



EAST PRESTON PARISH COUNCIL

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COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT COMMITTEE

MINUTES: of the Committee Meeting held on Monday, 25th January 2021 at 19:00 via the Zoom online meeting application

PRESENT: Councillors C Bowman, A Chapman, L Duff, P Gander, E Linton (Chairman), D Moore and S Toney

ALSO: Clerk to the Council, Simon Cross

Mr John Heaton, Office of National Statistics (until 19:45)

The following abbreviations may appear in these Minutes:

ADC – Arun District Council;
NHS – National Health Service;
NR – Network Rail;

VHF – East Preston & Kingston Village Hall Foundation;
WSCC – West Sussex County Council.

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The meeting opened at 19:01.

The meeting was held in accordance with *The Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020* and the council's own *Protocol for Remote Meetings*.

069/21 APOLOGIES AND REASONS FOR ABSENCE

All committee members were present.

Cllr Linton led a round of introductions for the benefit of Mr Heaton.

070/21 PERSONAL AND/OR PECUNIARY/PREJUDICIAL INTERESTS

No declarations were made.

071/21 PUBLIC SESSION

No members of the public were present.

072/21 OFFICE OF NATIONAL STATISTICS – CENSUS 2021

The following paper had been circulated in advance of the meeting:

Office of National Statistics – Census 2021

Committee is asked to hear from John Heaton, Census Engagement Manager, South and West of West Sussex, on ways in which the council may be able to help with Census 2021.

Council is already aware it has been contacted by Mr Heaton and has already published an initial article in the e-newsletter dated 1st December 2020. In the run-up to the 2011 Census, the council did publish a full-page article in the Winter 2011 Newsletter. Mr Heaton has drafted an article for the Winter 2021 Newsletter.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

18th January 2021

Mr Heaton introduced himself as the Census Engagement Manager for South and West of West Sussex. His area covered that of Arun, Worthing and Adur, and Chichester District Councils.

He thanked the committee for inviting him to the meeting and thanked the Clerk for the enormous help he has been from the first contact from Mr Heaton. Mr Heaton said it had “been lovely to engage with him.”

As Census Engagement Manager he had three main responsibilities. 1. To maximise the responses received; 2. To get the highest possible level of online completion; and 3. To ensure the responses received come from as broad a cross-section of the population as possible. Mr Heaton explained the latter was to ensure those who may feel most marginalised are recognised and given the support they may need.

Information collated by the census will begin to be published in the middle of 2022.

Mr Heaton said he saw this council’s role in Census 2021 as being one of publicising the census and allaying respondents’ fears about the validity of the census. Mr Heaton was very aware of people’s fears of being scam and data theft. He had already had one article published in an e-newsletter to residents in December and was finishing an article for inclusion in the Winter 2021 (paper) Newsletter. He was aware he could include further articles in future e-newsletters if he needed to. Additionally, he hoped the council would be able to signpost residents to sources of information they may need.

Households will start to receive direct mails about the census at the beginning of March. Letters will include a code for online completion except for a very small percentage which have already been identified as needing a paper copy, but Mr Heaton did not believe there were (m)any of those in East Preston. The letters will contain a Freephone number for anyone who would prefer a paper copy. Mr Heaton said the council could let him know about anyone it thought would only be able to complete a paper form.

A Census Field Force was being recruited and these would be the people calling on households to chivvy up responses or to help where necessary. Members of the Census Field Force would not be going inside people’s properties.

The census would be available in something like thirty languages with guidance available in, at least, another twenty languages.

In response to a question about could people help other people by filling in the census online with them, Mr Heaton said his not-quite-official answer was yes.

With no further questions forthcoming, Mr Heaton said again he was very grateful for the opportunity to talk to the committee. As a former resident, he had a lot of affection for East Preston and still visited regularly.

(Mr Heaton left the meeting at the conclusion of this item.)

073/21 CHRISTMAS (2020) POETRY

The following paper had been circulated in advance of the meeting:

Christmas Poetry initiative

Committee is asked to receive a report on the Christmas Poetry initiative.

On 9th November, I had the random idea of asking East Preston residents to submit a poem of their own with the council publishing one a day on its Facebook page throughout December, a total of 31 poems. At the date of the last meeting we had received thirteen entries. In total we received 33 entries, one of which was only appropriate to be used on 30th November and one only appropriate to be used on 1st January. So all 33 were used on a one-a-day basis. Most were from East Preston residents although a few came from slightly further afield via Philippa Bower's writing group. Apart from one day where I got the clock wrong, all were published at 11:00, the mistake was posted at 23:00.

All received some likes and most received nice comments. Two councillors and one officer were amongst the contributors.

It was suggested at Full Council the poem with the most Shares should be published in the Winter 2021 Newsletter. This was *Is Your Chimney Covid Safe?* by Robert Morley of Normandy Drive.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

18th January 2021

The Clerk confirmed *Is Your Chimney COVID-safe?* would be included in the Winter 2021 Newsletter.

074/21 EXTRA KIND MONTH

The following paper had been circulated in advance of the meeting:

Extra Kind Month

Committee is asked to receive an update on Extra Kind Month.

At the last meeting, the committee agreed to make February East Preston's Extra Kind Month. Cllrs Linton and Duff were looking at adapting the Happiness Month calendar from Action for Happiness to make it more relevant to East Preston and also to lose three days to make the calendar suitable for February.

Cllr Gander has drafted a newsletter article about being positive and this will refer to Action for Happiness and other similar mental health wellbeing websites. Interestingly, or maybe not, in the e-newsletter of 6th January I shared the details of five organisations which could be contacted by people wanting to discuss mental health concerns and this time. Each was included with a link to the website – not one subscriber has followed any of those links, not even out of curiosity.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

18th January 2021

The committee AGREED with the Clerk's concern having Extra Kind Month in February did not leave much time for the preparation that was still needed, and AGREED to reschedule it to March. Cllr Linton agreed to collate suggestions from councillors and officers as to some of the suggestions that could be include in the calendar. Such should be provided by 29th January. Cllr Linton and the Clerk will then work on the final wording which will then be passed to Cllrs Chapman and Duff to design into something pretty residents can download from the council's website at the beginning of March. Cllrs Chapman and Duff will complete that by 22nd February.

075/21 PLAYSCHEMES IN 2021

The following paper had been circulated in advance of the meeting:

Playschemes – 2021

Committee is asked to receive an update on a possible Easter playscheme. There is £750 in the proposed Playschemes budget line for the coming financial year.

At the last meeting, the committee agreed to approach Sussex Forest Activities about a possible half-day playscheme during the Easter holidays.

Sam from Sussex Forest Activities has responded as follows: "Covid allowing I am happy to do a half day for the village. If you can get the school to let you use their land I can do it very cheaply, let's say £60 for the session plus materials, such as marshmallows and hot chocolate. This would give you two leaders to lead the session. If it is going to be elsewhere in the village it will be a lot more work as I will have to bring all of my kit with me so that would be not so cheap as I would have to go to my lockup at Dappers Lane and get everything out the day before. That's more like £125.00 plus materials. We could do the session at the campsite in Dappers lane and then I am again quite happy to do that for £60.00 again with two leaders."

I have made an initial and cautious approach to the school.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

18th January 2021

The committee AGREED running a half-day playscheme during the Easter holidays (2nd to 16th April) was no longer likely to be possible given the current status of the pandemic.

The committee AGREED to look at May half-term instead. The dates for May half-term were 31st May to the 4th June.

076/21 EASTER ACTIVITIES IN 2021

The following paper had been circulated in advance of the meeting:

Easter 2021

Committee is asked to consider any other Easter activities it wants to offer.

There is a very real possibility anything communal we arrange for the Easter holidays may not be able to go ahead because of government restrictions at that time. Does the committee want to think about some Easter activities in the same way as we had Christmas activities?

I did wonder about encouraging residents to paint pebbles and having those as a trail around the village somehow. On the other hand though, I wonder whether council involvement upfront would take away the spontaneity of such an idea. Decisions, decisions.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

18th January 2021

The committee liked the Clerk's idea of an Easter egg trail around East Preston shops, each shop buying its own Easter egg to display. The committee AGREED to this suggestion.

The committee also AGREED to encourage the painting of pebbles around the village with an Easter or spring theme. This would not be competitive, simply to lift residents' spirits.

077/21 QUEEN'S PLATINUM JUBILEE, JUNE 2022

The following paper had been circulated in advance of the meeting:

Queen's Platinum Jubilee, June 2022

Committee is asked to continue consideration of how the village could mark this occasion.

An extra Bank Holiday has been announced for June 2022 to mark the 70th anniversary of the Queen ascending the throne in February 1952. More information can be found here - <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-54911550>

At the last meeting the committee began considering a street party in Sea Road and agreed an article should be included in the Winter 2021 Newsletter asking for ideas. Such an article has been written.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

18th January 2021

At its next meeting, the committee would consider any feedback received in response to an article in the Winter 2021 Newsletter. It would then decide which suggestions were right for this committee to pursue and which were right to pass over to the Major Events Committee.

078/21 ENVIRONMENTAL INITIATIVES WORKING PARTY (EIWP)

Cllr Gander and the Clerk updated the meeting on some of projects the EIWP was currently progressing. These included focus on food waste, increased flower planting, the reduction of energy consumption and considering the implications of the proposed extension to the Rampion Wind Farm. Each working party member had read one of a number of conservation documents provided by a local resident and had summarised these for the rest of the working party. The members had noticed some running themes.

An application had been submitted to the Woodland Trust for some hedging trees to be planted at the Warren Recreation Ground. A decision was not expected before March. Cllr Gunston had applied to WSCC for permission to plant wildflower seeds on the verge outside his property. He had been visited by a WSCC officer who had given him paperwork to complete.

Cllr Linton offered a vote of thanks to all members of the working party.

079/21 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 23RD NOVEMBER 2020

The draft Minutes of the meeting held on 23rd November had been circulated to all members on 27th November asking for suggested amendments by 4th December. Cllr Gander had replied, “All fine, Simon.”

The committee AGREED unanimously the Minutes could be signed as a true record of the meeting which had taken place on 23rd November and AGREED unanimously Cllr Linton could sign them when she was next visiting the Council Office.

080/21 UPDATE ON MATTERS FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS

The following report by the Clerk was circulated in advance of the meeting:

Matters Arising from previous meetings

Minute 100/20 – Wellbeing in East Preston – Happy to Chat bench – the replacement sign was installed on 5th January.

Minute 313/20 – Roundstone Level Crossing – my new Network Rail contact is still working on finding us someone to attend a public meeting in the future.

Minute 490/20 – Councillor walkabouts – further to Lockdown 3 and many people not going out, and the weather being typically wintry, I will not be arranging any councillor walkabouts during February.

Minute 873/20 – Environmental Initiatives Working Party – Cllr Gunston has applied to have the verge outside his property licenced for wild-flower-planting. He has been visited by a WSCC officer.

Minutes 887/20 – Community Engagement Committee Budget for 2021/22 and 888/20 – Major Events Committee Budget for 2021/22 – the proposed budgets were agreed by Full Council on 4th January (Minute 013/21, Resolution 1496).

Minute 890/20 – Christmas Cards - £100 has been donated to the Friends of East Preston Infant School for the use of two Christmas card designs. Christmas cards were sent to all East Preston Voluntary Service volunteers and service users as well as District and County

Councillors for East Preston, school Headteachers, the Chairman of the Festival Committee and similar local dignitaries.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

18th January 2021

Minute 490/20 – Councillor walkabouts – Cllr Linton suggested these should be suspended until further notice, at least until the end of National Lockdown. This was AGREED by the committee.

081/21 NEWSLETTER – WINTER 2021

The following report had been circulated in advance of the meeting:

Newsletter – Winter 2021

Committee is asked to consider content for Newsletter No. 57, Winter 2021.

The Winter issue is scheduled for publication in February.

The table below is ideas we have had so far.

Front page	Page 2	Page 3	Page 4
Spring geocaching article Random Acts of Kindness Fire Support vehicle (ST)	Henry Thorne Blue plaques (EL) (ph) ✓ In bloom update Intergen playground (LD/SC)	Village Life (SC) ✓ Environmental – audit Environmental – where can I recycle things? Arun Wellbeing(MB) ✓ Healthy Eating recipe – meat-free Monday	Thanks ✓ Car parking Roundstone map (requested by Jackie Bowley) Census 2021 (JH) ✓
Page 5	Page 6		
<i>Is Your Chimney Covid Safe?</i> ✓ Corres Corner – Jo H ✓ Littlehampton Fridge (ph)	Platinum jubilee ✓		

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

18th January 2021

The first batch of copy had been sent to Helena at ADC and the Clerk was waiting to see how much space that left. He would keep in touch with the editorial team throughout the week.

082/21 BLUE PLAQUES

The following report had been circulated in advance of the meeting:

Blue plaques

Committee is asked to consider correspondence received about a fourth blue plaque in the village.

On 22nd December, the council received the following email from Margaret Gilbert, local historian and former parish councillor:

“Dear Simon

“Delighted to learn of the installation of blue plaques to Sir Maurice Craig and Sir Stanley Holloway. It is so good that the council is spearheading more plaques.

“A worthy candidate for a fourth blue plaque would be the artist Heywood Hardy of Forge House. A well known and respected artist, his outstanding local work, of course, is his panels in Climping church, notably the one of Jesus by the River Arun with Arundel Castle in the background. The figures, in contemporary dress, include villagers. Dick Standing supplied me with the names of a number of them. The panel is illustrated at p.128 of Dick Standing’s EP & K book.

“Anyway, this is just a thought!”

General examples of Hardy’s work, although not the piece mentioned by Margaret, can be seen here - <http://19thcenturybritpaint.blogspot.com/2013/05/heywood-hardy.html>.

There is £600 in the 2021/22 budget for Blue Plaques.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

18th January 2021

Cllr Linton reported she had again read through the whole of the file of information provided by Mr Standing, and she believed Heywood Hardy was the most likely next candidate for a blue plaque in the village. Cllr Linton said it would also be nice to get a blue plaque more centrally-located in the village.

Although there was some concern about investing in another blue plaque at a time when many people may be feeling additional pressure on their finances, it was AGREED initial investigations with the householder could continue as the timescales for a blue plaque project were not particularly speedy.

083/21 WAR MEMORIAL

The following report had been circulated in advance of the meeting:

East Preston war memorial

Committee is asked to consider further a proposal for an additional plaque to be added to the war memorial.

Cllr Moore and the Clerk may have additional information at the meeting.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

19th January 2021

The Clerk had been in touch with Mr Standing and needed to consider Mr Standing’s responses in this matter.

084/21 INTERGENERATIONAL PLAYGROUND

The following report had been circulated in advance of the meeting:

Intergenerational playground

Committee is asked to receive an update on the idea of an intergenerational playground.

The last meeting agreed to refer the Sovereign Play scheme to the Amenities Committee for its consideration. There has been no Amenities Committee meeting in the interim but there is one in early February.

The last meeting also agreed to publish an article in the Winter 2021 Newsletter seeking public support for the idea of an intergenerational playground. Cllr Duff and I have started this.

Cllr Gander said she had been thinking of play areas, particularly in Spain, where there were far more benches around and the whole family tended to sit around watching the youngest play. The committee considered this and voiced some safeguarding issues, citing Spanish culture is very different to British culture. Cllr Gander accepted these concerns.

Cllr Moore said he would invite his brother, an international expert in playgrounds, to a future meeting.

085/21 WELLBEING IN EAST PRESTON – READING FRIENDS

Cllr Gander reported there was nothing further on this initiative from the West Sussex County Council library service. This was not surprising during the pandemic.

086/21 WELLBEING IN EAST PRESTON – SPORTING MEMORIES

The Clerk said this was a suggestion from the Festival Committee and whilst not currently possible was something that should remain on the committee's agenda. The village's sports clubs had expressed their willingness to host occasional events at which local residents could get together and talk sport, sport, sport.

The committee AGREED unanimously to pick this up when able.

The Festival Committee was tentatively thinking about what it might be able to offer to the village in 2021.

087/21 EAST PRESTON YARBOMBERS

The following paper was circulated in advance of the meeting:

East Preston Yarnbombers

Committee is asked to consider a proposal from the East Preston Yarnbombers.

All committee members will be familiar with the work of the East Preston Yarnbombers and the pleasure their projects bring to most residents. Projects in 2020 were the bicycles and scooters in Sea Road in June and the snowpeople the length of Sea Road in December. The Yarnbombers have approached the council looking for some financial assistance with a project for December 2021. To maintain the secrecy and surprise of the project I will give more details – in confidence – during the meeting.

In the meantime, the council will be publishing a plea for wool in an e-newsletter between the writing of this report and the meeting.

The Clerk explained further and indeed showed a photograph of what the yarnbombers were thinking. He had contacted a local craftsman who would be willing to work with the yarnbombers on this project but felt it needed to be scaled back somewhat. The committee AGREED in principle to support the yarnbombers' project but would need to discuss this further once the Clerk had managed to get the lead yarnbombers and the craftsman to talk to each other.

The Clerk reported the plea for wool had received a fantastic response from residents.

088/21 CORRESPONDENCE - DOGS

The following paper was circulated in advance of the meeting:

Correspondence: dogs in public spaces

Committee is asked to consider the following correspondence.

Over the past month, Council has received separate correspondence from a mother and daughter.

The mother sent the following email on 30th December:

“I was writing in response to the recreation ground improvement matter mentioned in one of the E P newsletter or booklet. I was suggesting a dog free area/zone, and that there could also be a similar arrangement at a stretch of our beach. I’d be very happy to volunteer to help with carrying out research in the village regarding views about this. I do like dogs but also feel that one should be able to sit on grass at the park where it is free from them and from their residual mess, even after their owner has cleared it away. Also one should be able to visit the beach in a dog free zone, especially during summer- as in Worthing. At our beach and in our Immediate surrounding countryside, often dogs are off their leads with its handler far away. and if one is swimming your belongings(sandwiches) are not safe!! We could make simple changes and everyone would be happy and able to relax. Anyway- if you do consider that this could be looked into/taken further, let me know.”

I replied something similar was considered by this committee several years ago and was dismissed at that time. I said I would bring this correspondence to this committee meeting. I also suggested the above correspondence be converted into a Correspondence Corner article for the Winter 2021 Newsletter to which the author agreed.

The adult daughter contacted the council on 9th January with a proposal for making the beach a dog-free zone at certain times. As the beach is controlled by Arun District Council I suggested the suggestion be forwarded directly to the three District Councillors representing East Preston.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

19th January 2021

The committee considered the suggestion and were unsure whether any of the council’s land was suitable to make dog-free or, conversely, to have a fenced-off, dog-friendly area where dogs could run around off the lead whilst being kept on a lead the rest of the time. Perhaps the Village Green could be a dogs on leads area in the future. The committee would discuss this further in light of any response to the Correspondence Corner article in the Winter 2021 Newsletter.

089/21 NEXT MEETING (29TH MARCH)

NHS, Social Care and Frontline Workers’ Day, 5th July
Sussex Day, 16th June
Village bus

The Meeting closed at 20:25.

Chairman: Cllr Elizabeth Linton Date: **30th March 2021**