



# EAST PRESTON PARISH COUNCIL

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**MINUTES:** of the Proceedings of the Monthly Meeting of East Preston Parish Council held at 19:00 on Monday, 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2023 at East Preston Infant School, Lashmar Road, East Preston

**PRESENT:** Councillors Christine Bowman, Andrea Chapman, Lisa Duff, Barbara Gale, John Gunston, Helen Hill, Elizabeth Linton, Glyn Mathias, Rick McElroy, David Moore, Steve Toney (Chairman) and Steven Wilkinson

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

West Sussex County Councillor Roger Elkins (from 19:54)

Arun District Councillors Philippa Bower, Ricky Bower and Paul Kelly (until 19:21)

Mrs D, Mr G and Mrs M

**ABSENT:** Councillor Kit Bradshaw

\* \* \* \* \*

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

\* \* \* \* \*

The meeting opened at 19:01.

## 539/23 **INTRODUCTIONS**

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

Cllr Toney reminded the meeting there would be no Full Council meeting in August, but councillors were expected to attend a training session on that evening at 18:00. This met the requirement within the council's Training Plan for councillors to receive training once every four-year term.

## **540/23 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

An apology and a reason for absence had been received from Cllr Bradshaw.

**1761** The Council **RESOLVED** unanimously to accept the apologies received from Cllr Bradshaw (iii).

Apologies had been received from Mrs Dorothy Lee.

## **541/23 DECLARATION OF PERSONAL AND/OR PREJUDICIAL/PECUNIARY INTERESTS**

None were declared. Cllr Toney reminded councillors they could also declare an Interest at the beginning of each Agenda Item.

## **542/23 PUBLIC SESSION**

**Agenda Item 9c – Community Engagement Committee** – Mrs D congratulated the council on its giving Coronation commemorative coins to all children at East Preston Infant and Junior Schools. She was sure this would have been well received by those children.

**No Agenda Item** – Mrs D asked whether there had been any progress about overgrowing hedges in the village, especially the one around Tamarisk Apartments, at the junction of Sea Road and Manor Road.

**Agenda Item 9a – Amenities Committee** – Mrs D said she had attended Roy Allen's "excellent" presentation on 21<sup>st</sup> June on the subject of Reach the Beach. Mrs D felt Mr Allen really had considered all angles and his proposal for a boardwalk and viewing platform at the southern end of Sea Road really would work. She thought almost all of those at that meeting had come away feeling the same.

Mrs D had received a Reach the Beach newsletter published by Mr Allen. Within that, he proposed a community group be set up, along similar lines to that which currently ran the South Strand toilets. Mrs D was unsure whether this was the correct way forward as she felt this project was different to that project. Mrs D liked the idea of ownership of the project including as many people in the village as possible, and liked the idea of local businesses being asked to contribute in some way.

Mrs D said she hoped the parish council would also be able to find ways in which it could support the project.

## **543/23 COUNCIL RESPONSES**

**No Agenda Item** – the Clerk said he knew the board of directors for Tamarisk Apartments had met late in June and the hedge had been an agenda item at that meeting. He knew the board of directors was investigating how best to mitigate the impact the hedge had.

(Cllr Chapman arrived at the conclusion of this item.)

## **544/23 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 5<sup>TH</sup> JUNE 2023**

The draft Minutes were circulated to all councillors on 6<sup>th</sup> June asking for suggested amendments by the 13<sup>th</sup> June. None had been suggested. Cllr Moore had emailed, "I have read through the draft Minutes and found them to be a true reflection of the meeting."

**1762** The Council **RESOLVED** unanimously the Chairman could sign the Minutes as a true record of the meeting held on 5<sup>th</sup> June. Cllr Toney duly did so.

## **545/23 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 451/23 – Annual Governance and Accountability Return for year-ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023**

1. **Introduction**

This is the report covering items discussed during Full Council meetings up to and including the meeting held on 5<sup>th</sup> June 2023.

2. **Minute 451/23 – Annual Governance and Accountability Return for year-ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023**

Tracy and I pulled together the paperwork and I sent it to the External Auditor on Friday, 23<sup>rd</sup> June, a week before the closing date. Tracy and I checked we had sent everything asked for but, as usual, are waiting for the auditor to tell us we have missed something.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

27<sup>th</sup> June 2023

The Clerk offered to answer any questions, but none were asked.

#### **546/23 FINANCIAL MATTERS**

The Accounts for June 2023 had been distributed to Members in advance of the meeting.

- 1763** The council **RESOLVED** unanimously to approve the Outstanding Purchase Orders report for 2023/24, value £9,602.08 (excl. VAT).
- 1764** The council **RESOLVED** unanimously to approve the Supplier Non-BACS Invoices Paid reports for June 2023 (inc. unreported additional payments from previous month) totalling £1,574.05 (inc. VAT).
- 1765** The council **RESOLVED** unanimously to approve the Supplier BACS Invoices Paid reports for June 2023 totalling £23,338.79.
- 1766** The council **RESOLVED** unanimously to approve the List of Sales Receipts & Bank Receipts by Bank report for financial year to date totalling £162,494.70 (inc. VAT).

The council NOTED the Bank Reconciliations to 14<sup>th</sup> June 2023.

The Chairman thanked Mrs Khoo and Mr Vyse, the council's Book-keepers, for preparing the above reports.

#### **547/23 REPORTS FROM PARISH COUNCIL COMMITTEES**

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

### **Committees**

The following committee meetings have taken place since the last Full Council meeting: Community Engagement on 12<sup>th</sup> June, Major Events on 26<sup>th</sup> June, and Planning & Licensing on 12<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> June. Draft Minutes for these meetings will have been circulated to all councillors before this meeting.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

27<sup>th</sup> June 2023

## **Amenities Committee**

The committee did not meet during June.

**Security measures at Warren Recreation Ground** – The new steel security gates have been installed at the vehicle entrance of Warren Recreation Ground. The gates have a shroud cover to conceal the padlock.

**Notice Boards** - Following recent damage to the Northern Shops Notice Board, Committee re-assessed its agreed five-year plan to replace all the Notice Boards in the village, with Recycled Plastic Notice Boards.

Initially Committee was looking to replace the Village Green Notice Board but it would now like to include the Northern Shops board. These two boards are the largest boards in the village, to replace them both would cost £5,000.00. In order to replace all the remaining Notice Boards more quickly, Committee is requesting Full Council set up a reserve to cover the cost of replacing the remaining three Notice Boards. These boards are smaller boards, therefore the approximate costs to replace them is in the region of £6,000.00. **Committee is requesting £11,000.00 from Full Council's reserves to set up a fund to cover the cost of replacing all the council's noticeboards in the village, starting with the Village Green and Northern Shops noticeboards.**

**Village Green Car Park – Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR)** - The ANPR system at the Village Green Car Park is now operational. The signage has been replaced to indicate the system is operational. An article has been published in the Council's Newsletter to notify members of the public. One member of the public expressed concerns about the signage to Simon on 26<sup>th</sup> June but accepted he had seen the article in the newsletter. Simon and I immediately went and visited the signage and confirmed, whilst it could perhaps be a little more explanatory, the right references are on the signs.

**Tree work** – Due to the weather this tree work was not completed within the last financial year as planned. Therefore the £4,200.00 which Full Council had agreed to fund the work from its Annual Contingency Budget (resolution 1722 - Essential Tree Works identified in the Council's Annual Tree Report), will now come out of this financial year's Annual Contingency Budget. Contact me if you need further explanation.

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

27<sup>th</sup> June 2023

## **Audit & Governance Committee**

The committee's next meeting is in July.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

26<sup>th</sup> June 2023

## **Community Engagement Committee**

The committee met on 12<sup>th</sup> June; the draft Minutes were circulated to all councillors on 26<sup>th</sup> June. Below are some updates.

Cllrs Linton and Duff were re-elected Chairman and Vice-Chairman respectively.

**Tourist map** – Cllrs Bradshaw and Gunston have been working together on this, with design work being carried out by Mandy Armstrong at ADC. The committee agreed the council should set up a YouTube channel, to which it could post the videos related to places on the map. It was also suggested councillors could read the articles in each newsletter and make those available on the channel too. A YouTube channel is free-of-charge.

**Beach cleans** – the committee agreed the more concentrated timeslot of midday to 13:00 worked better. The next beach clean is scheduled for Sunday, 24<sup>th</sup> September. The committee agreed to buy some children's hoops and litter-picks for future events.

**Playschemes** – the committee agreed to work with Sussex Forest Activities again for an autumn half-term playscheme, but at the beach this time. Sam at Sussex Forest Activities has said that is a great idea and proposed Tuesday, 24<sup>th</sup> October.

**East Preston Festival – Come and Meet Your Local Councillors** – the committee felt the event went well and, where possible, answers to questions raised will be published in the Summer 2023 Newsletter.

One member of the public has written in to complain about the title *Come and Meet Your Local Councillors*; he feels that as there have not been more councillors than posts available for several years now, he has not elected any councillors and therefore the title should be *Come and Meet the Local Councillors*.

The committee agreed to think about trying either or both a different day and different time for the event next year.

**Village bus** – public feedback has been good. Even a member of the public who called in to complain about the route also collected a timetable whilst he was here. I have mentioned to Compass Travel and to Rustington Parish Council that a redesign of the route might be something to consider if this council agrees to buy into the service for a further year. For example, perhaps the bus could turn right at the western end of Vicarage Lane and head up Station Road past the station to get to Sainsbury's that way. Both organisations have said they would be open to such a conversation.

The committee's next meeting is on 24<sup>th</sup> July.

Cllr Elizabeth Linton –  
**Chairman of the Community Engagement Committee**

26<sup>th</sup> June 2023

## **Finance & General Purposes Committee**

The committee did not meet in June. There are no updates.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

26<sup>th</sup> June 2023

## **Major Events Committee**

The committee met on 26<sup>th</sup> June.

**Funday Sunday** – the committee agreed to run another *Funday Sunday* event next Spring.

**Big Coronation Lunch, 7<sup>th</sup> May** – although there was a greater amount of negative comments on Facebook than we usually receive, the committee felt the event had been successful and the negativity came from people expecting a Food & Drink Festival rather than a picnic with live entertainment. Alison told us The Big Lunch is an annual, national event aimed at tackling loneliness, and the committee would be interested in seeing if the Festival Committee would run a similar event each year, with or without council support.

**Remembrance Sunday, 13<sup>th</sup> November** – I will meet with the Chairman and Secretary of the British Legion branch shortly to ensure everything is in place or an owner identified where not.

Preparations for the **East Preston Food & Drink Festival** (26<sup>th</sup> August) and **East Preston Christmas Celebrations** (25<sup>th</sup> November) are both progressing to plan.

Cllr Elizabeth Linton –  
**Chairman of the Major Events Committee**

27<sup>th</sup> June 2023

## **Personnel Committee**

The committee has not met since the last Full Council meeting. The council's new bookkeeper, Adrian Vyse, started on 1<sup>st</sup> June and seems to be settling in nicely. Adrian has helped Tracy prepare this meeting's financial reports.

Simon and Tracy are due to have a conversation shortly about her final working day. If you would like to contribute to Tracy's leaving present, please let me know.

Four councillors have not yet completed a 2023-24 DBS check for the council; some of these have advised the office this is because of unresolved technical issues. All councillors should get a new basic DBS check for the council at the beginning of each four-year term and half-way through (May 2025).

The bespoke termly training scheduled for 19<sup>th</sup> June had to be cancelled at short notice, but has been rescheduled for **7<sup>th</sup> August at 18:00**. Previously, this training has worked well for the council and been enjoyable too.

Cllr Lisa Duff – **Chairman of the Personnel Committee**

26<sup>th</sup> June 2023

## **Planning & Licensing Committee**

The committee met on 12<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> June.

On the 12<sup>th</sup> June, the committee considered three Applications, agreeing to object to none of them.

On the 26<sup>th</sup> June, the committee considered four Applications, agreeing to object only to one in Nursery Close – the committee believed the proposed changes would result in a property out-of-character with the rest of the close.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

27<sup>th</sup> June 2023

Additionally:

Amenities – Cllr Wilkinson reported Dawn was on the case with the council's insurers after a vehicle had damaged the fence around the children's playground after, apparently, a large black dog had been running free around the car-park.

Cllr Toney added he had been called by a friend who was the first local resident to be caught by the Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) system going live. The Clerk said there had been two other residents who had complained they too had been caught, one amiably accepting he had read about it in the newsletter but had been distracted and overstayed the initial free 15 minutes, and another rather less amiably.

Community Engagement – Cllr Linton said she and Cllr Moore had met and had looked at the few Christmas Lighting motif designs suitable to replace those in the northern shops. From the limited designs available, they had chosen two pairs to cover the four lampposts in question.

Personnel – Cllr Duff also reminded councillors of the training session to be held on 7<sup>th</sup> August.

Planning & Licensing – Cllr Mathias mentioned the High Court had upheld Worthing Borough Council's decision not to allow 475 homes to be built at Chatsmore Farm in Goring.

There was no update from the council's other three committees.

#### **548/23 AMENITIES COMMITTEE – COUNCIL NOTICEBOARDS**

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

### **Amenities Committee – noticeboards**

**Council is asked to create a £11,000 fund for plastic replacements to the council's wooden noticeboards.**

As already mentioned in my report above, the Amenities Committee has already started to look at a five-year programme for replacing the council's noticeboards around the village. These are all wooden and are at: northern shops, Village Green, Village Hall, Lashmar Road and one at the western end of Worthing Road. The latter is the most recent, but is only half the capacity of the others, so perhaps not as useful.

The noticeboard in Lashmar Road has been subjected to some vandalism. The ones by the Village Green and in the northern shops have also been subjected to some vandalism and experience some wear and tear problems. Most recently, one of the doors on the northern shops noticeboard was found hanging off, with no obvious explanation. Thanks to Cllr Toney for carrying out a temporary fix on this noticeboard.

Having canvassed the members of the Amenities Committee, we would like to ask council to create a fund of £11,000 so all five noticeboards could be replaced with plastic equivalents sooner than the committee had originally planned. Replacing with plastic should reduce the amount of maintenance the boards require, would come with a new guarantee for 5 years, and would fit in with the council's policy of not buying wood products where possible. Although there would be provision in the fund to replace the Worthing Road noticeboard, that could wait longest in order to get best value from that noticeboard.

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

26<sup>th</sup> June 2023



Cllr Wilkinson provided further background to this request.

- 1767** The Council **RESOLVED** unanimously to set up a ringfenced fund of £11,000 for plastic replacements to the council's wooden noticeboards.

This money would be taken from the council's general reserves and be made available to the Amenities Committee to progress this project.

#### **549/23 REPORTS FROM PARISH COUNCIL WORKING PARTIES**

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

### **Working Parties**

None of the working parties has met since the last Full Council meeting.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

27<sup>th</sup> June 2023

### **20mph Working Party**

County Cllr Roger Elkins asked for more information to help him decide whether or not to agree to this proposal moving to the next stage within WSCC. I have sent him the responses from the online survey and also the conversations Community Speed Watch coordinator, Keith Harris, had with members of the public who asked in that survey to be contacted by the Community Speed Watch team.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

28<sup>th</sup> June 2023

### **Conservative Hall Working Party**

Terry Chapman met me on Monday, 5<sup>th</sup> June. He said he would get back to me about a meeting between trustees and councillors shortly.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

27<sup>th</sup> June 2023

### **Environmental Initiatives Working Party (EIWP)**

The working party did not meet in June.

Cllr John Gunston –  
**Chairman of the Environmental Initiatives Working Party**

27<sup>th</sup> June 2023



## **Flat Working Party**

No further concerns have been raised by the tenant. The council has been advised the excavation work in the back garden will begin around about 1<sup>st</sup> August. The agency and the tenant have been informed.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

28<sup>th</sup> June 2023

## **Leases Working Party**

Nothing to report. Still waiting for me to arrange a meeting between the working party and the Bowls Club committee.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

26<sup>th</sup> June 2023

Additionally:

20MPH – the Clerk reported he had spoken to County Cllr Elkins on the afternoon of the meeting and had asked him for an email explicitly giving his support to the proposed 20mph Zone.

Environmental Initiatives – Cllr Gunston reminded the meeting the working party was next meeting on Monday, 10<sup>th</sup> July.

There were no updates for the council's other working parties.

### **550/23 ARUN DISTRICT COUNCIL**

District Cllr R Bower started by reporting on the High Court decision in favour of Worthing Borough Council in upholding its refusal of Planning Permission for 475 new homes at Chatsmore Farm, Goring. He had read the judgement in some detail and particularly referred to the impact the proposed development would have on the nearby South Downs National Park, in particular views from Highdown Hill. He said he would be asking ADC officers to be stronger in its references to the impact on the South Down National Park whenever possible. He could not be certain the developer of the Chatsmore Farm site would not come back with a further proposal which it believed addressed all of the objections which have been raised throughout the long appeals process.

Cllr R Bower stated ADC's Planning Policy Committee had decided it would start to review the Arun Local Plan. He was concerned whilst the Levelling Up Bill was reviewing the review process and had not been finalised, the work starting now could mean some unnecessary work was undertaken, at a cost to local residents.

Cllr R Bower ended by advising the latest appeal against ADC's refusal for a property to be built on the corner of Beechlands Close and Montpelier Road had again been refused by the Planning Inspectorate.

District Cllr Kelly congratulated the council on its new security gates at the Warren Recreation Ground. He believed a lot of local residents would sleep more easily now the gates were in use.

District Cllr P Bower said she had nothing to add this month.

Cllr Gunston asked the district councillors if they knew anything about the allotments in East Preston, as a resident had spoken to him at the recent Come and Meet Your Local Councillors event, concerned several plots appeared to be unmaintained and there was only a closed waiting list for plots at the site. The clerk provided some additional recent history in this matter and Cllr Kelly offered to take up this matter at ADC.

In response to a question from Cllr Toney, Cllr R Bower said ADC was currently being run by joint interim Chief Executives, Karl Roberts and Philippa Dart. A recruitment panel was likely to be convened soon and the process would then be underway to find a permanent Chief Executive.

#### **551/23 SUSSEX POLICE**

The Clerk reported no report had been received from Sussex Police in time for this meeting.

#### **552/23 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. Unauthorised encampment, 17<sup>th</sup> to 21<sup>st</sup> June**
- 5. Freedom of Information / Data Protection requests**
- 6. Littlehampton Locality schools multi-agency meeting, 21<sup>st</sup> June**
- 7. Disability Action Group, Reach the Beach meeting, 21<sup>st</sup> June**
- 8. Community Speed Watch, 26<sup>th</sup> June**
- 9. Social media**
- 10. MailChimp stats**
- 11. A selection of things we have been asked since the last meeting**
- 12. Recent bouquets and complaints**
- 13. Leave**
- 14. July meetings and events**

#### **1. Introduction**

This is the report mainly covering June 2023 and matters which may not arise elsewhere on the agenda.

#### **2. Police matters**

On 5<sup>th</sup> June, I reported a van which appeared to have been abandoned on the island opposite the office. The van had its front offside panel missing and was untaxed. PCSO Raj responded very quickly, "Vehicle is not showing stolen and unable to contact owner as person does not live in local. I have completed operation crackdown report to make them to deal." Subsequently, this van has been jiggling around the village, parking for a few days at a time, recognisable by its still-missing panel. There have been reports the driver has been verbally threatening to at least one resident. PCSO Raj is on the case.

Some residents have complained about some other vans parked for long periods around the village. With the exception of a van we know has been parked in front of the Village Green gate for security reasons, these other vehicles have been reported to the police either directly or via the Operation Crackdown website. Little reassurance has been forthcoming even though some of the vans have no tax.

### 3. **Anti-social behaviour matters**

There are no updates on previous reports of anti-social behaviour in the village.

A household in Sea Road reported to me the property had had a brick thrown through its front window late on the evening of Saturday, 24<sup>th</sup> June. Fortunately, the occupants were away, but not a nice thing to come home to. There is no reason to believe this was targeted, just silly vandalism. At the time of writing, the reporter is being helped by Sussex Police in this matter.

The letterbox topper provided by the East Preston Yarnbombers for the letterbox in the northern shopping area has been stolen for a second time, and has been returned for a second time, albeit after a longer period missing than the first time.

### 4. **Unauthorised encampment, 17<sup>th</sup> to 21<sup>st</sup> June**

At about 18:35 on Saturday, 17<sup>th</sup> June, Rosie from Rustington PC called me to alert me to the fact a group of travellers had breached the earth bunds at the northern / Worthing Road entrance to Langmeads Field. I alerted Steve T. and went to see for myself. I arrived at the same time as two Sussex Police PCSOs. Whilst I spoke to concerned residents at the entrance to the field, the two PCSOs spoke to members of the party. The information they were given was the group was not expecting to become any larger (at this point it was two caravans, two lorries and one car, two families, some children) and was expecting to resume its journey on Tuesday, 20<sup>th</sup> June. The group had located itself on the western side of the central copse, and had avoided backing on to any of the properties bordering the field.

I came home after about an hour, and sent an email to Sir Peter Bottomley MP, our West Sussex County and Arun District councillors and various other interested parties and also sent a similar email to councillors to let them know the situation. A representative of ADC's Parks and Greenspaces Department was already working on the case and admitted that council needed to strengthen its security measures at the field.

I visited Langmeads again on Sunday, 18<sup>th</sup> and Monday, 19<sup>th</sup> mornings, just to confirm the group had not got any bigger and it had not. Local reports were the group was not causing any disturbance. This meant Sussex Police were not able to invoke additional powers to move the group on.

Although the group had told police officers on that first day they would leave on Tuesday, they actually left early evening on Wednesday, 21<sup>st</sup> June. The status of any eviction action has been cloudy throughout.

In response to an email sent late on 21<sup>st</sup> June, early on 22<sup>nd</sup> June ADC Parks and Greenspaces replied, "Tivoli will be on site this morning to tidy up. We will arrange for a concrete block from another site to be located at the Worthing Rd entrance today, whilst we await the delivery of new deterrents. The block will stay at this location."

### 5. **Freedom of Information / Data Protection requests**

No Freedom of Information requests received since the last report.

No Data Protection requests received since the last report.

### 6. **Littlehampton Locality schools multi-agency meeting, 21<sup>st</sup> June**

I attended this meeting at Littlehampton Town Council's Millennium Chamber. The meeting was called by Arun District Council following receipt of a letter sent by the headteachers from the ten schools within the Littlehampton Locality. The opening two paragraphs of the letter were:

"We are writing to you as the group of Headteachers who are responsible for all the local primary and secondary schools in the wider Littlehampton area. Last week two of the Littlehampton Community Wardens attended one of our regular meetings. Their input was very useful, and it prompted a discussion afterwards about the escalating gang culture in our area and what we could do about it.

"As a group we can cite some worrying examples of serious anti-social behaviour by our pupils. Most of the victims are our pupils too. Sadly the perpetrator age range is on a downward trajectory. A child as young as 8 has recently been caught bringing a knife into one of our local schools. Unfortunately we are finding that younger siblings often want to follow the same path that their older siblings have taken, or even worse. They have a misconception that joining their sibling's gang will protect them. Once in their gang, this frequently leads to county lines involvement. As a group of Headteachers we want to work with our local community to do whatever it takes to break the cycle, to help our younger pupils make better choices than their older siblings."

Sobering reading.

Other councils represented at the meeting were WSCC, ADC, Littlehampton Town Council, and Angmering and Rustington Parish Councils. All schools in East Preston and Angmering and one of the schools in Rustington fall into the Angmering Locality, but the issues raised at this meeting apply.

On the schools' side, the meeting was led by Marie Smailes, Executive Headteacher of Rustington Primary School, and Richard Hanks, Assistant Principal at The Littlehampton Academy. In addition to the problems mentioned above, they reported an increase in physical fighting – children using violence to settle disputes rather than words, "an epidemic of vaping", roof-walking, river-jumping, sexualised behaviour and sexual harassment (including in primary schools), graffiti. The increase is comparing pre-pandemic to post-pandemic. Truancy has also increased, children in homes where one or both parents work from home see staying at home as some sort of norm.

Officers from ADC and WSCC talked about the work they undertake to engage with children. This included the work of the Littlehampton Community Wardens. A WSCC officer referred to the [Your Space](#) part of the WSCC website. This contains a wealth of information for children and teenagers, including a link to WSCC's main directory of local clubs and organisations. A quick search on BN16 1NN showed only the tennis, floral and bowls clubs listed and the Horticultural Society. I have approached the other sports clubs asking them to consider listing themselves. The Chairman of the football club has added his club to the database.

Arun Youth Projects were present and, in addition to the youth club nights they run on a weekly basis for Rustington PC and Littlehampton TC, mention was made of the organisation's work at the Angmering School Smallholding. Men in Sheds were mentioned as working alongside them at the site.

Sussex Police reps said its aim is to divert children away from crime through early intervention both with the children directly and with the parents.

One of the infant schools present said it had decided to open at least two days a week for five of the six weeks of the summer holidays, this to give a safe space to children who might otherwise be left home alone or sent out alone for the day.

The meeting closed on a feeling of already working more closely together. The coordinator for Littlehampton Locality, Madeleine Vaughan, is also the coordinator for Angmering Locality. I have let Mrs New and Mr Tidd, headteachers at East Preston Infant and Junior Schools respectively, know I attended this meeting, and they will seek further information from Ms Vaughan.

## **7. Disability Action Group, Reach the Beach meeting, 21<sup>st</sup> June**

Cllr Wilkinson and I attended this meeting, officially, and Cllrs Gale, Hill and Moore attended semi-officially. Overall attendance was estimated at around 70 and included District Cllr Philippa Bower. Probably about as many known faces as unknown; several Men in Sheds and Festival Committee members were present.

Alan Hultquist, Chairman of the Disability Action Group, opened the meeting and quickly handed over to Roy Allen who gave a presentation not only on his design for a boardwalk for the beach, at the bottom of Sea Road, but also his idea the community should form a team to manage this project from inception to completion. Roy said this would be a facility for the whole community not just those with reduced mobility. This accords with the council's resolving "unanimously to confirm the council's commitment to the concept of improving access to the beach for all users." (2<sup>nd</sup> March 2015, Minute 140/15, Resolution 0859)

The only real dissent from the floor was from a member of the public stating his belief the better location, purely from traffic management grounds, would be for the boardwalk to be at the bottom of Sea Lane. His comments appeared to receive little support around the room.

A resident of Sea Lane asked me directly whether the council would reconsider submitting the Planning Application. This was my opportunity to stand up and "confirm the council's commitment to the concept of improving access to the beach for all users." Explaining I was an administrator not a decision-maker, I said if there was sufficient will amongst the community, the council could have a further discussion about whether or not it was willing to submit the Planning Application. The same gentleman asked again after the meeting had ended, and I said IF the council agreed to submit the Planning Application it would have to be on the understanding such an action did not commit the council to leading on the project in any way.

A resident of South Strand suggested local businesses be approached for sponsorship. Roy replied that was something which would be easier once Planning Permission had been granted.

I expected there to be greater criticism of the council, but if it was there it was not expressed to the meeting.

Roy asked anyone interesting in being part of a group to progress the scheme should contact him by the end of the month.

Late on 27<sup>th</sup> June, I was asked to provide a statement to the Littlehampton Gazette. This was for an article which will appear in the 29<sup>th</sup> June edition. At the time of writing, I do not know how my statement will be edited.

## **8. Community Speed Watch, 26<sup>th</sup> June**

I went on Community Speed Watch shift at the Village Green, between 09:00 and 10:00. 64 vehicles passed the patrol, the lowest ever on a Sea Road shift in which I have been involved. Gallingly though, the patrol did catch one car travelling at 37mph, and it was someone I know, which is a first. He will be reported through the Community Speed Watch system and Sussex Police will either write to him or visit him depending upon his past history.

It was a quiet shift, not only were there few cars passing but also not many pedestrians. One of my colleagues had not been on shift with me before. After I had had a conversation with a tricky resident, my colleague said she had been very impressed by how I had managed to put the resident in her place without her realising I had done so.

## **9. Social media**

This month, three of the council's Facebook posts were seen by more than 500 people:

- Photograph of the very first of the extended No. 12 bus services – 10,428 people
- Photograph of a found bracelet – 724
- Promotion for *Come and Meet Your Local Councillors*, 8<sup>th</sup> June – 720
- MailChimp post for *East Preston Parish Council news* – 20<sup>th</sup> June 2023 - 596
- Repost of Arun Parks and Greenspace post announcing the arrival of travellers on Langmeads, 17<sup>th</sup> June – 571
- Repost of Arun Parks and Greenspace post announcing the travellers had left the night before, 22<sup>nd</sup> June – 551

(Personally, I found it interesting the people who were so negative on the post about the travellers arriving on Langmeads, not one of them said anything positive on the post about the travellers having left and ADC having quickly returned Langmeads to good condition.)

† Food & Drink Festival page

▲ East Preston Business Community page

\* East Preston Christmas Celebrations page

(posts up to and including 27<sup>th</sup> June)

The number of Followers is currently 1,818, an increase of 6 on the last report.

#### 10. **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 – 1<sup>st</sup> June – sent to 910 subscribers, opened by 655 (72.1%)

Parish Council news – 7<sup>th</sup> June – sent to 910, opened by 639 (70.4%)

Parish Council news – 20<sup>th</sup> June – sent to 914, opened by 646 (71%)

#### 11. **Things we have been asked since the last meeting**

Nothing unusual.

#### 12. **Recent bouquets and complaints**

(In addition to anything reported above)

Thanks from members of the Disability Action Group to those councillors and officers who attended the Reach the Beach meeting.

Thanks from the residents of Sea Road for advice given after their window had been smashed.

Thanks from White Lodge care home for helping to publicise its Summer Fair.

#### 13. **Leave**



Dawn is on leave on 3<sup>rd</sup> July. Adrian has some leave booked in July too.

#### **14. July Meetings and Events**

This list may be incomplete and is subject to change.

- 3<sup>rd</sup> Full Council (19:00, East Preston Infant School)
- 7<sup>th</sup> Third and final tennis coaching session of 2023 (10:00, Warren Recreation Ground)
- 10<sup>th</sup> Planning & Licensing Committee (18:00, East Preston Infant School)  
Environmental Initiatives Working Party (19:00, East Preston Infant School)
- 12<sup>th</sup> SLCC Sussex quarterly meeting (13:30, Pulborough) (SC only)
- 17<sup>th</sup> Planning & Licensing Committee (18:00, East Preston Infant School)  
Audit & Governance Committee (19:00, East Preston Infant School)
- 20<sup>th</sup> SLCC Arun & Chichester meeting (11:00, Bersted) (SC and DR only)
- 24<sup>th</sup> Planning & Licensing Committee (18:00, East Preston Infant School)  
Community Engagement 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**

28<sup>th</sup> June 2023

**Item 6 – Littlehampton Locality schools multi-agency meeting, 21<sup>st</sup> June** – Cllr Linton said she found the information contained in the Clerk's report on this matter to be deeply disturbing. Cllr Mathias agreed. Aware there have been problems with the provision of a youth service in East Preston for a while, Cllr Linton asked whether there was any update.

The Clerk replied the bad behaviour mentioned in his report was taking place within the Littlehampton Locality, not necessarily within the Angmering Locality which included East Preston. The current tenants of the East Preston Youth Club building, located between the two schools, had announced their intention to cease trading at the end of the current school term. The clerk had already contacted the WSCC Estates team to make it aware of this – it already was – and to say the parish council and the Youth Club committee would be looking for any new lease to include similar provision of a free hire one night a week. The clerk said he had already asked Cllrs Chapman and Duff to stay behind after the meeting in their roles as Chairman and Secretary of the Youth Club committee.

**Item 9 – Social Media** – Cllr Linton said she was very pleased to see how many more viewers a post about the extended No. 12 bus service had had compared to its closest rival in the month. She hoped all those viewers would be using the bus.

#### **553/23 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 any reports.**

#### **Arundel & Littlehampton Scout District Annual General Meeting, 22<sup>nd</sup> June**

##### **Arundel Castle**

I was representing both the East Preston 1<sup>st</sup> Scout group as Chair and East Preston Parish Council as Chairman along with Chairs from Rustington, Yapton, Arun District Council and the Mayor of Arundel.



What a fantastic venue, The Barons Hall, highly polished floors and beautiful portraits hung around all the walls. The event was hosted by The Duke of Norfolk who is President of the Scouting association for the area.

After the formalities of reading out the nominations for the different positions, and financial reports from the treasurer, there was the presentation of certificates to various leaders for their years of service to scouting ranging from 5 years to 40 years' service.

There was a special presentation to the Scouting Band Leader for his 35 years in charge, and his retirement from this role, and handing over to a younger person.

At the end of the proceedings, we were sampling the delights of the buffet and beverages.

The evening finished around 21.00 hrs and a very pleasant evening too.

Cllr Steve Toney – **Chairman of the Council**

2<sup>nd</sup> July 2023

#### **554/23 RESPONSE TO EXTERNAL MEETINGS AND EVENTS**

Nothing was added.

#### **555/23 LIAISON WITH TRAVELLING COMMUNITIES**

Cllr Hill said she had been responded to by WSCC and now had the name of the council's main officer for business relating to travelling communities. His name was Scott Judge, and Cllr Hill asked the council whether they would like her to invite him to come and talk to the council.

The council AGREED it would be useful to invite Mr Judge to the October Full Council meeting as the season would have ended by then and, theoretically, Mr Judge may have a little more time to spare us.

Councillors generally AGREED the council's land within the village was as secure as it was possible to be and hoped neighbouring parishes had made their own sites as secure as possible too.

Cllr Gale reported seeing the new gates at the Warren Recreation Ground wide open earlier in the day whilst a member of the cricket club was mowing the lawn. The clerk would advise the cricket club it was not acceptable to leave the gates open whilst mowing.

The council continued to discuss matters relating to travelling communities.

(The meeting adjourned at 19.43 pending the imminent arrival of County Cllr Elkins.)

(County Cllr Elkins arrived and the meeting resumed at 19:54.)

#### **556/23 WEST SUSSEX COUNTY COUNCIL**

County Cllr Elkins started by referring to the Chatsmore Farm decision too. He hoped the High Court's decision would be useful for local councils.

The council was about to have initial budget conversations for 2024/25. Cllr Elkins believed there would be changes to social care and education. The council was already in receipt of extra money from central government for Highways.

County Cllr Elkins said there was progress in the trial to make it easier to implement speed reductions around schools. He said schools have an active role in this and a variety of methods were being piloted. Where physical amendments were needed to a locality these, obviously, came at a price.

He highlighted this year's Summer Reading Challenge, and encouraged anyone who knows local children in the 4-11 age bracket to encourage them to take part. The Library Service was also recruiting teenage volunteers to support the scheme over the summer.

The council was still looking for foster carers, particularly for children in the 11-17 age range. There were currently 550 children of those ages in care in the county.

The Leader of the county council, Paul Marshall, had written to central government to express his concern the current Levelling Up funding might overlook wealthier councils, such as WSCC. Any reduction in central government funding would have a major impact on the county.

In response to information provided by Cllr McElroy, Cllr Elkins said he would raise with Highways concerns about the road surface on the A259 at Shoreham-by-Sea.

Cllr McElroy also raised concerns about the amount of on-street and on-verge parking in North Lane now both East Preston schools were operating at their increased capacities. There were times of the day when North Lane was now reduced to a single lane of traffic flow because of this parking.

Cllr Elkins reported funding had been found for additional bus live information displays at 255 bus stops in the county. He believed some local bus stops would soon be provided with these displays which would be very helpful to local bus users, allowing them to see how long they have before their bus arrives.

The clerk said this council had already promoted the Summer Reading Challenge in its most recent e-newsletter.

The clerk said he had already had a conversation with Cllr Elkins earlier in the day about the status of the Traffic Regulation Order for the stretch of North Lane / Sea Road between the junctions with Lashmar Road and Fairlands. This request had been submitted in February 2022 and had been evaluated by WSCC Highways in March 2022. The clerk had chased for an update in March 2023 and, only in response to that chase, had been asked last week for evidence of public support and diagrams. Both had to have been provided in order for an evaluation to take place. He had asked WSCC Highways to explain why it was asking for this information again as an evaluation had taken place in March 2022. He was awaiting a further reply.

With reference to travelling communities, the clerk asked Cllr Elkins for any information he had on transit sites. Cllr Elkins offered to find out, but said sometimes transit sites were less effective than they could be owing to personality clashes within travelling communities.

Cllr Mathias asked Cllr Elkins whether there was any news on when the Youth Club could restart using the Youth Club building as per the clause in the lease allowing one night a week, free-of-charge, to the Youth Club committee. Cllr Elkins replied he had seen correspondence from the WSCC Estates team which said it was not prepared to intervene in what it saw as a local dispute between the tenants of the building and the Youth Club committee. Cllr Mathias reminded Cllr Elkins the village was only in this position because WSCC had decided to withdraw funding for many youth clubs across the county, leaving communities exposed. Cllr Chapman said there was an opportunity with the current tenants ceasing to trade, and the Youth Club committee had already indicated to WSCC Estates it wanted to be part of any discussions with potential new tenants before any agreement was put in place. Cllr Elkins said he would help where he could.

#### **557/23 NEW ITEMS FOR THE NEXT MEETING (4<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER)**

Nothing was suggested.

The meeting on 4<sup>th</sup> September will begin at 18:30 with a presentation from a representative of WADARS.

**The meeting concluded at 20:20.**

Chairman: *Cllr Steve Toney* Date: **4<sup>th</sup> September 2023**

END