractors.

Action: The Clerk

59.22 Highway/Parish Steward/Footpath matters.

a. To note any new Highways issues for referral to Wiltshire Council

i. Need for a dropped kerb at the junction of A30/Firs Road – it was noted that needed to be located near the bus stop.

Resolved: to refer this to the LHFIC for action, and Cllr Brown will take photos to accompany the application. **Action:** The Clerk and Cllr Brown.

ii. Speed Indicator Device – data had recently been downloaded from the Firsdawn SID and forwarded to Wilts Council as evidence to support the creation of a Police pilot project to allocate more resources to supporting Speedwatch groups and providing enforcement action.

Resolved: to upload the data to the Parish website as well. **Action:** The Clerk and Cllr Brown

b. To note any new tasks for the Parish Steward – Cllr Walsh mentioned about the weeds on the kerb in Firs Close and Greatcroft. **Action:** The Clerk & Cllr Brown to add to Parish Steward work request for next visit.

c. To note any new footpath matters: - Cllr Walsh advised that the circular walk had been cut

60.22 Planning

a. To consider a response to planning applications received:

PL/2022/04297 – demolition of existing outbuilding, replacement single storey detached workshop/domestic storage outbuilding at 78 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. **Resolved:** to note none notified

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

i. PL/2022/03793 - Construction of single storey detached dwelling (resubmission of 19/04404/FUL) at 26 Firs Road, Firsdawn. **Resolved:** to confirm the Parish Council's objection because of sight line and access issues.

ii. PL/2022/03423 - Change of use of 1000m2 of woodland to garden use at 86 Firs Road, Firsdawn –

Resolved: to confirm the Parish Council's support of this application

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

resolved: to note there were none, and that application PL/2022/03793 at 26 Firs Road had been withdrawn by the applicant.

61.22 To review other ongoing matters for further action as necessary

a. Picnic benches on the Byway – the Clerk advised these had been delivered and installed in time for the Jubilee event, and feedback has been very positive. This will no longer be an agenda item.

b. Play area fencing – the Clerk advised the second company approached has been less than helpful, and with thoughts that mixing wooden railings with plastic posts might affect the integrity of the fencing, it was **Resolved:** to obtain quotes for the replacement of all the fencing with recycled plastic fencing, and also with wood. **Action:** The Clerk

c. Path Improvement Grant – the Clerk reminded councillors that this scheme is now administered by the new LHFIG, and unfortunately the FPC's application was unsuccessful, as the map lecterns will not ultimately be the property of Wiltshire Council. The FPC will need to pay for the full cost of two lecterns, as originally intended.

d. Map lectern project – design, lecterns, location – in the absence of Cllr Beavan, this item was deferred to the next meeting.

e. Community Jubilee event – Cllr Smith advised this was well attended, with positive feedback, and donations from the funds raised were made to Barnados and Project Uganda.

f. Bank mandate – Councillors noted that Lloyds Bank had still not acted on the instructions given in November 2021, and with the resignation of Rich Rogers as a Firsdown councillor, it the mandate would need amending again anyway. After a short discussion, it was **Resolved:** to remove Len Simcock, Brian Edgeley and Rich Rogers, add Cllr Beavan, Cllr Stewart and Cllr Smith, and all to have online access. **Action:** The Clerk

62.22 Items for the next agenda

- Byway access quotes
- Map lectern project
- Tree and wildflower planting on the byway

63.22 To note the dates and time of the next ordinary meeting of the Council

Wednesday September 7th 2022 at 7.15pm in Winterslow Village Hall

64.22 To close the meeting

The meeting closed at 8.40pm

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