



# EAST PRESTON PARISH COUNCIL

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**MINUTES:** of the Proceedings of the Monthly Meeting of East Preston Parish Council held at 18:30 on Monday, 8<sup>th</sup> January 2024 at East Preston Infant School, Lashmar Road, East Preston

**PRESENT:** Councillors Christine Bowman, Kit Bradshaw, 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 (until 19:43)

Mrs Sioned Vos, Friends of Langmeads (until 19:43)

Mrs Carole Ward, Clerk of Rustington Parish Council (until 19:17)

Two members of the public

Mr Scott Judge, West Sussex County Council (until 19:17)

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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;  
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 18:34. Cllr Toney welcomed everyone to the meeting.

## **001/24 INTRODUCTIONS**

Cllr Toney welcomed everyone to the meeting and wished everyone a Happy New Year. He explained the meeting protocol and safety information.

## **002/24 WEST SUSSEX COUNTY COUNCIL – GYPSY AND TRAVELLER OFFICER**

Cllr Toney welcomed Scott Judge, WSCC Gypsy and Travellers Team Manager and invited him to address the meeting. Scott talked through a presentation, detailing what actions he and his team take when an illegal encampment is set up in the county. After the meeting, Scott said he would update his presentation and send it to the Clerk for distribution to all councillors.

A number of councillors, members of the public and the Clerk asked Scott a number of questions – below is a summary of Scott's answers.

Simply put, travellers is an all-encompassing term for people choosing a mobile lifestyle, including but not exclusively groups such as Irish Travellers and Romany Gypsies. Travellers overall have protected ethnic status which means they cannot be discriminated against for their choice of lifestyle.

Travellers have worse health generally and a lower life expectancy than other members of society. They are able to access walk-in health services, as exist in Brighton, and Accident & Emergency services in hospital, just as any other person can.

Permanent traveller sites are usually created within District and Borough Councils' Local Plans.

In response to a question about how travellers can be said to be taxpayers when they do not appear to have a permanent address, Scott said most travellers do have a permanent residence elsewhere, but migrate to the south during the summer in search of work.

Scott felt there was probably some unquantifiable impact on Sussex of Kent, Surrey and Hampshire not having transit sites in place. He understood Surrey was working towards operating a transit site in the not-too-distant future. There is currently no statutory duty for councils to provide transit sites.

Sussex Police can no longer issue partial directions where only the right number of vehicles from a group can be sent to a transit site. It now has to be all or nothing, and with groups getting larger on average, fewer directions to a transit site are being issued.

Scott said his experience was groups tended to be respectful towards councils. He usually visited without police back-up.

Travellers often leave a lot of rubbish behind, partly because they do not have a West Sussex address and therefore cannot use a West Sussex recycling centres. If a group has been successful in carrying out tree- or ground-works in the area, that output should be disposed of at a commercial site, but the group is unlikely to have the requisite licences to do so. Prosecution for littering is unlikely because it would be almost impossible to pinpoint the correct perpetrators.

Scott said he was willing to look at improving early communications to local councils. Asked how councils can help in the process, Scott said lowering the temperature of local feeling was probably the best help local councils could provide.

Local residents should be encouraged to report anti-social behaviour, shoplifting and the like to Sussex Police as that will help that organisation build a picture of the impact an illegal encampment is having upon the community which, in turn, will direct the action Sussex Police may take.

With no further questions to be asked, Cllr Toney thanked Scott for his engaging presentation.

(Mr Judge and Mrs Ward left the meeting at the conclusion of this item.)

### **003/24 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

All parish councillors were present.

Apologies had been received from District Cllr Paul Kelly, the whole of Angmering Parish Council, Mrs Linda Denton, Mrs Dorothy Lee, Mrs Sue Morley and Mr Alec Price.

### **004/24 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.

## **005/24 PUBLIC SESSION**

No questions were asked.

## **006/24 COUNCIL RESPONSES**

No questions had been asked, so no responses were required.

## **007/24 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 4<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER 2023**

The draft Minutes were circulated to all councillors on 5<sup>th</sup> December asking for suggested amendments by the 12<sup>th</sup> December. None were suggested.

**1810** The Council **RESOLVED** unanimously the Chairman could sign the Minutes as a true record of the meeting held on 4<sup>th</sup> December. Cllr Toney duly did so.

## **008/24 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 904/23 – West Sussex County Council – School Safety Zone**
- 3. Minute 1016/23 – public session – East Preston in Bloom – East Preston Football Club boundary**
- 4. Minute 1016/23 – public session – Warren Recreation Ground boundary**
- 5. Minute 1018/23 – West Sussex County Council**
- 6. Minute 1019/23 – Arun District Council – flooding recovery group**
- 7. Minute 1019/23 – Arun District Council – allotments**
- 8. Minute 1021/23 – West Sussex County Council – parking restrictions in Vicarage Lane**

### **1. Introduction**

This is the report covering items discussed during Full Council meetings up to and including the meeting held on 4<sup>th</sup> December 2023.

### **2. Minute 904/23 – West Sussex County Council – School Safety Zone**

Finally, on 14<sup>th</sup> December, I was able to report the School Safety Zone lights in Vicarage Lane and The Street (by Manor Close) were both working again. Whether they have continued to work is another matter.

### **3. Minute 1016/23 – public session – East Preston in Bloom – East Preston Football Club boundary**

The day after the meeting, Mrs Gander contacted District Cllr Kelly with further information on the northern boundary of the Football Club, facing Roundstone Drive. Cllr Kelly contacted ADC's Parks department and was advised by Neil O'Connor, "I have contacted our contractors Tivoli to request that they schedule in a visit to tidy up the area, and reminded them that now the trees have been removed they will need to include the area in their regular maintenance schedule. Unfortunately, Tivoli do not currently have the resources to have the area dug out, but I shall be contacting East Preston in Bloom to discuss options, and the potential for them to carry out work on this area."

4. **Minute 1016/23 – public session – Warren Recreation Ground boundary**

Following confusion about the ownership of certain boundary fences around the Warren Recreation Ground, the council has ordered the relevant title documents from Land Registry.

5. **Minute 1018/23 – West Sussex County Council**

At the last meeting I reported two separate residents had complained to me about the trees planted in Sea Road by WSCC in November. Having had quite a rant at me in Sea Road, one of the two residents called into the Council Office a few weeks later to say well done to WSCC and how effective the trees would be at reducing parking on the verges in Sea Road.

6. **Minute 1019/23 – Arun District Council – flooding recovery group**

I alerted some residents of Sea Lane to the multi-agency recovery group community engagement session taking place on 5<sup>th</sup> December, led by ADC. One attended, and kindly provided the report for discussion at Agenda Item 15a below.

7. **Minute 1019/23 – Arun District Council – allotments**

District Cllr Kelly emailed several officers at ADC after our meeting on 4<sup>th</sup> December, "At the most recent East Preston Parish Council Meeting it was brought to my attention that although the allotment site has been cleared the agreement from your legal dept with details of the leasing arrangement has not yet been received. Please would you look into this ASAP and let EPPC, and myself, know when this will be forthcoming."

In response to this, I restated the council has made not agreed it wishes to take on the site management yet. Cllr Kelly replied, "Thanks for your email which I understand, in reply what I will say is now you have the point of contact at Arun I will leave it to you to make any further contact with them. However if I can be of further assistance on the subject please don't hesitate to contact me."

Three days later, Cllr Kelly forwarded me an email he had received from the lead officer on this matter which had not been copied to us. The email just advised of a meeting she was having with an ADC legal person.

8. **Minute 1021/23 – West Sussex County Council – parking restrictions in Vicarage Lane**

Mr Kimmer visited the Council Office on 14<sup>th</sup> December and together we completed and submitted the online application for parking restrictions in Vicarage Lane.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

2<sup>nd</sup> January 2024

**Minute 904/23 – West Sussex County Council – School Safety Zone** – in response to a question from Cllr Gunston, the Clerk informed the meeting the operating hours for School Safety Zone lights are 07:30 to 09:30 and 14:00 to 16:00.

## **009/24 WEST SUSSEX COUNTY COUNCIL**

Cllr Toney invited County Cllr Elkins to address the meeting next.

Cllr Elkins wished those present a Happy New Year.

Between the 1<sup>st</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> January, the county's rainfall had been 80% of an average January, and this had put a lot of pressure on various departments at WSCC.

The planned closure of Old Worthing Road, to supply services to the new housing estate on the south-eastern corner of the A280/A259 roundabout, had started on the day of the meeting. Although advertised as being for 13 weeks, Cllr Elkins was hopeful the works would be completed in less time than that. He understood work was due to start on providing the new access road into the housing estate. The Clerk advised Angmering Parish Council had raised a Planning Compliance case related to this site being occupied before certain Conditions on the Planning Permission had been met.

WSCC budget discussions were continuing. Cllr Elkins was confident WSCC's finances were well-managed and the council, although financially-challenged, was not about to collapse as other councils were in danger of doing.

£600,000 had been spent recently on Operation Watershed projects, communities working to improve their drainage infrastructure with help from WSCC.

West Sussex Fire & Rescue Service was currently attending local primary schools, teaching children about fire.

In response to a comment about a resident of Cotswold Way's concerns about flooding, Cllr Elkins asked the Clerk to send him an update and he would then be able to respond to the resident.

Cllr Elkins said he would find out the latest parameters for the provision of a school bus, in light of the possible increase in schoolchildren travelling from the north of Angmering into East Preston schools.

Cllr Hill asked whether there could be traffic lights added to the A259/A280 roundabout, and the Clerk said Mrs Lee had asked him to remind Cllr Elkins about her request for yellow hatching to be added to that junction. The Clerk had also received correspondence from a resident who felt a slip road should be built on the western side of the junction for traffic heading west out of Old Worthing Road. Traffic was still using the A259 because of a lack of improvements made on the A27. Cllr Elkins said he felt these were all issues which could be raised during the county council's assessment following the improvements recently made. Emergency vehicles movements were always part of WSCC's calculations.

Asked whether WSCC ever objected to Planning Applications on the grounds a particular road was already operating at capacity, Cllr Elkins said there was no guidance for what a "significant" impact meant, and this was open to challenge by a developer.

Cllr Mathias reported his pothole claim was coming up to its first anniversary.

(County Cllr Elkins and Mrs Vos both left the meeting at the conclusion of this item.)

## **010/24 FINANCIAL MATTERS**

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

- 1811** The council **RESOLVED** unanimously to approve the Outstanding Purchase Orders report for 2023/24, value £5,590.94 (excl. VAT).
- 1812** The council **RESOLVED** unanimously to approve the Regular Monthly Payments report for December 2023 totalling £1,312.93 (inc. VAT).
- 1813** The council **RESOLVED** unanimously to approve the Supplier BACS Invoices Paid report for December 2023 (totalling £52,489.91 inc. VAT).
- 1814** The council **RESOLVED** unanimously to approve the List of Sales Receipts & Bank Receipts by Bank report for financial year to date totalling £339,628.86 (inc. VAT).

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

The council NOTED the Budget Summary for 2023/24 to date.

The Chairman thanked Mr Vyse, the council's Book-keeper, for preparing the above reports.

## **011/24 REPORTS FROM PARISH COUNCIL COMMITTEES**

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

### **Committees**

Since the last Full Council meeting the following committees have met: Finance & General Purposes on 11<sup>th</sup> December; and Major Events and Planning & Licensing on 18<sup>th</sup> December. The draft Minutes from these meetings have been circulated to all councillors.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

27<sup>th</sup> December 2023

### **Amenities Committee**

Cllr Wilkinson is the chairman of this committee.

The committee did not meet in December.

**Noticeboards** – The village's five noticeboards have been replaced with new recycled composite noticeboards. The new noticeboards are manufactured largely from recycled plastics and require none of the regular maintenance that a timber equivalent does. The design of the boards will make it easier for Carol Ellis, Community Volunteer, to manage the boards on her own.

**Village Green Car Park** – A lot of time has been spent handling correspondence from a resident who received a parking fine after parking in the Village Green car park, in order to attend a charity event. Unfortunately, One Parking Solutions (OPS) initial letter advising of the fine was not received. The first correspondence the resident acknowledges receiving came from the debt recovery company. The resident has struggled to contact both OPS and the debt recovery company and has escalated the matter to Sir Peter Bottomley MP.

**Warren Recreation Ground** – Lighting. The lanterns have now been installed on the three columns at the car park. Enerveo apologised for the delay which was due to issues with the supplier. An agreement has been drawn up with the Village Hall for the electricity usage.

**North Lane Bus Shelter** – The North Lane bus shelter has been badly damaged, the entire shelter has been twisted on its base. Due to the structural damage it would appear the shelter may have been hit by a vehicle. We have initiated a claim with the council's insurers.

The committee's next meeting will be on 12<sup>th</sup> February.

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

2<sup>nd</sup> January 2024

### **Audit & Governance Committee**

The committee met on 11<sup>th</sup> December.

On behalf of the council, as part of the annual review of the council's Standing Orders, the committee agreed to update one paragraph to bring it into line with Model Standing Orders published by NALC in April 2022. The revision refers to contracts and is not something that will affect us often.

The committee carried out the annual review of the council's Risk Register, initially agreeing no changes were needed. This decision was changed later in the meeting when it was agreed to add a Risk to the register accepting there were a few days each year when the council's insurance policy did not cover 100% of the council's reserves. The committee agreed there was a low likelihood of any of council's current staff running away with the council's reserves.

The committee also carried out the annual review of the council's fees and charges and agreed no changes were necessary at this time.

The committee agreed nothing needed to be noted from the External Auditor's report on the Annual Governance and Accounting Review for the year-ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023. Of the two remarks made in the interim Internal Auditor's report for the Annual Governance and Accounting Review for the year-ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024, the committee is aware of the council's reserves and actions taken to address that and, as reported above, agreed to add a new risk to the council's Risk Register about the temporary shortfall in the insurance policy.

The committee's next meeting will be on 11<sup>th</sup> March.

Cllr Glyn Mathias –  
**Chairman of the Audit & Governance Committee**

19<sup>th</sup> December 2023

## **Community Engagement Committee**

Cllr Linton is the Chairman of this committee.

The committee did not meet in December.

The first of this year's Warm Welcome Spaces sessions took place at St Mary the Virgin church on 1<sup>st</sup> January. Ten light lunches were served, a nice number for the church's volunteers to get a handle on how to run the event. Cllr Linton called in to assist and advise. In addition to the light lunch sponsored by the council, attendees were treated to birthday cake by a local resident. From 8<sup>th</sup> January, sessions will run at both the church and the British Legion.

The committee's next meeting is scheduled for 22<sup>nd</sup> January.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

2<sup>nd</sup> January 2024

## **Finance & General Purposes Committee**

Cllr McElroy is the chairman of this committee.

The committee met on 11<sup>th</sup> December, mainly to agree a proposed budget and precept for the coming financial year.



The committee agreed to award East Preston Sports & Social Club £10,000 from the Greener Buildings Fund to enable it to replace the current floodlighting with a more energy-efficient alternative. This money will only be paid to the club once the work has commenced.

The committee carried out the annual review of the council's ringfenced reserves and identified some ringfenced reserves which can be closed at the end of the current financial year. At that point, all monies left in those particular reserves will be returned to the council's general reserves.

The committee reviewed the budget proposals from the council's committees and its recommendation to the council for a 2024/25 budget has been covered earlier in this meeting. Similarly, the committee considered a proposed precept for the coming year. Not unanimously, the committee agreed to freeze the precept for a Band D property at £98.43.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

13<sup>th</sup> December 2023

## **Major Events Committee**

The committee met on 18<sup>th</sup> December.

**Remembrance Sunday** – the committee had hoped to be able to discuss the 2023 and 2024 Remembrance Sunday events with a representative of the committee of the East Preston & Kingston branch of the Royal Legion, but he did not attend the meeting. This has been deferred to the committee's February meeting.

**Christmas Celebrations** – the committee agreed to run a further Christmas Celebrations event on Saturday, 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2024. Please add this date to your diaries now.

A thank you drinks events was held for Community Volunteers on 13<sup>th</sup> December.

**Funday Sunday, 21<sup>st</sup> April** – Cllr Hill will lead on this event, and has met with Pat Gander to get some idea of the ropes for the event. This will be marketed in earnest early in the new year.

**D-Day Big Lunch, 2<sup>nd</sup> June** – this event is being led by the East Preston Festival Committee with support from the parish council and the East Preston and Kingston Branch of the Royal British Legion. The council has booked live entertainment and refreshments stalls for the afternoon, but will only book any attractions if the financial support from the British Legion is sufficient.

**East Preston Food & Drink Festival, 24<sup>th</sup> August** – Cllr Chapman will again lead on this event, and invitations to apply for a stall will be sent out in January.

The committee's next meeting will be on 19<sup>th</sup> February.

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

21<sup>st</sup> December 2023

## **Personnel Committee**

Cllr Duff is the chairman of this committee.



The committee did not meet in December. The committee's next meeting is currently scheduled for 15<sup>th</sup> January.

The committee has arranged General Data Protection Regulations refresher training for 19:00 on Monday, 29<sup>th</sup> January. Please add this to your diary if you have not already done so.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

2<sup>nd</sup> January 2024

## **Planning & Licensing Committee**

Cllr Mathias is the chairman of this committee.

The committee met on 18<sup>th</sup> December. Two Planning Applications were considered. The first was an Application for treeworks at a property in Vicarage Lane, and the committee agreed to agree with any comments made by the ADC arboriculturist. The second was for structural changes to a property in Warren Crescent, and the committee agreed it would object to the changes which it believed would compromise the symmetry of the property.

The committee agreed to raise no objections to a Licensing Application for The Clockhouse Bar.

The Neighbourhood Plan Review Steering Group had been successful in securing a grant of £9,548 towards the costs of the Neighbourhood Plan review.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

2<sup>nd</sup> January 2024

Additionally:

Community Engagement – Cllr Linton reported the Warm Welcome Space initiative at the British Legion had been well attended on the day of the meeting, the option at St Mary the Virgin less so.

Personnel – Cllr Duff reminded councillors to attend the General Data Protection Regulations training session which was to be run on 29<sup>th</sup> January.

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

### **012/24 FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE – BUDGET AND PRECEPT 2024/25**

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

## **Finance & General Purposes Committee – budget and precept for 2024/25**

**Council is asked to agree to a recommended budget of £359,084.28 for the financial year 2024/25.**

At its meeting on 11<sup>th</sup> December, the committee considered the following supporting paper:

## **2024/25 Budget**

**Committee is asked to agree a budget and a precept to recommend to Full Council for the 2024/25 financial year.**

Each budget-holding committee has considered its financial requirements for the coming year. These are currently:

Committee	2023/24 net expenditure	2024/25 net expenditure	Difference
Amenities	£42,800.00	£45,625.00	+ £2,825.00
Audit & Gov.	£1,000	£1,000	-
Admin (F&GP)	£108,065.00	£113,651.00	+ £5,586.00
Comm. Eng.	£39,450.00	£71,100.00	+ £31,650.00
F&GP	£42,175.00	£46,925.00	+ £4,750.00
Major Events	£9,550.00	£10,100.00	+ £550.00
WRG Trust (Amenities)	£61,843.28	£59,683.28	- £2,160.00
Contingency	£10,000	£10,000	-
<b>Total net budget</b>	<b>£314,883.28</b>	<b>£358,084.28</b>	<b>+ £43,201.00</b>

Assuming the committee agrees to include the £10,000 contingency figure, the net budget (including contingency) for the coming financial year will be £43,201 (13.72%) increase on the current year. It would be fair to say the bulk of the increase is the increase in the costs of the extended No. 12 bus service. It would also be fair to say the Community Engagement Committee is conflicted about financing the bus service for another year – some feel the service is still bedding in and expect usage will continue to increase, others feel too few people are using it, and there is also a debate about whether the success should be based purely on usage or whether the value it adds to the life of regular users should also be taken into account. That all may or may not be for this committee to comment upon, but for the time being, there is money in the 2024/25 Community Engagement budget to run the bus service for the whole year.

Depending upon any discussion, **committee is asked to agree to recommend to Full Council a budget of £358,084.28 for the financial year 2024/25.**

For the past few years, the council has frozen the Band D precept at £98.43. With the councils reserves healthy, there seems no reason not to freeze the precept again. At the time of writing, I do not know what the Council Tax base for the year will be, but once I do know, I will multiply that by £98.43 to produce **a proposed precept for the financial year 2024/25.**

The agreed figure will be presented to Full Council in January. Rather than circulate a paper copy of the budget sheets, I will send around a PDF version. If anyone would like a paper copy too, please just get in touch.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

6<sup>th</sup> December 2023

At the meeting, a further £1,000 was added to the Warren Recreation Ground budget for electricity supply to the new car-park lights. This increased net expenditure to £359,084.28, an increase of £44,201.00 or 14% over the current year's budget.

On 6<sup>th</sup> December, ADC sent a letter advising the Council Tax base for the coming financial year would **decrease** from 2,827 to 2,803. This decrease had not been forewarned, nor was it explained in the letter. I asked for an explanation and received the following, "The reason for the change is due to current economic circumstances where there is likely to be an increase in non-collection."

Closer inspection of the above letter also showed ADC had an incorrect figure for a Band D property in East Preston, so I reported that and asked for a replacement letter which I received on 12<sup>th</sup> December.

**Council is also asked to agree a recommended precept of £98.43 per Band D property**, i.e. no increase on the current financial year. With the above decrease in the Council Tax base, the council will be asking ADC to collect £275,899.29 precept on its behalf.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

2<sup>nd</sup> January 2024

**1815** The Council **RESOLVED** unanimously to set the 2024/25 budget at £359,084.28.

**1816** The Council **RESOLVED** unanimously to set the 2024/25 precept at £275,899.29, i.e. no increase to the Band D rate of £98.43.

#### **013/24 REPORTS FROM PARISH COUNCIL WORKING PARTIES**

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

### **Working Parties**

The Conservative Hall Working Party met as part of the Finance & General Purposes Committee meeting on 11<sup>th</sup> December, and the Environmental Initiatives Working Party met on 6<sup>th</sup> December. None of the other working parties have met this month.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

2<sup>nd</sup> January 2024

### **20mph Working Party**

Cllr Wilkinson is the chairman of this committee.

Keith Harris and I met with Olly King, WSCC Highways Engineer, on site on 30<sup>th</sup> November. Although Olly had done all the assessment work to date, once on site he became conflicted as to whether the request should continue to be processed as a Traffic Regulation Order or whether it should be a Community Highways Scheme. Olly went away to think about that and I await his further update. Keith and I have asked Olly if he would come and meet with us again before he makes his final decision.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

2<sup>nd</sup> January 2024

### **Conservative Hall Working Party**

Cllr McElroy is the chairman of this committee.

The working party met as part of the Finance & General Purposes Committee meeting on 11<sup>th</sup> December, and Minutes from that meeting have already been circulated to all councillors.

The committee agreed to disband the working party for the time being, see Agenda Item 13a below.

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

The working party met on 6<sup>th</sup> December.

We are planning to put up a stall to publicise our work in conjunction with the Come and Meet your Local Councillors event in June. We aim to include some activities to get more parishioners involved with the environment. The event will be based on the sustainability framework from Worthing and Adur Borough Councils which has ten sections - shared leadership, carbon reduction, energy, water, biodiversity, land use, climate resilience, food, transport and waste reduction. As a Parish Council we have acted in all of these areas.

Michał, one of our new members, contacted West Sussex County Council regarding community road verges. We will be meeting Steve Hill on 10<sup>th</sup> January to find out what we can do in conjunction with the County Council. We also discussed flooding in the village and took away a number of actions from the meeting.

Our next meeting will be on 26<sup>th</sup> February.

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

1<sup>st</sup> January 2024

## **Flat Working Party**

Cllr Wilkinson is the chairman of this committee.

A new tenancy has been agreed to cover the current tenant, her husband and her dog. This also includes a small increase to the monthly rental.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

2<sup>nd</sup> January 2024

## **Leases Working Party**

The working party is still awaiting further contact from the Bowls Club.

As reported last month, on 28<sup>th</sup> November, the council received confirmation from Craig Baker he is now officially the elected General Secretary for the club. His email also reported David Davies was now President and Chairman of the club and Ian Campbell has remained Treasurer.

Craig asked for some information which I provided ahead of the new committee's first meeting which was scheduled to take place on 11<sup>th</sup> December. At the time of writing, I have heard no output from that meeting.

Additionally:

Environmental Initiatives Working Party – Cllr Gunston said he and Cllr Hill were looking for help with finding volunteers willing to lend a hand at the East Preston Repair Café which they were hoping to be able to launch in April or May.

Cllr Gunston also said he had read the 50+-page ADC response to the latest Rampion consultation document on the expansion of the wind far off the coast of Sussex. The response sought better information from Rampion on how negative local impact would be mitigated or compensated. The meeting AGREED the following summary should be included here:

#### RAMPION 2 LOCAL IMPACT REPORT BY ARUN DISTRICT COUNCIL (ADC).

##### General conclusions.

ADC supports renewable energy generation but believes Arun will not significantly benefit from the project & will experience significant negative effects, some unlikely to be mitigated.

##### Recommendations -

- Further work required so likely effects fully understood at local level.
- Firmer commitments to delivering social, economic & environmental benefits specific to the District.
- Where mitigation is impossible compensation through Community Benefits Package.
- ADC will continue to engage with the Applicant to secure actions & commitments.

##### Some of the specific recommendations.

##### Climping.

- ADC requests further information regarding the justification to choosing Climping
- Firmer commitments to mitigation measures specific to Climping Compound

##### Biodiversity.

- Reinstatement to a higher quality & species diversity, particularly in relation to trees & hedgerows of boundary/field treatments.
- Phased approach to restoration, within the first planting season.
- Contribution to Sussex Kelp Recovery Project to support marine biodiversity net gain

##### Tourism.

- Distribute funds from the Community Benefits Package using tourism partnerships such as Experience West Sussex & Sussex by the Sea.
- Updated noise assessment of wind farm to be submitted & agreed with ADC.

##### Historic environment.

- Project assessment to ensure effects on the historic environment fully understood.

##### Visual effects.

- Additional viewpoints (locations to be agreed with ADC) to be assessed.

##### Education & training.

- A full assessment of employment effects at the District level to inform developing skills & employment opportunities within the District.

##### Housing.

- ADC request further information on what impact the Project is likely to have on the strategic housing allocation at Littlehampton - West Bank.

Flat – the Clerk corrected his belief the new tenancy agreement would be in place from 1<sup>st</sup> January, it will be in place from the 1<sup>st</sup> February.

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

#### **014/24 CONSERVATIVE HALL WORKING PARTY**

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

### **Conservative Hall Working Party**

**Council is asked to disband the current Conservative Hall Working Party.**

The working party was set up in January 2021 with various responsibilities related to the possible transfer of the Conservative Hall from its current Trustees to the council. Its most recent meetings have all taken place as part of Finance & General Purposes Committee meetings rather than calling separate meetings, which would likely be very short.

With the proposed transfer currently being investigated by the council's solicitors and about to be the subject of an article in the Winter 2024 Newsletter, seeking public opinion, the committee felt there was no need for the current working party to continue. A new working party would be created further down the line, with different responsibilities and the chance for any interested councillor to join.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

2<sup>nd</sup> January 2024

Cllr McElroy explained the background to this proposal.

**1817** The Council **RESOLVED** unanimously to disband the Conservative Hall Working Party in its current guise.

#### **015/24 WEST SUSSEX COUNTY COUNCIL – DRAINAGE MAINTENANCE**

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

### **West Sussex County Council – highways maintenance**

**Council is asked to agree to a public proposal annual drainage works are included in the new Highways Maintenance contract currently being negotiated by WSCC.**

As mentioned in the Monthly Update Report above, a local resident attended the ADC-led multi-agency recovery group community engagement session which took place on 5<sup>th</sup> December. He provided the following report.

Hi Simon,

I attended the forum at North Bersted, arriving early and spoke to personnel from Arun District Council, Environment Agency, Southern Water and West Sussex County Council.

The main focus was clearly for the people and businesses who had been severely affected by the flooding of Bersted and Bognor. A disaster was just avoided when the major SSE power supply station just survived becoming water logged.

Specifically on discussing East Preston with Southern Water and West Sussex County Council:

Southern Water are undertaking a 'fit for purpose' review of all the pumping stations to determine whether more powerful pumps are required, including the pumping station on the greensward.

My name and email address was noted and the results will be made available. Unfortunately, although positive in some respects, a timeline was not available.

West Sussex County Council. This was more productive in that their representative was responsible for overseeing the remedial work to the drainage issues after the 2012 floods. Also he had previously been at WSCC Highways pre 2012, when the cleaning contracts stated annual visits, six monthly on main roads and three months on intersections of major roads. However, he stated that in recent years the service has drifted to every four years due to financial pressures.

The important news is that the gulley and drain maintenance contract is up for renewal in April 2024. The advice given was that both our local East Preston Parish Council, and the representative of WSCC who attends the needs of East Preston should be made aware of the need for regular gulley and drain cleaning on an annual basis of Sea Lane, to ensure that all the work completed after 2012 is not compromised.

An additional point that I have made previously to WSCC Highways is that the care home Dean House which is at the end of the road of Sea Lane, requires the ambulance service to regularly attend, and flooding at any point along Sea Lane could prevent their attendance.

I am also aware of the recent flooding in Sea Road rendering it impassable for a period of time and this would suggest that the same considerations with regards to gulley clearance and drainage maintenance should also be on an annual basis.

I will drop some leaflets in to the office tomorrow morning.

Kind regards

A

As per his suggestion above, the council is being asked to campaign for annual maintenance of the village gulleys and drains be included in the new maintenance contract currently being negotiated by WSCC. If council supports this suggestion, I would submit our case to WSCC Cabinet Member for Highways & Transport, Cllr Joy Dennis and Cllr Roger Elkins.

A has provided some leaflets and other paperwork from the event. If anyone would like to see these, please let me know.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

2<sup>nd</sup> January 2024

On the morning of the meeting, the Clerk had circulated a letter in support of this proposal from a further resident of Sea Lane.

**1818** The Council **RESOLVED** unanimously to support a public proposal to request annual drainage works are included in the new WSCC drainage maintenance contract.

#### **016/24 ARUN DISTRICT COUNCIL**

No District Councillors were present.

#### **017/24 SUSSEX POLICE**

The Clerk reported no report had been received from Sussex Police.

#### **018/24 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. Arun District Association of Local Councils conference, 1<sup>st</sup> December**
- 6. Disability Action Group East Preston meeting, 11<sup>th</sup> December**
- 7. ADC Youth Provision meeting, 12<sup>th</sup> December**
- 8. Arun and Chichester Clerks' networking event, 14<sup>th</sup> December**
- 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. January meetings and events**

## **1. Introduction**

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

## **2. Police matters**

As councillors will know, Seaview Stores was broken into in the early hours of Friday, 8<sup>th</sup> December. The council has been able to provide CCTV footage to Sussex Police, this showing the three perpetrators plus their getaway car.

A resident of Montpelier Road contacted the office, concerned about tyres of local vehicles being slashed by "thugs who use Montpelier Rd and its walkways on their way home". I replied advising her there had been no other reports to us about tyres being slashed, but there had been reports of foxes having a nibble on tyres not far from Montpelier Road. In a response, the reporter said, "I'm so glad I asked you about the tyre damage in Montpelier Rd. We're all relieved it's not 'thugs' after all". In a response to further advice offered, the resident included, "Thank you so much for all you do for the village". In an email sent on 31<sup>st</sup> December, the resident reported, "Regarding the tyre damage, the Police received so many reports that they came on Dec 23rd to talk to everyone to try and get a better picture of the situation. At the time they said it was probably caused by someone with a knife but then some of the residents heard back from them to say in view of all the other fox related reports in this area and all over the country they were now thinking it was foxes."

I have again asked PCSO Raj if he could join Vicky Shaw on school crossing duty some mornings and afternoons to tackle the problem of inconsiderate parking by some parents taking their children to the village schools. Raj has replied, "I will try my best, we got similar issues in other schools and will let traffic warden aware."

## **3. Anti-social behaviour (ASB) matters**

The resident mentioned in last month's report did come back and see me, by which time she had decided she felt better just having shared her concerns and knowing there was somewhere in the

village she could go to should anything escalate. For the time being, she has decided not to involve the ADC ASB team.

No new updates on any other previous cases raised to the ADC ASB team.

#### **4. 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.

#### **5. Arun District Association of Local Councils conference, 1<sup>st</sup> December**

I attended this conference held at Arundel Town Hall. Cllrs Toney and Linton had both sent their apologies as unable to attend. Sixteen of the local councils within Arun were represented, some by councillors, some by clerks.

The main speaker was Andrew Griffith, MP for Arundel and South Downs. He talked mainly about giving Planning power back to local people. He himself kept away from overt party politics, but some of the audience was less discreet, the first councillor to ask a question started by saying, "I don't live in your constituency, but if I did I would vote for you based upon that brilliant speech."

After Andrew had left, time was spent discussing "How to improve engagement with Arun District Council" which mainly suggested having more frequent, less antagonistic meetings with both district and county councils.

With regards to the future of ADALC itself, Chairman, Cllr Michael Tu (Arundel TC) suggested the roll-out of some forum app to all member councils so issues and concerns can be flagged and discussed. More details of this will initially be discussed by the Personnel Committee when it meets in January.

#### **6. Disability Action Group East Preston meeting, 11<sup>th</sup> December**

Dawn, Alison and I were all invited to attend the group's December meeting, which was to be more party than meeting, as thanks for our support of the group throughout the year.

On the day, Alison was unable to attend and by the time Dawn and I left the office, we only had time to pop in and say hello to the party. About eight members were there and could not resist asking us a few work-related questions whilst we were there, but it was all good.

#### **7. ADC Youth Provision meeting, 12<sup>th</sup> December**

Carrie Reynolds, ADC Communities & Wellbeing Manager, and Dax O'Connor, ADC Community Safety Officer, called this meeting to discuss a coordinated youth provision across the district in the future.

The meeting was also attended by my counterparts from Angmering and Rustington PCs and a representative from Littlehampton TC, ADC's Safeguarding Officer, Cathryn French, an ADC anti-social behaviour team leader, Lee Matthews (formerly a PCSO for East Preston) and a WSCC representative, Alex O'Keeffe.

ADC's Safer Arun Partnership, led by ADC, has been looking at youth provision across the patch for some time and would like to work with partners to provide a more coordinated approach, tackling problems where they arise and, hopefully, preventing local youths going too far down the wrong road to be redirected in better directions.

The Partnership has applied for funding to provide a “detached” youth offering, which is basically targeted, outreach youth provision. The aim is to run three, two-hour sessions a week in each of the following four areas: Littlehampton town centre, Bognor town centre, Arun East villages and Arun West villages. It is believed the youths most in need of a youth provision are the ones who would not attend a youth club offering anyway, or if they did, only to cause trouble. The Partnership will look around, probably across the whole of Sussex, at a variety of suppliers so that a variety of approaches can be used in different places, different circumstances. This could cost as much as £10k per month.

I said whilst we would probably be supportive of the scheme in whatever way we could, I felt the district should collectively be pushing back at WSCC as the statutory provider of youth services and asking it to step up to the mark again. The meeting appeared to agree, even the WSCC rep who said he was disappointed at how little WSCC was doing for youth. The meeting agreed to raise this at a particular forum which those in the know said was the right place to raise it.

We shall undoubtedly hear more about this initiative in due course, and have further chances either to influence it or to decide how much we want to be involved.

#### **8. Arun and Chichester Clerks’ networking event, 14<sup>th</sup> December**

Dawn and I attended this monthly meeting in Bersted, the first time either of us has been this year. Angmering was the other Arun East local council represented on this occasion. About fifteen other councils from across Arun and Chichester were represented, admittedly some by the same clerks.

The big draw, although we did not know this beforehand, was the presence of Steve Hill, WSCC Highways Parish & Community Engagement Co-ordinator. Steve explained he had been in post since 2020 and his role was chiefly to improve communications firstly within WSCC Highways and then outwards to the “trusted partners” that are local councils and then to the general public at large. Clerks present had plenty to say to him about where we feel WSCC Highways, and in particular its communications are failing all of us.

I raised the saga (farce?) of Vermont Drive and its continuing ongoing need to be resurfaced. Steve offered to look into this. At this point he said he was already planning to come to East Preston in January to have a conversation about communications. We agreed to open up this meeting to Angmering and Rustington PCs too. A provisional date of 10<sup>th</sup> January has been agreed as Steve is already meeting members of the EIWP on that date.

I also asked him if he knew what the threshold was for a WSCC Highways Planning officer to visit the site of a proposed development before replying to the Planning Application. He said he would find out. Several of us had instances of WSCC Highways Planning saying there were no problems with proposed developments when local knowledge suggested different. I said such site visits should be done in conjunction with a local council officer or councillor.

Elsewhere in the meeting, Dawn asked whether any council wanted to adopt our own wooden noticeboards or our redundant Christmas lighting motifs from the northern shops. No immediate takers but definitely some interest in the noticeboards.

I asked whether the Chichester District Councils had also seen a reduction in their Council Tax base because of the increased likelihood some people will not pay in the coming year. They had and they had also not been warned of this, only finding out when the Council Tax bases were announced.

Two cakes were on offer but Dawn and I chose not to indulge in either.

## 9. **Social media**

These are the council's posts in December which reached more than 500 people:

- Post reporting a found single Yale key – 1,243 people
- Post advertising *Carols by Candlelight* at St Mary the Virgin, 3<sup>rd</sup> December – 901
- Post detailing holiday season bin collection arrangements – 572
- Poster for East Preston Railway Club meeting, 7<sup>th</sup> December – 567
- MailChimp repost for e-newsletter published 31<sup>st</sup> December - 530

† Food & Drink Festival page

▲ East Preston Business Community page

\* East Preston Christmas Celebrations page

(posts up to and including 1<sup>st</sup> January)

The number of Followers is currently 1,861, an increase of 2 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 – 30<sup>th</sup> November – sent to 915 subscribers, opened by 648 (71%)

Parish Council news – 8<sup>th</sup> December – sent to 915, opened by 651 (71.2%)

Parish Council news – 15<sup>th</sup> December – sent to 914, opened by 645 (70.7%)

Parish Council news – 22<sup>nd</sup> December – sent to 914, opened by 636 (69.7%)

Parish Council news – 31<sup>st</sup> December – sent to 914, opened by 646 (70.8%)

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

Nothing not highlighted above.

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

(In addition to anything reported above)

From a resident of Somerset Road, "Just a quick email to say a HUGE thank you to all involved in the comments re. the planning application K/46/23/PL. It's all brilliant and so in-depth. I sent in my comments before the original deadline and am keeping everything crossed now. It would be totally heartbreaking if the application to build on this precious piece of land goes ahead."

Some Christmas card comments:

"Thank you for all you have done again this year."

“Thank you for all your support, Disability Action Group.”

“Thank you for all you have done for the village in the past year, it is very much appreciated.”

“Many thanks for all your help!! It is very much appreciated x”

“As you strongly team up to do your work, you team up to heal me, allowing me to dance and hug you contributes greatly to my healing. I am very grateful.”

“Thank you for all your help this year and for your continuing support of the Festival and the Committee.”

“Thank you for having our backs, for your support and kindness in 2023.”

“Dear Parish Council, Yarnbombers, Xmas Cttee and “anyone else that knows us” – a big thank you and all the best for 2024.”

“Thank you to everybody who has organised things for the village to enjoy, it has been another fantastic year.”

On 31<sup>st</sup> December, the council published its third annual photographic round-up of the village’s year (only the third, it feels like so many more). Some of the comments received:

“Thank you so much for these lovely photos - really appreciated”

“Thank you for all you do. Happy, healthy 2024 to you all.”

“I really enjoyed looking at the photos. Thank you”

“Thanks for the wonderful selection of photos. Have sent on "world-wide" to family in all parts of the globe. Happy New year- "Lang may yer lum reek”

“A lovely collection of photos, thankyou. Happy New Year to all at the Parish Council.”

“What a fantastic year! Thank you to you all for your hard work and making life here so dreamy. Happy New Year to you all and I hope you get some time to put your feet up.”

“Thank you for putting together all the lovely 2023 photos in the parish council email.”

“Excellent newsletter – thank you.”

“Thank you for including me in the photos re 2023.”

“Thanks for the email on New Year’s Eve with a year in pictures – much appreciated!”

“What a fantastic newsletter to end the year, the photos show that wonderful East Preston Community spirit!”

### 13. **Leave**

No leave booked for this month yet, but I will try not to work on a few Fridays. Alison is unavailable on 4<sup>th</sup> January.

### 14. **January Meetings and Events**

This list may be incomplete and is subject to change.

- 8<sup>th</sup> Full Council (18:30, East Preston Infant School)
- 9<sup>th</sup> Planning & Licensing Committee (18:00, East Preston Infant School)  
Neighbourhood Plan Review Steering Group (18:45, East Preston Infant School)
- 10<sup>th</sup> Meeting with WSCC Highways, Angmering and Rustington PCs (09:00, Council Office) (SC)
- 12<sup>th</sup> Society of Local Council Clerks quarterly meeting (10:00, Lewes) (SC only)
- 15<sup>th</sup> Personnel Committee (18:00, East Preston Infant School)
- 16<sup>th</sup> Annual meeting with Angmering-on-Sea Lawn Tennis Club (details tbc)
- 11<sup>th</sup> Meeting with Rustington PC and Compass Travel (11:00, Rustington)
- 22<sup>nd</sup> Planning & Licensing Committee (18:00, East Preston Infant School)  
Community Engagement Committee (19:00, East Preston Infant School)
- 24<sup>th</sup> *Levelling Up and Regeneration Act and updates to the National Planning Policy Framework* (19:00, Angmering) (GM, CB and SC only)
- 29<sup>th</sup> Sussex Community Rail Partnership – Sussex Coast line group quarterly meeting (13:30, Worthing Town Hall)  
General Data Protection Regulations refresher training (19:00, East Preston Infant School)  
(all councillors and office-based officers)

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**

2<sup>nd</sup> January 2024

**Item 7 – ADC Youth Provision meeting, 12<sup>th</sup> December** – Cllr Linton asked where the council stood currently on youth provision in the village. Cllr Chapman, Chairman of East Preston Youth Club Committee, said the council was unaware of any great push for a youth provision in the village at this time. Cllrs Duff and Mathias, both members of the same committee, added their thoughts about the agreement that should be being honoured by the current lessees of the Youth Club building, even though they have ceased trading there. All agreed it was difficult to extract any helpful information from WSCC on this matter and that this should be raised again with County Cllr Elkins at a future meeting.

Cllr Duff said the ADC anti-social behaviour team had been visiting schools later, explaining what is meant by anti-social behaviour. Cllr Duff felt that was very valuable work.

**Item 8 – Arun and Chichester Clerks' networking event** – Cllr Linton asked whether other councils had had their tax base reduced because of the likelihood of non-payment; the Clerk replied council within both Arun and Chichester districts had said they had suffered the same.

The Clerk advised Cllr Linton the East Preston Festival Committee was interested in adopting one of the council's now-redundant noticeboards.

**Item 2 – Police matters** – Cllr Bradshaw queried how a fox's chewing marks could be mistaken for knife marks. The Clerk replied he understood this was a national situation which had been recognised by at least one tyre manufacturer, unwilling to change anything in its tyres' composition.

## **019/24 EXTERNAL MEETINGS AND EVENTS**

The council NOTED the following report:

### **Other meetings and events – Part 1**

**Council is asked to note any reports.**

# **The Baytree Lunch Club, 15<sup>th</sup> December**

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

As neither the Chairman nor Vice-Chairman could attend on this occasion, I was nominated to represent the council at the club's Christmas lunch.

I was warmly welcomed by Carol Feasey, who introduced me not only to the members present, but also to Carol & Terry, Sandra & Ken, Lesley & Nick, Vivian and Davida, who were sat on the same table as me, all of whom regularly help out with the running of the lunches.

The lunch was extremely well organised with circa 70 people present with all the cooking being done by Brenda and Michelle.

I had a very enjoyable time with good company and I am sure I will attend some lunches in future myself.

Cllr David Moore

19<sup>th</sup> December 2023

### **020/24 RESPONSE TO EXTERNAL MEETINGS AND EVENTS**

Nothing was raised.

### **021/24 NEW ITEMS FOR THE NEXT MEETING (5<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY)**

Nothing new was suggested.

The Clerk said he had been asked to mention there would be a meeting for anyone interested in helping mount a Christmas Tree Festival in 2024. The meeting was scheduled for 19:00 on Wednesday, 31<sup>st</sup> January in the Spire Room at St Mary the Virgin Church.

The meeting concluded at 20:04.

Chairman: *Councillor Steve Toney* Date: **5<sup>th</sup> February 2024**

END