



# EAST PRESTON PARISH COUNCIL

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

Tel: 01903 770050

<http://eastpreston.arun.gov.uk/>

Email: [clerk@eastpreston-pc.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@eastpreston-pc.gov.uk)

## **FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE**

**MINUTES:** of the Meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on Monday, 16<sup>th</sup> May 2022 at East Preston Infant School, Lashmar Road, East Preston at 18:00

**PRESENT:** Councillors John Gunston, Elizabeth Linton, Glyn Mathias, Rick McElroy (Chairman), Steve Toney and Steven Wilkinson

**ALSO:** Clerk to the Council, Simon Cross

Janine Nicholson and Lynne Smith, East Preston Festival Committee (until 18:20)

---

The following abbreviations may appear in these Minutes:

ADC – Arun District Council;

WSCC – West Sussex County Council.

---

The meeting opened at 18:00.

Following the Annual Meeting of the Council on 9<sup>th</sup> May, the membership of this committee was Cllrs Gunston, Mathias, McElroy and Wilkinson with one vacancy. As Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Council respectively, Cllrs Toney and Linton were entitled to attend and vote at meetings of this committee.

The following paper had been circulated in advance of the meeting and covered the first two Agenda Items:

### **Annual appointment of Chairman and Vice-Chairman**

**Committee is asked to consider the appointment of a committee Chairman for the council year 2022/23.**

**Committee is asked to consider the appointment of a committee Vice-Chairman for the council year 2022/23.**

On 10<sup>th</sup> May, members of the committee were asked to let me know if they wished to stand for either of these posts. It is early days, but at the time of writing, I have only received a response from Cllr Gunston, stating his willingness to stand as Vice-Chairman.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

10<sup>th</sup> May 2022

The meeting AGREED Cllr Linton could act as a second teller alongside the Clerk.

**400/22 APPOINTMENT OF A COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN FOR THE YEAR 2022/23**

Cllr McElroy was appointed unopposed.

Cllr Linton confirmed all six councillors present had voted.

**401/22 APPOINTMENT OF A COMMITTEE VICE-CHAIRMAN FOR THE YEAR 2022/23**

Cllr Gunston was appointed unopposed.

Cllr Linton confirmed all six councillors present had voted.

**402/22 SECTION 144 GRANT – EAST PRESTON FESTIVAL COMMITTEE**

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

**Grant Aid 2022/23**

**Committee is asked to consider the following tourism grant request for the current financial year.**

Organisation – charity no	Amount requested? (£)	Councillor notes:
East Preston Festival Committee n/a	£2250  “Insurance coverage for the E P Festival 2022/23 and children’s entertainment for 2022 Community Fete”	

Section 144 of the Local Government Act 1972, allows councils to encourage people to visit their area for recreation, health purposes etc..

The council budgeted £2,000 for Section 144 tourism grants to be used by the East Preston Festival Committee.

Janine Nicholson, Chairman, and Lynne Smith, Treasurer, will be attending the meeting to answer any questions to committee may have.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

10<sup>th</sup> May 2022

Cllr McElroy thanked Mrs Nicholson and Ms Smith for attending the meeting. Cllr McElroy then asked the committee members if there were any questions they wished to ask.

In response to a question about whether there was scope to defer renewing the Committee’s insurance each year if there was a period after renewal date when the Committee had no events planned. Both Mrs Nicholson and Ms Smith said they understood the thinking behind the question, but past experience had shown any kind of deferral of renewal resulted in a lot of additional work when negotiating with insurance companies. All the information which had already been provided to the insurer needed to be re-provided whereas in an automatic renewal situation, that information generally rolled over.

Cllr McElroy said he thought the Festival Committee did a “fantastic job” and “worked very hard”, but he wanted a better understanding of how the Festival Committee was constituted, how it ran and how it chose which organisations to donate to each year.

Mrs Nicholson replied the Festival Committee was definitely not a registered charity, but she believed it had the status of a charitable organisation. The money the committee raised was not used by the committee or its supporters themselves, but was distributed to charities and social groups operating in the village. In response to a question about a particular business once having received a donation, Mrs Nicholson said she felt that had been because the business

owner had helped out during that year's Festival. It was certainly not the Festival Committee's intention to make donations to businesses. A list of the groups who had received a donation in 2019 had been included in the current Festival brochure, page 7. The Festival Committee worked from a standard list of organisations in the village, but others were welcome to apply.

Mrs Nicholson explained the Festival Committee liked to keep a certain amount of money in its reserves to pay for the following year's Festival. Costs were currently rising unpredictably, and Mrs Nicholson reported the example of Village Hall costs which had increased from £1,200 to £2,200. This increase had led to the Festival Committee scaling back its use of the Village Hall. Financially, the committee now had two members focussed on bringing in sponsorship, and that had got off to a good start.

Cllr McElroy said the council needed to be sure the money it donated to any organisation was used for the purposes stated in any application. Mrs Nicholson said there was no official oversight of the Festival Committee's activities, although it would welcome such. Mrs Nicholson and Ms Smith agreed to look into improving the ways in which recipients of Festival grants were decided upon.

The committee AGREED to award £2,000 to the Festival Committee. This grant would be used to renew the Festival Committee's insurance, the remainder being used to support financially the provision of children's entertainment at the Community Fête and Charity Market event on 4<sup>th</sup> June.

(Mrs Nicholson and Ms Smith left the meeting at the conclusion of this item.)

#### **403/22 APOLOGIES AND REASONS FOR ABSENCE**

All committee members were present.

#### **404/22 PERSONAL AND/OR PREJUDICIAL/PECUNIARY INTERESTS**

No Interests were declared.

#### **405/22 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

No members of the public were present.

#### **406/22 ANNUAL REVIEW OF THE COMMITTEE'S TERMS OF REFERENCE**

The committee carried out the Annual Review of the Committee's Terms of Reference, as per the following paper which had been circulated in advance of the meeting:

### **Terms of Reference**

**Committee is asked to review and agree the committee's Terms of Reference for the coming year.**

The current Terms of Reference can be found at Appendix A below. These were last revised, by Full Council, on 4<sup>th</sup> May 2021, and readopted by the committee on 16<sup>th</sup> August 2021.

I have proposed three changes this year.

In clause 2.4, I propose "will attend" be changed to "may be required to attend" only because there are times when it has been more appropriate for other councillors to attend – for example the Chairman of the Environmental Initiatives Working Party to talk about the council's Greener Buildings Project or, when it existed, the Chairman of the Playing of Cricket Working Party to talk about cricket.

In clause 5.4, I have suggested what I think is a clearer wording, and in clause 5.10 I have expanded the wording as we do also award some grants using Section 144 of the Local Government Act 1972 as our reasoning.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

10<sup>th</sup> May 2022

The committee AGREED to incorporate all three suggested changes and to readopt the Terms of Reference. These would become version 14.

#### 407/21 GRANT AID 2022/23

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

### Grant Aid 2022/23

**Committee is asked to consider the following Grant Aid requests for the current financial year.**

The council budgeted £6,000 for Section 137 Grant Aid donations this financial year.

Publicity about the Grant Aid process started in February, with a closing date for applications of 31<sup>st</sup> March. The following eleven applications have been received.

Organisation – charity no	Amount requested? (£)	Outcome
4SIGHT Vision Support 1075447	£250  “We are seeking funding for our specialist support so that we can continue supporting people in your Parish who are living with sight loss”	£250
East Preston Youth Football Club (“EP Youth”) n/a	Up to £600  “Equipping four new EP Youth teams to respond to surging demand from local children for a fun and safe place to play football”	£311 – 100% support of one team
East Preston Sports & Social Club n/a	£6,250  “Making boundary of ground compliant with ADC new lease stipulations”	†
FEPIS - Friends of East Preston Infant School 1108710	£2,000  “New playground equipment”	£500 ††
Home-Start Arun, Worthing and Adur 1132416	£750  “Supporting the costs of volunteer training, including room hire, printing and other resources”	£500
KEPT – Keep East Preston Tidy n/a	£250  “To provide a litter picking station for the beach to encourage people to do a 2 minute beach clean”	£250
Littlehampton Sea Cadets 305392	£250  “Replacement boat engine. Youth. Several cadets, plus members of Arun & Angmering Choral Societies. Band performs at East Preston Fete”	£250
Parish Church of St Mary the Virgin, East Preston with Kingston 1180544	£342.79  “Replacement of existing kitchen storage in order to accommodate a dishwasher at a later date”	£342.79

St Barnabas House	£350  "We are applying for a grant to support the work of the Hospice at Home Night Service in East Preston, a relatively new service which provides specialist palliative care to patients in their own homes during the night time"	£350
Victim Support (Sussex Area) 298028	£200 "or what you feel appropriate as we are very grateful for all amounts"  "Recruit and train new volunteers to support victims and witnesses of crimes in Sussex"	£200
West Sussex Mediation Service 1084592	£200  "To support the provision of free mediation service within the parish"	£200

Committee members are advised to call in at the Council Office in advance of the meeting to read the application forms for themselves.

The total of the above requests is £11,442.79. Therefore, councillors may wish to think about a maximum sum we award the above organisations.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

9<sup>th</sup> May 2022

N.B. when circulated the Outcome column was headed Councillor's notes.

The committee AGREED donations as per the Outcome column above. The donations totalled £3,153.79, leaving £2,846.21 in the budget.

† The committee AGREED to invite representation from the East Preston Sports and Social Club to the committee's next meeting, as the relationship between the Football Club and the Sports and Social Club needed to be better understood.

†† The committee AGREED there might be more money available for the FEPIS project if there was still a shortfall in the project towards the end of the financial year.

#### **408/22 SECTION 144 GRANT – DISABILITY ACTION GROUP, EAST PRESTON**

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

### **Grant Aid 2022/23**

**Committee is asked to consider the following tourism grant request for the current financial year.**

Organisation – charity no	Amount requested? (£)	Councillor notes:
Disability Action Group, East Preston n/a	"As much as EPPC are able to contribute"  "To install a platform/walkway over the stones to enable those with mobility problems to "Reach the Beach"."	

Section 144 of the Local Government Act 1972, allows councils to encourage people to visit their area for recreation, health purposes etc..

The council budgeted £1,000 for Section 144 tourism grants to be used by the Disability Action Group, East Preston in its beach access project.

The committee may wish to consider whether it wants to set aside this money within the council's reserves until such time as the group can demonstrate its actual need for this money.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

10<sup>th</sup> May 2022

The committee AGREED it supported the group's project, but there was too little information available at this time for the council to agree to hand over the money it had set aside in this year's budget. The committee AGREED the Chairman and Secretary of the group should be invited to the committee's next meeting, which is scheduled for 15<sup>th</sup> August.

#### **409/22 EAST PRESTON & KINGSTON VILLAGE HALL FOUNDATION - CCTV**

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

### **East Preston & Kingston Village Hall Foundation CCTV**

**Committee is asked to continue consideration of a proposal from the East Preston & Kingston Village Hall Foundation regarding its CCTV system.**

As discussed at previous meetings, the Village Hall Foundation is replacing and upgrading its CCTV system (Minute 589/21). There is capacity within the new system for four cameras which could be included for the council's use, covering areas such as the toilets and the Warren Recreation Ground which would otherwise be of little interest to the Village Hall Foundation.

The committee agreed to Cllrs Gunston, Mathias and Wilkinson looking into this proposal further. At its December meeting, the committee agreed Cllr McElroy could provide expert knowledge to the three councillors named above.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

10<sup>th</sup> May 2022

Cllr McElroy said there was no update on this matter.

#### **410/22 CONSERVATIVE HALL WORKING PARTY**

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

### **Conservative Hall Working Party**

**Committee is asked to consider any update from the Conservative Hall Working Party.**

The working party is scheduled to meet on 10<sup>th</sup> May, likely to discuss the surveyor's report and related matters.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

10<sup>th</sup> May 2022

The Clerk reported the meeting held on 10<sup>th</sup> May had agreed to share the report with Terry Chapman as lead Trustee of the Conservative Hall. This share was to be accompanied by a letter from the council asking Mr Chapman to consult with his fellow Trustees and to come back with a clear statement of what they were offering the council in this matter. That should enable the working party to discuss the matter fully.

#### **411/22 FLAT AND FRONTAGE WORKING PARTY**

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

## **Flat and Frontage Working Party**

**Committee is asked to consider any update from the Flat & Frontage Working Party.**

At the Full Council meeting on 9<sup>th</sup> May, Cllr Wilkinson suggested the working party be re-formatted to separate out what have become two distinct workpackages – matters related to the flat and matters related to the frontage and layout of the office. That may be the only update there is to note at this time.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

10<sup>th</sup> May 2022

The Clerk said he would have a look sometime at how the Working Party could be split.

### **412/22 DEFIBRILLATOR FUND**

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

## **Village defibrillators**

**Committee is asked to begin consideration of a policy for distributing funds from the council's Defibrillator Fund.**

Following a recommendation from this committee, the council agreed at its March meeting “unanimously to set up a Defibrillator Fund of up to £3,500 to provide village venues with external defibrillator cabinets.” That was the easy bit – the committee now needs to work out a policy.

I imagine, although I am happy to be proved wrong, this will fall to Cllr Wilkinson and me to draft something, but input from other committee members on anything in particular you think should be included in the policy would be useful.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

9<sup>th</sup> May 2022

The Clerk and Cllr Wilkinson AGREED they would look at this in due course. There was a suggestion the policy needed to make clear maintenance of the defib and its cabinet remained the responsibility of the organisation.

### **413/22 BANKING SIGNATORIES**

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

## **Banking signatories**

**Committee is asked to review the council's banking signatories.**

Past experience has shown how difficult it is to get banks to change signatories. With that in mind, the council needs to start thinking about any changes to its signatories which the May 2023 local elections might require. At the time of writing, at least one signatory has said she will not stand in May 2023. For her to transfer her knowledge to another councillor is very desirable.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

9<sup>th</sup> May 2022



The Clerk confirmed the council's main signatories were Cllrs Toney, Mathias, Gander and Wilkinson. Cllr Linton was also a signatory on some accounts. Cllr Gander had advised the Clerk she spent "less than 1 hour per week" on council banking matters.

Cllrs McElroy and Gunston both volunteered to be new signatories. As Cllr Gunston was retired, the committee AGREED he should become a signatory soon, replacing Cllr Gander who had stated she would not be standing for re-election in May 2023.

#### **414/22 ENVIRONMENTAL INITIATIVES WORKING PARTY (EIWP) – GREENER BUILDINGS PROJECT**

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

### **Greener Buildings Project fund**

**Committee is asked to receive an update on a request from the Environmental Initiatives Working Party to take £35,000 from the Village Improvement Fund to set up a Greener Buildings Project fund.**

Cllr Gunston to lead on this item.

At the last meeting, the committee agreed to hold off any agreement to this request until the report from the Brighton & Hove Energy Services Cooperative had been received.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

9<sup>th</sup> May 2022

Cllr Gunston reported the council had now received the report from BHESCo. The report stated, "The total cost of these measures [to reduce carbon emissions] across all buildings is estimated at £136,000 and these would give savings of £14,000 each year."

Cllr Gunston said he believed those savings of £14,000 would, effectively, be put back into the village through the organisations which made those savings. Currently, every age group in the village made some use of one or more of the buildings under consideration.

Cllr Gunston asked the council to set up a fund of £68,000, half of the money estimated by BHESCo. He had calculated the council's underspend of income against expenditure over the past three years, as a figure of £135,000. The fund would, he believed, show the council's commitment both to village life and to tackling climate change.

After some debate about how effective against climate change any measures undertaken by the village could really be, Cllr Gunston said he would like the council to repurpose the Village Improvement Fund to be a Greener Buildings Fund which the building custodians could apply to for grants to match their own funds going towards any suggested improvements. Cllr Gunston noted the Village Improvement Fund currently had just in excess of £42,000 and the council could spend up to £44,100 (approximately: 5,000 electors x £8.82 Section 137 amount per year) in the current year on Grant Aid; £6,000 was already ring-fenced to be spent on donations to organisations working within the village.

Cllr Mathias reminded the meeting the Village Improvement Fund had initially been set up to help the council provide office accommodation in the centre of the village, an aim he did not feel had been met by the current Council Office.

Cllr Gunston saw the Greener Buildings project as a catalyst for improved relationships with and between the organisations, adding up to better life in the village.

The committee AGREED to ask council to repurpose the Village Improvement Fund to a Greener Building Fund. Cllr Mathias voted against this proposal.

Cllr Gunston thanked the committee for its agreement to this and said, ultimately, he hoped to build the fund up to the £68,000 mentioned above.

#### **415/22 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 21<sup>ST</sup> FEBRUARY 2022**



The draft Minutes had been circulated to all councillors on 24<sup>th</sup> February asking for suggested amendments by 3<sup>rd</sup> March. Cllrs Toney, Wilkinson and Gander had all replied the Minutes were fine.

The committee AGREED unanimously the Minutes could be signed as a true record of the meeting held on 21<sup>st</sup> February. Cllr McElroy duly signed the Minutes.

#### 416/22 MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS

The committee NOTED the following report, which had been circulated in advance of the meeting.

### Updates from previous meetings

**Minute 160/22 – East Preston Football Club** – I did email the Chairman of the Football Club, Terry Doyle, on 22<sup>nd</sup> February to say the council supported the club in its efforts to renew its lease with ADC.

**Minute 163/22 – Sea Road Pavement Extension** – after some weeks of waiting, and apparently confusion, yesterday I received Cllr Elkins's agreement to this project. I have not started the process of submitting the request to WSCC yet.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

10<sup>th</sup> May 2022

**Minute 166/22 – Warren Recreation Ground – Annual Return** – the Clerk advised the committee, he had now written to Ian James, thanking him for his work on the Annual Return over the past couple of years and advising him of the council's decision to work with The Martlet Partnership on this in the future. Mr James had replied amiably and said he was happy to agree a handover to The Martlet Partnership. The latter company will now make contact with Mr James.

#### 417/22 ITEMS FOR THE NEXT MEETING (15<sup>TH</sup> AUGUST)

Nothing new was suggested at this time.

*The Meeting closed at 19:10.*

Chairman: *Cllr Rick McElroy* Date: **15<sup>th</sup> August 2022**

(END)