



EAST PRESTON PARISH COUNCIL

Council Office, 122 Sea Road, East Preston, West Sussex. BN16 1NN

01903 770050

<http://eastpreston-pc.gov.uk/>

Email: clerk@eastpreston-pc.gov.uk

MINUTES: of the Proceedings of the Monthly Meeting of East Preston Parish Council held at 19:00 on Monday, 4th April 2022 at East Preston Infant School, Lashmar Road, East Preston

PRESENT: Councillors Kit Bradshaw, Andrea Chapman, Barbara Gale, Patricia Gander, John Gunston, Elizabeth Linton (Chairman), Glyn Mathias, Rick McElroy, David Moore and Steven Wilkinson

ALSO: Clerk to the Council, Simon Cross

District Councillors Ricky Bower, Terry Chapman and Paul Kelly (all until 19:44)

Mr C and Mrs D

ABSENT: Councillors Christine Bowman, Lisa Duff and Steve Toney

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The following abbreviations may appear in these Minutes:

ADC – Arun District Council;
AoSERA – Angmering-on-Sea Estate Residents' Association
BTP – British Transport Police;
CPRE – Campaign for the Protection of Rural England;
JEAAC – Joint Eastern Arun Area Committee;
NHS – National Health Service;
NR – Network Rail;
PCSO – Police Community Support Officer;

SLCC – Society of Local Council Clerks;
SW – Southern Water;
TfSE – Transport for the South East;
TRO – Traffic Regulation Order;
VHF – East Preston & Kingston Village Hall Foundation;
WRA – Willowhayne Residents' Association
WSCC – West Sussex County Council;
WSALC – West Sussex Association of Local Councils

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The meeting opened at 19:02. In the absence of the Chairman of the Council, Cllr Toney, the Vice-Chairman of the Council, Cllr Linton, assumed the chair.

283/22 INTRODUCTIONS

Cllr Linton welcomed all present, ran through some protocol and led a round of introductions.

Cllr Linton asked the council if it would be happy to appoint a Vice-Chairman for the meeting.

1631 The council **RESOLVED** unanimously to appoint Cllr Gander Vice-Chairman for the meeting.

284/22 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies and reasons for absence were received from Cllrs Bowman, Duff and Toney.

1632 The council **RESOLVED** unanimously to accept the apologies and reasons for absence from Cllrs Bowman (holiday) and Duff and Toney (both illness).

Apologies had also been received from County Cllr Elkins.

285/22 DECLARATION OF PERSONAL AND/OR PREJUDICIAL/PECUNIARY INTERESTS

Cllr Linton reminded councillors they could also declare an Interest at the beginning of each Agenda Item.

286/22 PUBLIC SESSION

Agenda Item 11c – Community Engagement Committee – East Preston in Bloom – Mrs D started by congratulating Cllr Gander for her leadership of and early success with the East Preston in Bloom initiative. “There are several parts in the village which look so much neater, cleaner & tidier. So noticeable and hopefully very rewarding to those in the group who have put in the necessary work. Also thank you to the various people at the Council Offices who are supporting & facilitating this work.”

Agenda Item 6a – West Sussex County Council – Mrs D then reported she had read the recent WSCC A259 Progress Update and was concerned no sooner would the improvements have been completed than the road will become overused again. Mrs D felt the reason for this was obvious, the amount of housing development which had been given the go-ahead in recent years. Did the government not see the impact this was having upon those of us already living in the area? Taking into consideration all the developments in Angmering and Kingsley Gate and North Littlehampton, surely enough redevelopment had been granted permission to be equivalent to a small town. The difference being a small town would have been provided with the necessary infrastructure from the start, whereas these developments are being heaped upon already struggling, tired infrastructure. Mrs D’s biggest concern in this matter was the way in which mitigating Climate Change appeared to be overlooked in these developments. Just two solar panels incorporated into the roofs of all new houses would make a huge difference to those houses’ reliance on destructive fossil fuels. Mrs D said she hoped the parish council’s Council Plan would help it to keep on track, at least.

Agenda Item 13b – Environmental Initiatives Working Party – Mrs D.’s final point was her devastation there were local people who were actively campaigning against the expansion of the Rampion Wind Farm. Mrs D had become a firm believer in the need for the expansion and felt valuable time was being lost in the battle against Climate Change. On the afternoon of the meeting, Mrs D has heard Professor Simon Lewis, professor of global change science at University College London and University of Leeds, saying on Radio 4 that every single person needed to halve their carbon emissions by the end of the decade. Mrs D said she was proud to be a member of the parish council’s Environmental Initiatives Working Party which was trying to help residents take those small steps that all added up to a bigger positive impact upon the environment. Mrs D said local residents should be proud to contribute to the future by accepting the expansion of the wind farm, otherwise most of East Preston will be under water in twenty to thirty years. Mrs D ended by saying she was proud East Preston Parish Council had backed the expansion project.

Agenda Item 6a – West Sussex County Council – Mr C said he wanted to talk about traffic management in and around the village and how the parking situation in the village is getting worse. Can the village still call itself a village when there are vehicles constantly parked on both sides of most roads? Mr C said he felt a committee of local people and councillors was needed to sit together to examine the traffic management between Littlehampton and Kingston, local people because they know best the problems they experienced regularly. Mr C was willing to sit on such a committee.

287/22 COUNCIL RESPONSES

Agenda Item 13b – Environmental Initiatives Working Party – Cllr Gander thanked Mrs D for her positive feedback about East Preston in Bloom, and said she had been overwhelmed by the positive response from members of the public. Their contributions to some of the less appealing tasks, such as weeding and leaf-clearance, had been excellent.

Agenda Item 13b – Environmental Initiatives Working Party – Cllr Gunston said the council was working with Rampion on an article for an e-newsletter which would aim to dispel some of the misconceptions which had been included in an article recently published in *All About East Preston and Kingston*.

288/22 ARUN DISTRICT COUNCIL

(Throughout this Minute, Cllr Chapman refers to District Cllr T Chapman not Parish Cllr A Chapman.)

District Cllr Bower provided some background to the improvements to the A259, initially funded by developer contributions and then expanded with some central government funding. He believed the improvements would eventually see a positive impact upon local residents when the A259 stopped being used as an Arundel Bypass because it is a faster road in places than the A27. Once the Arundel Bypass has been implemented, Cllr Bower expected to see a noticeable reduction in the amount of through-traffic using the A259.

Cllr Bower said the area was being held ransom by developers “gaming the Planning system” by not building the 5,000 agreed developments on agreed land because of the infrastructure obligations that went with those developments. This was a major abuse of the current Planning system, and he had written a report on this which was being given some coverage.

District Cllr Chapman said traffic management, being a WSCC matter, was always a difficult topic to comment upon, but he agreed with Cllr Bower the Arundel Bypass would alleviate a lot of the local problems.

The Lashmar Recreation Ground children’s play area was about to be redeveloped following extensive local consultation. The redevelopment work would likely start at the end of April and probably take two to three weeks. Cllr Chapman gave some details of the kit to be included and of the significant improvements to be made to the safety surfacing. He was very much looking forward to seeing the refurbished play area up and running.

In late March, the government had issued a revised strategy for the charging of electric vehicles. A sizeable amount of money was being made available to local authorities to provide some charging infrastructure in their areas.

A White Paper was about to be tabled which should see marked improvements in the adequacy of smoke and carbon monoxide detectors in social housing. Cllr Chapman thought the proposals were likely to be in law by October. Mr C said the technology was available, but not yet widely-used, for detectors to set off alarms in every unit within a building of multiple occupancy, working on the theory a false alarm was better than no alarm.

Cllr Chapman praised the WSCC Fire & Rescue Service’s Community Strategy document which had now been published.

A government White Paper was proposing to set aside £320m in the Levelling Up Fund to create or reinstate Family Hubs such as the recently-lamented Children & Family Centre in East Preston. Cllr Chapman said he hoped all three tiers of local government could work together to draft a cogent bid to fund a Family Hub in the village.

Planning resources at ADC were currently running low with, for example, only one officer working on Enforcement. Plans were being constructed to address this shortfall.

Cllr Chapman confirmed Worthing Borough Council was going to the High Court over the Planning Inspectorate decision to allow development on Chatsmore Farm. Sir Peter Bottomley MP had also been pursuing this decision through parliament, but had been given a clear steer it was a judicial matter.

Cllr Linton said she welcomed the redevelopment of the Lashmar Road Recreation Ground as it could address some of the thoughts this council had been having about accessible and inclusive play. Cllr Chapman confirmed the play area was accessible by those with reduced mobility.

Cllrs Chapman, Mathias and Gunston shared some opposing views of the Rampion Wind Farm expansion.

In response to a question from Cllr Gander, Cllr Chapman said there would not be bin strikes in Arun as the refuse collection contract was with a contractor not directly-employed refuse collectors as in Adur & Worthing.

In response to a question from the Clerk, Cllr Chapman said he could not answer why ADC appeared to have a policy of leases set to a maximum of ten years to local sports clubs. He had not yet understood any value in this and had raised the matter with the Chief Executive and the Leader of the Council. At present, this was having an impact on East Preston Football Club’s negotiations for a new lease.

Cllr Bower said the Planning Inspectorate’s decision on Chatsmore Farm was likely to lead to a flurry of Planning Applications for developments on the north of the A259. Lansdowne Nursery was already subject to an early consultation, and Highdown Vinery was likely to be subject to another Application soon. Highdown Hill was an Anglo-Saxon burial ground, possible burial site of a King of Sussex and, as such, was of great historical importance needing to be protected vigorously from development. ADC had always fought hard to resist development on the north side of the A259 and he believed would continue to do so. The Angmering-Ferring Gap was vital to protect those communities from the encroachment of each other.

Cllr Bradshaw reported he had attended a recent consultation evening on proposals for redeveloping Lansdowne Nursery. He had expressed his concern about the erosion of the local countryside.

In response to a question from Cllr Wilkinson, Cllr Chapman said there had been successful cases where the High Court had overturned decisions made by the Planning Inspectorate.

(Cllrs Bower, Chapman and Kelly left at the conclusion of this item.)

289/22 WEST SUSSEX COUNTY COUNCIL

County Cllr Elkins had sent his apologies for the meeting. He had provided the following report which the Clerk had circulated to councillors electronically late on the afternoon of the meeting, and on paper at the start of this meeting:

Good Afternoon Simon

Apologies for this evenings Full Council as I have to attend another meeting.

Just a couple of items to note

West Sussex response to the conflict in Ukraine

West Sussex County Council (WSSCC) are ready to support eligible families and individuals leaving Ukraine in response to the current situation in the country. We are working with local and national government, charities and volunteer groups to provide appropriate support in line with Government policy for resettling refugees, as the situation develops.

Ukraine Families Scheme

The Ukraine Family Scheme allows immediate and extended family members of British nationals, people settled in the UK and certain others resident here, to come to the country. Those accepted under the scheme will be granted a visa that lasts three years, giving them certainty and ensuring their future in the country. Those applying to the Ukraine Family Scheme:

- must be applying to join or accompany a UK-based family member
- must be Ukrainian or the immediate family member of a Ukrainian national who is applying to the scheme
- must have been residing in Ukraine on or immediately before 1 January 2022 (including those who have now left Ukraine).

You can find more information about the immigration routes available for Ukrainian nationals in the UK, British nationals and their family members and sign up to receive updates on GOV.UK.

Plus West Sussex Fire and Rescue has taken four Fire Engines that are no longer required for in use to Ukraine

A group of volunteers from West Sussex Fire & Rescue Service have gone to Ukraine to donate vital equipment for use on the frontline. A total of 12 volunteers will transport four, fully equipped fire engines to the country which is currently facing a Russian invasion.

Extended opening hours for Recycling Centres.

These hours will run from 1 April until 30 September 2022.

Sites require pre-booking to visit a Recycling Centre using the Book to Recycle system and West Sussex County Council is reminding residents to check their website beforehand.

Littlehampton: 9am to 6pm - Monday, Thursday to Sunday

Worthing: 9am to 6pm - Monday to Sunday

Happy to follow up on any points from the meeting.

Kind regards
Roger

The Clerk added he had intended to ask Cllr Elkins a question on behalf of Mr H. regarding a bus-stop in Old Worthing Road. This bus-stop had gone missing in September 2019, following an accident with a contractor's vehicle. Upon being asked to reinstate the bus-stop, WSCC initially said it needed to move it slightly, for safety reasons. It then decided not to reinstate the bus-stop at all, as the new location was close enough to the nearest bus-stop to make a second bus-stop a bit redundant. After Mr H's campaign direct to WSCC and through the Littlehampton Gazette, WSCC agreed to consult on reinstating the bus-stop in its original location. This was agreed, with funding made available to address the safety issues, but the work has yet to be completed. Mr H chased his contact at WSCC and has been told that, owing to a change of contractor, this work will not now happen until about September. The Clerk said he would ask Cllr Elkins if he would be able to intervene.

290/22 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 7TH MARCH 2022

The draft Minutes were circulated to all councillors on 8th March asking for suggested amendments by the 15th March.

1633 The Council **RESOLVED** unanimously the Chairman could sign the Minutes as a true record of the meeting held on 7th March. Cllr Linton duly did so.

291/22 UPDATE ON MATTERS IN THE MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

Council NOTED the following report, which had been circulated in advance of the meeting:

Monthly Update Report

- 1. Introduction**
- 2. Minute 975/21 - ADC Licensing timescales**
- 3. Minute 101/22 – Community Engagement Committee – parking restrictions in Sea Road and North Lane**

1. Introduction

This is the report covering items discussed during Full Council meetings up to and including the meeting held on 7th March 2022.

2. Minute 975/21 - ADC Licensing timescales

Following my recent question to Cllr Chapman about the short timescales a town or parish council has to respond to a licensing application, Cllr Chapman has received this response:

The dates are prescribed by statute and we cannot step outside of them. The consultation period is 28 days for premises licences. We have a week for pavement licences. This equally puts pressure on my team who have to constantly re-prioritise their workloads to respond when applications come in.

I am sorry that we are unable to extend these times. They are set by central government who have to ensure that businesses do not grind to a halt because of application processes taking too long. A difficult balance!

It is a positive that we all have the ability to communicate remotely outside of meeting times now, it really does help doesn't it.

There are mechanisms for us to look at any problems that may arise as a result of granting a licence, so there is a way for us to look at things again if you do not have time to consider an application.

Best Wishes

Sarah Meeten
Licensing Manager, Technical Services

3. **Minute 101/22 – Community Engagement Committee – parking restrictions in Sea Road and North Lane**

Having submitted a Traffic Regulation Order request to WSCC only on 24th February, I was very pleased to receive the following email on 9th March:

Dear Mr Cross

I refer to your application of 24th February for a Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) to prohibit waiting over sections North Lane and Sea Road, East Preston

I have now completed a technical assessment of your proposal and will include it in the forward programme for future work. It will, however, have to compete with other priorities for inclusion in the 2022/23 works programme,

Yours sincerely,

Neil Smith
PMO Officer

Neil has given the proposal a score of 45 which I think, from past experience, is quite a useful score, but it is all relevant to whatever other schemes are on the table.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

10th March 2022

The Clerk said he had nothing to add but would take questions if there were any. There were none.

292/22 FINANCIAL MATTERS

The Accounts for March 2022 had been distributed to Members in advance of the meeting.

- 1634** The council **RESOLVED** unanimously to approve the Outstanding Purchase Orders report for 2021/22, value £2,964.32 (excl. VAT).
- 1635** The council **RESOLVED** unanimously to approve the Supplier Non BACS Invoices Paid report for March totalling £1,695.47 (incl. VAT) (including unreported additional payments from the previous month).
- 1636** The council **RESOLVED** unanimously to approve the Supplier BACS Invoices Paid report for March totalling £17,144.09 (incl. VAT).
- 1637** The council **RESOLVED** unanimously to approve the List of Sales Receipts & Bank Receipts by Bank report, showing £330,235.20 (incl. VAT) for the financial year ending 31st March 2022.

The council NOTED the paper Bank Reconciliations to 14th March 2022.

The council NOTED the year-to-date Budget Summary Report for 2021/22.

The following report was circulated in advance of the meeting:

Financial matters - overspends

Council is asked to note small overspends on three budget lines.

Tracy has noted overspends on the following budget lines.

Admin

1. Parish Office Running Costs – Overspent on £2.5K budget – current actual £3035.00

Amenities

1. Highways Flower Planting – Overspent on £21K budget – current actual £21,292

Major Events

1. F&D Event – Overspent on £1K budget – current actual £2,420

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

29th March 2022

In response to a question, the Clerk said he would obtain more information on the overspend attributed to the Food & Drink Festival.

The council NOTED the overspends on three budget lines.

Cllr Linton thanked Mrs Khoo, the council's Book-keeper, for her preparation of all the above reports.

293/22 REPORTS FROM PARISH COUNCIL COMMITTEES

The council NOTED the following reports which had been circulated in advance of the meeting:

Committees

The following committees met during March. Audit & Governance on the 14th, Community Engagement on the 28th and Planning & Licensing on the 14th and 28th. Draft Minutes from these meetings should have been circulated by the time of this meeting.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

29th March 2022

Amenities Committee

The committee did not meet during March.

Village Green Car Park – Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) – Enerveo, (formally SSE) have begun work to extend the Village Green power supply. The new cable has been laid from the feeder pillar at the north-western corner of the Village Green, along to the Car Park.

Enerveo still have to install a feeder pillar at the car park and connect the power supply. When the work is complete, One Parking Solutions (OPS) will install the ANPR cameras. The ANPR system will eliminate the need for OPS agents to monitor the car park.

Warren Recreation Ground Tree Planting – Councillor Gunston planted a further ten hedging trees along the Warren Recreation Ground southern boundary. The new trees were donated by Zoë Steel and have replaced some of previously planted trees which had not survived. In total almost seventy hedging trees have been planted, which in time will form a solid hedging row.

Spring Floral Displays – Ferring Nurseries have planted stunning Spring floral displays around the village. The planter at Lashmar Bank looks particularly vibrant, filled with Primroses and Hyacinths. Committee has ordered a second planter which is to be installed to the left of the existing planter.

Dawn Reid – **Assistant Clerk to the Council**

28th March 2022

Audit & Governance Committee

The committee met on 14th March. The meeting encompassed brief meetings of the Conservative Hall Working Party and Leases Working Party, both detailed below.

The committee considered no matters of its own.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

15th March 2022

Community Engagement Committee

The committee met on 28th March.

As always, the meeting covered a lot of ground, some of which is reported here.

The committee agreed to run a half-term playscheme in October, following the success of the one in February.

Slow progress is being made towards the installation of the jubilee clock. Four members of the public have come forward with 2nd June birthdays, one of whom was actually born in 1952. Talking of the jubilee, the committee would like to donate a commemorative beaker to the children at the two East Preston schools. A request for funding is further down this agenda.

The committee agreed the council should take part in this year's Christmas Tree Festival, which is running between the 8th and 11th December.

We discussed some potential pieces of play equipment which would be wholly inclusive and intergenerational. We hope to have a proposal to put to Full Council next month.

Now the weather is better, the committee members will be restarted councillor walkabouts in April.

David has done further research into the last years of the life of Sjt. Davis and the committee is now in a position to write to the British Legion branch about Sjt. Davis's absence from the war memorial. Our thanks to David for his dogged pursuance of this matter.

East Preston in Bloom and Men in Sheds initiatives are both working well, although there is no sign of a venue for the Men in Sheds.

The new Official Guide for the village should be arriving this week. Cllr Wilkinson has kindly agreed to deliver them to our delivery company.

Those were the main topics of conversation. More can be read in the Minutes once they are available.

Cllr Elizabeth Linton –

29th March 2022

Chairman of the Community Engagement Committee

Finance & General Purposes Committee

The committee did not meet in March.

The window for Grant Aid applications for the coming financial year has opened. Forms are expected to be back by 31st March, but if anyone knows of a locally-operational group that might wish to apply, that date could be stretched a little.

The committee's next meeting is in May.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

28th March 2022

Major Events Committee

The committee did not meet in March.

Updates on some of the council's Major Events are as follows:

Funday Sunday, 24th April – at the time of writing 43 of the available 50 tickets have been sold.

Queen's Platinum Jubilee Weekend, 2nd to 5th June – the Infant School has not heard back from Prince George of Cambridge yet, so the committee has asked for members of the public born on 2nd June (any year) to come forward to be part of the "unveiling" of the Queen's Platinum Jubilee clock on 2nd June. Four have come forward so far, two ladies and two gentlemen, One of the ladies was born on 2nd June 1952.

On Sunday, 5th June, at 11:30 for 11:45, the council will dedicate a commemorative plaque for the Queen's Platinum Jubilee tree. Dorothy Lee has been asked unofficially to officiate at the dedication and has agreed.

East Preston Food & Drink Festival, 27th August – this year's event will again take place on the Village Green. Potential stallholders had until 14th March to submit their expressions of interest. Later that week, Cllr Gunston and Bowman met with Alison and thirty-three applicants have been offered a pitch. These are thirteen hot food vendors and 20 others covering retail, alcohol and ice-cream. Twelve vendors have not attended a Food & Drink Festival previously.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

28th March 2022

Personnel Committee

The committee did not meet in March.

Other councils have been caught out by the Local Government Pensions Scheme (LGPS) Discretions Policy situation and this has been added as an Agenda Item for the next WSALC Clerks' meeting, 11th April.

A pay increase for all staff was agreed nationally at the beginning of March. This is roughly 1.75% and has been backdated to 1st April 2021.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

28th March 2022

Planning & Licensing Committee

The committee met on 14th and 28th March.

On 14th March, the committee considered three Planning Applications. The committee agreed to object to Applications for properties in The Ridings and Chiltern Close.

On 28th March, the committee considered three Applications and agreed to object to one in Normandy Drive. The committee felt a proposed dormer was too large for the host property, too obtrusive to neighbours, too visible from the street because of the layout of the road, and too close to neighbouring properties.

The council has been approached by both Angmering and Ferring Parish Councils to provide support in their attempts to persuade ADC not to give Planning Permission for large developments in their areas. The committee agreed to provide support where possible.

Cllr Mathias is joining a conference called by Ferring Conservation Group on Wednesday, 30th March. This will include other local parish councils and look at how best the councils and conservation/preservation groups can work together to resist the mass development of the area's remaining greenspace.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

29th March 2022

Additionally:

Community Engagement – Cllr Linton explained the committee was restarting councillor walkabouts now the weather seemed to be improving. Rather than the Council Office spending valuable time working out when which councillors who go out with whom, committee members were being asked to arrange amongst themselves to go out with each of the other members of the committee at least once before the end of the summer.

The Clerk said he would pull something together to give those councillors not on the Community Engagement Committee some idea of how they could also get involved.

Personnel – the Clerk confirmed Cllr Gander did not need to work on a Pensions Discretions Policy until the outcome of the WSALC meeting was known.

Planning & Licensing – Cllr Mathias said the meeting mentioned for 30th March had actually taken place on 31st March and had been about local town and parish councils banding together to support one another in deliberations about major Planning Applications.

There were no updates from the council's four other committees.

294/22 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT COMMITTEE – PLATINUM JUBILEE TUMBLERS

Council NOTED the following report, which had been circulated in advance of the meeting:

Community Engagement Committee – jubilee reusable tumblers

Cllr Linton to lead on this item.

Council is asked to spend up to £1,500 to provide all primary school children at East Preston Infant and Junior Schools with a commemorative reusable plastic tumbler in honour of the Queen's Platinum Jubilee.

At its meeting on 28th March, the committee considered the purchase of overprinted reusable plastic tumblers for each pupil currently at East Preston, a total of 580 children. To purchase 650 of these tumblers would allow the council to sell a few too to other members of our community, though past experience has led us not to expect too great a rush on sales.

Cllr Linton and I have identified a supplier who could provide 650 tumblers, with lids, at a cost of £2.04 each (today), a total of £1,326 excluding VAT. This figure includes delivery. Lead time is currently 7-10 working days, so plenty of time.

The committee is asking for £1,500 just in case of any additional expense related to the purchase. This money would be taken from the council's Contingency Budget line for 2022/23.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

29th March 2022

Cllr Linton explained the background to the proposal. In response to a question, the Clerk said the beakers were made from polypropylene and, whilst not recycled, could be recycled themselves in the future.

1638 The council **RESOLVED** unanimously to expenditure of approximately £1,500 on jubilee beakers to be given to all children at East Preston Infant and Junior Schools.

295/22 REPORTS FROM PARISH COUNCIL WORKING PARTIES

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

Working Parties

The Environmental Initiatives Working Party is due to meet on the 29th March.

The Conservative Hall and Leases Working Parties met as part of the Audit & Governance Committee meeting on 14th March.

The council's other working parties did not meet.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

28th March 2022

Conservative Hall Working Party

The Working Party met as part of the Audit & Governance Committee meeting on 14th March.

An initial structural survey on the building had been received, but was incomplete as the surveyor had not been able to access all areas he wanted to access. The working party agreed to accept his offer to return and to liaise with the trustees of the hall to ensure access is available. I agreed to ask the surveyor for a list of the access and documentation he wanted to see on a second visit, so I could pass that on to the trustees. A return visit is currently scheduled for 1st April, having had to be cancelled by the surveyor on 25th March.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

28th March 2022

Environmental Initiatives Working Party (EIWP)

No report yet, as the working party's meeting is taking place on the evening of the 29th March, by which time these supporting papers will have been closed. This meeting will be attended by Dr Nick Mills, Southern Water's Head of Storm Overflow Task Force. Including members of the working party, about thirty people have said they will attend the meeting including members of the local watersports community.

I will either provide a written report ahead of the Full Council meeting or a verbal one at the meeting.

Other than that, the Greener Buildings Project is continuing with the Brighton & Hove Energy Services Cooperative (BHESCO) in the process of visiting the buildings on our list. A report is expected sometime in May.

Cllr John Gunston –
Chairman of the Environmental Initiatives Working Party

28th March 2022

Flat and Frontage Working Party

A verbal update on the flat above the Council Office will be provided at the meeting.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

28th March 2022

Leases Working Party

The working party met as part of the Audit & Governance Committee meeting on Monday, 14th March. The committee agreed a solicitor to act on behalf of the council in the matter of the renewal of the lease to the East Preston & Kingston Bowls Club. I met with the solicitor on 22nd March and we discussed a few things. The next step will be for the Leases Working Party to go through the existing lease working out the council's requirements from a new lease. That will then make the working party a united front going into an initial meeting with the Bowls Club.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

28th March 2022

Playing of Cricket Working Party

On the evening of 22nd March, I attended a meeting with Cllrs Toney and Gunston, cricket club rep's and Simon. The latter's report can be found in his Clerk's Report.

Cllr Christine Bowman –
Chairman of the Playing of Cricket Working Party

28th March 2022

Additionally:

Conservative Hall – the second part of the survey had taken place on Friday, 1st April, and access had been provided to the areas not previously inspected.

Environmental Initiatives – Cllr Gunston referred councillors to his report on the latest meeting of the working party, which had taken place on 29th March, and had been a Southern Water special. In addition to councillors and staff present, twenty-two members of the public had attended the meeting which had been lively at times. Dialogue with Southern Water was

continuing and members of the public at the meeting had been asked to send any further questions to the Clerk for collating before they were forwarded on to Southern Water.

Flat & Frontage – the Clerk provided a limited update on the legal situation regarding the flat above the Council Office.

There were no additional updates from the council's other working party. The Clerk said he believed the work of the Playing of Cricket Working Party had been completed and said he would discuss with the working party's Chairman, Cllr Bowman, the disbanding of the working party.

296/22 CLERK'S REPORT

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

Clerk's Report

- 1. Introduction**
- 2. Police matters**
- 3. Anti-social behaviour matters**
- 4. Freedom of Information / Data Protection requests**
- 5. East Preston Men in Sheds, 1st March**
- 6. Read Easy Chichester & Arun public meeting, 2nd March**
- 7. Memorial service for Father David Rea, 17th March**
- 8. Friends of St Mary's church (FoSM) Annual General Meeting, 20th March**
- 9. Twice yearly meeting with East Preston Cricket Club, 22nd March**
- 10. Social media**
- 11. MailChimp stats**
- 12. A selection of things we have been asked since the last meeting**
- 13. Recent bouquets and complaints**
- 14. Leave**
- 15. April meetings and events**

1. Introduction

This is the report mainly covering March 2022 and matters which may not arise elsewhere on the agenda.

2. Police matters

Following a request from a resident of Sea Lane, PCSO Raj has put up an additional pair of 30mph signs in Sea Lane, the same as those already up in the top part of The Street.

A resident of Woodbridge Park emailed in to complain about people parking too close to the entrance to The Martlets care home. He felt their parking was contrary to The Highway Code. Although he could not prove it, he stated that the drivers in question were all staff of or visitors to The Martlets. I did advise him they could just as easily be employees of or visitors to other local businesses. That said, I did ask the manager of The Martlets to remind staff to park considerately in Fairlands. I also asked PCSO Raj to keep an eye when passing which he has agreed to do.

One anonymous letter was received on 17th March, complaining about a local businessman repeatedly parking on a grass verge in North Lane. The author telephoned in the following day, even though I have already explained to her this is a WSCC matter and WSCC does not feel there is a problem at the moment. The author took this to be me saying she could park anywhere in Brighton if she could not find a legal space.

I advised that was not what I had said at all. At the time of the anonymous letter and telephone call, the author's household was the only one complaining about the situation. However, two more households wrote in during the following week complaining about the same matter. WSCC Highways is still holding back from intervening.

A resident emailed in on 18th March, asking about a car which had been parked for a couple of weeks in Clarence Drive without moving. I reported this to the Abandoned Vehicles officer at ADC as the car was taxed but did not have an MoT. At the time of writing, I have not had a response, unusually, from the office, but the car has been moved. It is still showing as having no MoT.

Following on from the last line of my report last month, PCSO Raj has been in touch with Mrs New. Although they have not been able to meet they have discussed certain issues over the phone.

3. **Anti-social behaviour matters**

Nothing to report.

4. **Freedom of Information / Data Protection requests**

No Freedom of Information or Data Protection requests received since the last report.

5. **East Preston Men in Sheds, 1st March**

I attended this second meeting of the group. Cllr Gander led the meeting. The number of attendees was about the same as the first meeting, but the faces were only about half the same.

An expected talk from two members of the Broadwater branch on how they set up their group was cancelled due to illness. This is now expected to take place at the meeting on 5th April.

Instead, the group each took a turn in telling us about their first car, which led to some interesting and humorous anecdotes and from that point on conversation flowed. All attendees seemed happy to be there and willing to continue in this vein until a workshopy venue becomes available.

6. **Read Easy Chichester & Arun public meeting, 2nd March**

I attended this as Cllr Gander was unable to.

For some time now the Community Engagement Committee has been looking at possible reading-based activities to help improve the general wellbeing of the community.

Read Easy UK is a registered charity which aims to increase adult literacy through one-to-one sessions. The charity's vision is "for all adults in the UK to have the literacy skills they need to realise their potential and live life to the full." The charity's mission is "to provide adults, who want to improve their reading, with confidential, free, one-to-one coaching to help them gain the skills they need to live life to the full."

The 2011 Skills for Life survey of English working age population found that 5% can either not read at all or can barely read. That equates to 2.4m adults in England who struggle even to do their food shopping. In Arun District, that percentage rose to 6.8%.

An inability to read can lead to concerns such as isolation, marginalisation, problems finding work, being unable to support children's reading, low self-esteem and confidence and more. The cost to the public purse has been estimated to be up to £64,000 per individual over a lifetime in employment-related costs alone.

Read Easy is just setting up in Arun and Chichester and this call was to talk to representatives of local councils to give them a basic understanding of how the charity works.

Anyone over the age of 18 can be referred to Read Easy either by an agency such as Citizens Advice or a Job Centre or can self-refer. As the service is free to anyone wanting to learn to read, it is accessible to anyone wanting to learn. New readers are provided with a trained volunteer coach they agree to meet twice a week for just half an hour in a convenient but discreet location. Readers progress at their own speed, whatever that may be. The local cost for this service is estimated to be just £148 per reader per year.

Two videos you may want to spend fewer than five minutes watching are:

Phoebe Fortescue on being a volunteer – <https://youtu.be/KFWCd3GNa0M>

Sarah on being taught by Phoebe – <https://youtu.be/8NtP7t6DNSo>

Read Easy is looking for local councils to support it in this area. I have said we may be able to help with publicity and also with a venue for one-to-one reading sessions.

7. **Memorial service for Father David Rea, 17th March**



I attended Fr David's memorial service as Cllr Toney was unable to and also because Fr David knew my parents.

Fr David had died on St Patrick's Day 2020, resulting in a funeral during first lockdown attended only by the bishop. There had still been plenty of restrictions in place at the time of his first anniversary but now, with restrictions lifted, the church felt the time was right to celebrate his life.

The Mass was led by Fr Stephen Ortiger. Several visiting clergy concelebrating with him and, after he had introduced each of them, he welcomed two of Fr David's nieces, Michelle and Esther, who had both flown from Dublin at the crack of dawn to attend and who were flying back after visiting their uncle's grave. Fr Stephen then said he wanted to welcome just two of the guests present, me followed by the local undertaker, Dean Jones! Former parish councillors present included Celeste Amoo, Dorothy Lee, Paul Kelly and Michael Taggart. St Mary the Virgin was represented by both Fr Andrew and Reverend Emma.

The homilist told stories of Fr David's life, the last of which was about him being given the Last Rites by his lifelong friend and rival in Irish sporting matters, Monsignor Benny O'Shea. Having been given the Last Rites, he looked at Fr Benny and said, "You bastard, Benny!" and pretty much died there and then. I'm just reporting.

Mass was followed by a St Patrick's Day lunchtime party, both in the church hall and outside in a marquee borrowed from 1st East Preston Scouts. Several residents took the opportunity to talk to me in this relaxed atmosphere.

8. **Friends of St Mary's church (FoSM) Annual General Meeting, 20th March**

I attended this meeting. Current and former councillors present included David Moore, Dorothy Lee, Margaret Gilbert and Philip Sherwin. I would estimate about thirty people were present.

Fr Andrew opened the meeting then handed over to Malcolm McLelland, Chairman of the Friends. Malcolm's report covered 2020 and 2021 and reported the Friends coffers were up to £33,200 at the end of 2019, thanks mainly to the third Christmas Tree Festival and the East Preston Iconic Church (EPIC) appeal. The pandemic severely curtailed activity during 2020, but £900 was made from the sale of nearly 300 packs of Christmas cards.

For previous Christmas Tree Festivals, the Friends had borrowed the necessary equipment from the church at Goring which offered and agreed to sell the equipment to the Friends for the sum of £5.

In April 2021, the Quinquennial Report was produced by an architect, and this suggested expenditure of about £100,000 over the next five years. The Friends paid the professional fees of nearly £1,700, in part thanks to a grant of 50% of that amount from the parish council.

The Friends have canvassed villages at events such as the East Preston Christmas Celebrations and have secured enough support they are now planning a fourth Christmas Tree Festival. This will take place over the weekend of 8th to 11th December.

By the end of 2021, the Friends had £45,500 in the bank. They are now calculating which essential works can be carried out when.

In turn, Malcolm handed over to the Treasurer, John Harbidge, who went into greater detail on the financial status of the Friends and circulated financial reports in support of his statements.

All existing Friends committee members were re-elected unopposed.

After the meeting, teas and coffees were served and, in place of the advertised talk – cancelled due to illness, members of the Friends committee took small groups around the church, highlighting points of interest as per the laminated sheets always available at the church for that purpose.

A few residents took the opportunity to talk to me about various village matters. The last of these was Margaret Gilbert who spoke to me about a yew tree which had been planted on the Warren Recreation Ground for the millennium. This is on the eastern boundary and Margaret was concerned about the way in which it was growing. The fact it is a Millennium yew tree had almost been lost in time, but Dawn has made a note of this now.

9. Twice yearly meeting with East Preston Cricket Club, 22nd March

This meeting was also attended by Cllrs Toney, Gunston and Bowman and Andy Reeves and Colin Smith representing the cricket club. Simon Locke, Chairman of the cricket club was, at short notice, unable to attend.

The meeting started with the club giving us some details of the refurbishment of the inside of the clubhouse it is part-way through. The works will mainly improve the bar area but will have some knock on impact on the changing rooms. Once the refurbishment is complete, the club is keen to make the venue available for public hire.

The club still planned to install new practice nets, a double bay which would likely require the removal of the London plane tree to the north-west of the clubhouse. The club planned to have one bay locked exclusively for the club's use whilst leaving the second open for public use. I expressed concern about this following concerns raised by members of the public last year they were almost hit by balls coming from the practice nets when no matches were on and there was no indication the practice nets were in use. I asked the club to write formally to the council on the subject of the practice nets and the plane tree. The reps agreed this would be done in time for the Amenities Committee's May meeting.

Following recent high winds, small twigs littered the recreation ground and these were proving difficult to pick up manually. Dawn has contacted the council's grounds maintenance contractor about this, and Cllr Gunston led a working party from East Preston in Bloom in this matter.

The council reps gave the club permission to excavate as necessary where a water leak needed to be repaired. The leak was believed to be in the north-east corner of the main body of the ground and it should be possible to fix this non-invasively.

The club was working closely with Sussex County Cricket Club on promoting girls' cricket in the area. The club's darts team was doing well and relationships with the stoolball club were good again.

From our side, Cllr Gunston provided an update on the Greener Buildings Project, which the club was still happy to take part in. I provided an update on the Food & Drink Festival and the thought of moving it to the Warren Recreation Ground.

* * *

The club has inspected from ground-level the nets ahead of the first match of the new season, scheduled for 30th April. The contractors who have done work for the club in the past have ceased trading and the club has not yet found an alternative contractor. At the club's invitation, Cllrs Toney and Gunston met with Andy Reeves at the ground on the afternoon of 24th March. Together they inspected the areas of concern in the netting, and agreed which needed to be resolved before play could resume and which were slightly lower priority.

10. **Social media**

Again, no Facebook posts seen by over 500 people since the last report. So, our three most-seen posts were:

- MailChimp post for e-newsletter, 16th March – 344 people
- Link to WSCC Refugee Resettlement webpage – 338
- Repost of Action for Happiness's Mindful March calendar - 328

† Food & Drink Festival page

▲ East Preston Business Community page

* East Preston Christmas Celebrations page

(posts up to and including 28th March)

The number of people currently liking the council on Facebook is 1,494, an increase of 12 on the last report.

11. **MailChimp stats**

Since the last papers were issued, the council has sent out the following emails to local residents on the council's main e-mailing list:

Parish Council news – 2nd March – sent to 905, opened by 634 (70.1%)

Parish Council environmental special * – 9th March – sent to 55, opened by 51 (92.7%)

Parish Council news – 16th March – sent to 904, opened by 625 (69.4%)

Parish Council news – 24th March – sent to 905, opened by 611 (67.7%)

* only to respondents to last year's survey who gave their email address

12. **Things we have been asked since the last meeting**

“Are you collecting for Ukraine?” (No, we suggested the caller contact the Red Cross.)

“Does the council work with any drug abuse organisations?” (No, but Arun Exact and DAWN (Drug and Alcohol Wellbeing Network) both work in the area.)

13. **Recent bouquets and complaints**

(In addition to anything reported above)

From a resident of Vermont Drive who has not automatically received a quarterly Newsletter for the past year or so. “YES! I received my copy a few days ago. I had friends staying with me at the time and even though they live near Bedford, they both found the Newsletter an interesting read as well!”

From a resident of Sea Lane Close who asked if we could include something about fundraising for Ukraine in an e-newsletter, “Thank you, so pleased to see you’ve added the Red Cross link.”

From a local resident who had been in touch about parking problems at the southern end of Sea Road, “Thanks for your help Simon, but no doubt the various official bodies that have managed to pass on & bat the issue around the various departments will feel comfortable in that yet again they have managed to get away with doing nothing.”

Thanks to the council for not increasing the precept this coming financial year, both from a resident of Vermont Way and a resident of Hillview Crescent.

From a resident of Sea Road, advised of a Planning Application directly opposite her home, “Thank you for keeping me in the loop. And, as always, many thanks to all of you on the Parish Council.”

From a couple who lived in Myrtle Grove upon unsubscribing from the e-newsletter, “We have moved away, but thank you for all your efforts, which made our stay in EP a very happy one.”

From a resident who called for some advice as he is hosting a Ukrainian family, “Brilliant, Thank you.”

Thanks from members of the Disability Action Group for directing them to a news article about a new scheme being trialled in Saltdean this summer.

Thanks from a resident of Russells Close looking for information on planting a tree in memory of a relative.

14. **Leave**

Dawn is off for the week beginning 11th April. I am off from the 14th, returning on 22nd.

15. **April Meetings and Events**

This list may be incomplete and is subject to change.

- 4th Full Council (19:00, East Preston Infant School)
- 5th East Preston Men in Sheds (12:00, British Legion) (PG and SC only)
- 8th South Strand Community Toilets AGM (14:00, Littlehampton) (SC only)
- 11th WSALC Clerks’ Forum (10:00, online) (SC only)
Planning & Licensing Committee (18:00, East Preston Infant School)
Personnel Committee (19:00, East Preston Infant School)
- 12th WSALC Chairman Forum (19:00, online) (EL only)

24th *FunDay Sunday* (14:00, East Preston & Kingston Village Hall)

25th Planning & Licensing Committee (18:00, East Preston Infant School)
Major Events Committee (19:00, East Preston Infant School)

N.B. where committee meetings fall on the same day, the timings of these meetings may be subject to change.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

28th March 2022

Cllr Linton asked whether there were any known Ukrainians already in the village, who might be looking for some social interaction. Various councillors and the Clerk replied they knew of households who had offered to take Ukrainian refugees but not that any had arrived yet. The Clerk said one family due to be rehomed in East Preston had arrived in the Netherlands and decided to stay there. There was a Facebook page, East Preston for Ukraine, and that was facilitating a lot of contact between those households who were willing to rehome a family. The Clerk was keeping a list of households that had contacted the council, but those were maybe only five to date. There were plans afoot to bring Ukrainian families into contact with each other, but those plans all depended upon when the refugees arrived,

Cllr Linton thanked the Clerk for his report.

297/22 SUSSEX POLICE

The council NOTED the following report which had been circulated on the day of the meeting:

Sussex Police

Council is asked to note the following report:

INCIDENTS (Feb- March 2022)

- I am aware of the car parking issues and we had a couple of reports this month.
- There were reports of shoplifting from one stop and cooperative shops where one suspect is identified.
- Scam related incidents reported again but nothing serious in nature.
- I am still receiving ongoing neighbourhood disputes from regular residents.

I have contacted Mr. Clavin [Calvin Baylis] from Arun council, who is responsible for traffic management and wardens and explained current ongoing parking issues. Hopefully we can see some action soon.

PCSO Rijo Raju 40743 –
Arun and Chichester Neighbourhood Policing Team

3rd April 2022

298/22 EXTERNAL MEETINGS AND EVENTS

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

Other meetings and events – Part 1

Council is asked to note the following report:

Meeting with Southern Water, 29th March

Our Lady, Star of the Sea church hall

Dr Nick Mills, Head of Southern Water Storm Overflow task force, addressed a meeting attended by 22 village residents. He explained the pressures involved with trying to cope with both rainwater runoff and sewage using the same system. Up to 30 times the normal flow is created by severe storms and storm overflows then empty into the sea and rivers. These storms

are becoming more frequent owing to climate change. He and his team are putting together a plan to be financed in 2025 which has a target to reduce discharges by 80% by 2030.

The plan will try to slow the flow of water into the system using new technology, such as smart water butts, as well as rainwater harvesting and tree pits to allow water to soak away naturally rather than rushing into the sewers. More infrastructure investment will also be considered to help the system cope.

Questions from the audience focussed on Southern Water's poor record on sewage discharge and what was happening now rather than a plan for the late 2020's. Dr Mills gave honest answers to the questions and agreed to provide more information on current activity and efforts to improve on existing water quality measuring systems. A fuller report will follow in the next Parish newsletter.

I ended the meeting saying I hoped this would be the first of further meetings between elements of the village and Southern Water.

Cllr John Gunston –
Chairman of the Environmental Initiatives Working Party

30th March 2022

299/22 RESPONSE TO EXTERNAL MEETINGS AND EVENTS

There were no further comments about the above report.

300/22 NEW ITEMS FOR THE NEXT MEETING (9TH MAY)

Nothing was suggested.

The meeting concluded at 20:08.

Chairman: *Cllr Steve Toney* Date: **9th May 2022**

END