

# FIRBECK PARISH COUNCIL

## Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting of 24<sup>th</sup> January 2024

Present: Cllr C Jopling (Chair), Cllr D Pittard, Cllr J Pittard, Cllr B McManus, Cllr R Potts.

In attendance: RMBC officers A Saxton, K Heydon, 13 members of the public

**3625** Apologies – To Receive and Approve Reasons for Absence. Nil.

**3626** Declarations of Interest. Nil.

**3627** Public Discussion Period.

- a. Village Drainage Issues (inc. Item 3630 below). Numerous issues had been experienced in the village during the autumn/winter period, and both members and parishioners wished to explore options to prevent repeats in the future. A particular area of concern was the copse opposite the entrance to Firbeck Hall, in which soakaways had been installed many years ago but could no longer cope, causing issues on the road and to residents of 'The Beeches'. The flood defences of The Beeches were also no longer sufficient in being able to divert water away from the village, and the RMBC officers present stated that RMBC were investigating options to improve the situation.

Other issues relating to drainage were concerns over the lack of road sweeping/drain clearing (the RMBC officers advised that these should be completed once per year, but the council overall was currently behind schedule), the HaHa was full of stagnant water, and the copse mentioned above was like a pond, causing concerns that trees were becoming unstable as a result.

**3628** To Approve the Parish Council Minutes:

- a. 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2023. The minutes were approved as an accurate record.

**3629** Ward Update. No Ward member was present, but it was noted with thanks that a grant of £2k had been received from the Ward members towards the cost of installing CCTV in the village.

**3630** Discuss Village Drainage Issues. See item 3627 above.

**3631** Finance:

- a. To Approve the Bank Reconciliation – 31<sup>st</sup> December 2023. **Resolved:** that the bank reconciliation be approved.
- b. To Approve the Budget Monitoring Report – 31<sup>st</sup> December 2023. **Resolved:** that the budget monitoring report be approved.
- c. To Approve Accounts for Payment. **Resolved:** that the monthly accounts covering the period since the last meeting be approved for payment.
- d. To Discuss and Agree the Precept and Budget for FY2024-25. Members reviewed the budget proposed by the Clerk and it was noted that a change in the tax base of the village due to properties being occupied in Firbeck Hall would result in extra income. To achieve a balanced budget would require a Band D precept increase of 4.07% (£2.56pa).

Members also noted planned changes to earmarked reserves in the FY 24/25 of £3k towards the cost of CCTV, and £2k to purchase a second defibrillator. In addition, it was hoped that the Neighbourhood Plan would commence very soon and some of the £2k earmarked to contribute towards the cost of this may be required in the next 12 months.

**Resolved:** it was resolved by unanimous decision to increase the precept at its current level to £12,000 for the year 2023/24, the majority of the increase being funded by a change in the tax base for the village and just a 4.07% increase for village taxpayers

### 3632 Updates on Current/Ongoing Issues

- a. Verges/Grass Maintenance and General Street Scene. Concerns had been raised in both Firbeck and Letwell regarding the management of hedgerows by local farmers, mud on the roads and tractor movements through the villages. The Chair proposed a joint meeting with Letwell PC and local farmers (which was approved by members) with the following aims:
  - i. An appreciation by the farmers of their impact on the villages.
  - ii. A better understanding of farming operations.
  - iii. Improved respect for the infrastructure and appearance of the villages.
- b. 'I Love Firbeck' Project – update. Cllr J Pittard had contacted the local Ward members for free bulbs for spring planting and had also entered the village in this year's Yorkshire-in-Bloom competition.
- c. Re-Homing the Original Wood Village Sign in St Martin's Church. A parishioner had offered to cover the cost of re-housing the sign in the church and would take over the project from this point. Item closed.
- d. Village Road Safety, Including Speed Limits and HGV Traffic. Mobile speed cameras had been offered to the village by the local PCSOs, and members were requested to send their thoughts on the best times for temporary installation.
- e. Village CCTV – update. Awaiting further information from RMBC re procurement and installation.
- f. Second Defibrillator – update. Due to already having one defibrillator in the village options for funding a second defibrillator were not possible. Quotes for a full price purchase would now be sought.
- h. Village Neighbourhood Plan. A funding application for a grant to cover the costs of developing a Neighbourhood Plan had been submitted. AECOM, a company that could help with designs to support the plan had requested a meeting within the next few days. A first public meeting to start the process with input from parishioners would be held in the next few weeks (date to be circulated) but the Chair stressed the development of the Plan would not proceed without members of the parish joining a committee to oversee its development.

### 3633 Planning

- a. To Consider the Following Planning Applications:
  - i. RB2023/1694 – Erection of stable block and tack room – 1 Princes Plantation New Road Firbeck – no comments.
  - ii. RB2023/1713 – Single storey side extension to existing garage, single storey front extensions, alterations to the roof including increase in roof height to create rooms in roof space and installation of 3 no. dormer

windows to front with roof terraces and glass balustrade – Penwood 1 Park Hill Drive Firbeck – no comments.

iii. RB2024/0018 – Prior notification for the proposed change of use from an agricultural building to a dwelling house (Use Class C3) – barn at Lamb Lane Firbeck – no comments.

b. To Note the Following Planning Applications Processed Since the Last Meeting.

i. RB2023/1484 – Increase in roof height to create rooms in roof space with dormer windows to front at The Spinney Salt Hill Firbeck – Granted Conditionally

NOT ON AGENDA

ii. RB2023/1201 – Erection of porch to front and replacement pitched roof to existing front extension at Park Hill Farm Park Hill Drive Firbeck – Granted Conditionally

**3634** To Review the Christmas Tree Festival. Once again the festival was felt to be a very successful event, and the small trees had been preserved for use again next year. A couple of donations were still outstanding.

**3635** To Discuss the Poppy Appeal 2024. Item deferred to next meeting.

There being no other business the meeting closed at 8:05pm.

The next meeting would be held at 7pm on **Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> March 2024.**

Signed:.....

Date:.....