



EAST PRESTON PARISH COUNCIL

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

01903 770050

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

Email: clerk@eastpreston-pc.gov.uk

MINUTES: of the Proceedings of the Monthly Meeting of East Preston Parish Council held at 18:30 on Monday, 3rd June 2024 at East Preston Infant School, Lashmar Road, East Preston

PRESENT: Councillors Christine Bowman, Kit Bradshaw, Andrea Chapman, 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

County Councillor Roger Elkins (until 19:25)

Arun District Councillors Philippa Bower and Paul Kelly (both until 19:25)

Sgt Danny West and PCSO Raj Rijo, Sussex Police (both until 19:18)

Neil Ellis, Patricia Gander, Kevin Hill, Adrian Miller and Tony Page, East Preston Men in Sheds (all until 18:37)

Mrs Morley (until 19:59)

ABSENT: Councillor Lisa Duff

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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 18.32. The Chairman proposed several alterations to the running order of the meeting to enable certain attendees to spend less time at the meeting – these were all agreed, and appreciated by those attendees.

358/24 INTRODUCTIONS

Cllr Toney welcomed everyone to the meeting and explained the meeting protocol and safety information.

359/24 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

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

1864 The Council **RESOLVED** unanimously to accept the apologies received from Cllr Duff (family matter).

Apologies had also been received from District Cllr Ricky Bower and Mr Roy Allen.

360/24 DECLARATION OF PERSONAL AND/OR PREJUDICIAL/PECUNIARY INTERESTS

Cllr Hill declared a Personal Interest in Agenda Item 13, *To agree to a recommendation to award East Preston Men in Sheds £15,000 to enable it to complete the build and kitting out of its shed* as her husband was a member of East Preston Men in Sheds.

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

361/24 PUBLIC SESSION

Agenda Item 11e – Major Events Committee – Mrs Morley thanked the council for its contribution to a wonderful start to the 2024 East Preston Festival. Mrs Morley had attended the Big D-Day Lunch and noted its “happy, joyous atmosphere.” Mrs Morley thanked the council again for all it did “to make the village so wonderful.”

Mrs Gander agreed with Mrs Morley’s comments and said she had spent all afternoon on the day of the meeting walking around the village’s Open Gardens. Lots of residents had been talking about the Big D-Day Lunch and, without exception, they had been “so complimentary” about the event

362/24 COUNCIL RESPONSES

Agenda Item 11e – Major Events Committee – Cllr Linton thanked the members of the public for their positive comments about and enjoyment of the Big D-Day Lunch. A local publican, relatively new to the village, had told her how impressed he was with the events the village put on and how much he personally had enjoyed being part of the Big D-Day Lunch.

363/24 FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE – EAST PRESTON MEN IN SHEDS

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

Finance & General Purposes Committee – East Preston Men in Sheds

Council is asked to agree to award a grant of £15,000 to East Preston Men in Sheds to enable it to complete the build and kitting out of its shed.

Cllr McElroy to lead on this item.

Representatives of East Preston Men in Sheds attended the Finance & General Purposes Committee’s meeting on 14th May and gave a presentation on how the group is coming along.

The group was seeking a grant of £15,000. This money would be used to complete the electrical and fire alarm installation in the cabin, add security grilles, a bicycle shelter and planters – to meet the biodiversity requirements of the Planning Permission – and to fit out the cabin with a range of equipment, ready for the group to start operating as it had always envisaged. The group will then aim to be self-funding, carrying out community maintenance, making and selling products, supporting the local schools and care homes and suchlike. For the members, the group should reduce social isolation, promote new friendships and teach new skills.

Committee members were impressed the group had already raised over £20,000 for the project.

Councillors will have seen the cabin has been built, by the Men in Sheds themselves.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

17th May 2024

Cllr Hill declared a Personal Interest in this matter, as noted in Minute 360/24 above, and neither spoke nor voted in this matter.

Cllr McElroy spoke in support of this proposal. No questions were asked.

1865 The Council **RESOLVED** unanimously to award a grant of £15,000 to East Preston Men in Sheds to enable it to complete the build and kitting out of its shed.

As Chairman of East Preston Men in Sheds, Mr Ellis thanked the council saying the group was “very, very grateful” and could now embark upon the final phase of the build, with an aim to be up and running by the beginning of August.

(Mr Ellis, Mrs Gander, Mr Hill, Mr Miller and Mr Page all left the meeting at the conclusion of this item.)

364/24 MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING HELD ON 13TH MAY

The draft Minutes were circulated to all councillors on 15th May asking for suggested amendments by the 22nd May. None were received.

1866 The Council **RESOLVED** unanimously the Chairman could sign the Minutes as a true record of the meeting held on 13th May. Cllr Toney duly did so.

365/24 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 358/23 – 20mph Working Party – 20mph Zone for The Street, Fairlands and Sea Road**
- 3. Minute 108/24 – Clerk’s Report – Item 6 – Meeting with WSCC Highways, 10th January**

1. Introduction

This is the report covering items discussed during Full Council meetings up to and including the meeting held on 13th May 2024.

2. Minute 358/23 – 20mph Working Party – 20mph Zone for The Street, Fairlands and Sea Road

Following the council receiving notice from Oliver King, WSCC Highways Traffic Engineer, the application had failed the Detailed Assessment, on 22nd May, the council submitted an appeal to the head of WSCC Highways to review this decision. We do not know whether or not there is an appeal process.

3. Minute 108/24 – Clerk’s Report – Item 6 – Meeting with WSCC Highways, 10th January

Following the update provided to the May meeting, on 15th May, council received a further update:

Dear Parish and Town Councils

Thank you again for registering your interest to take part in a pilot where we will be trialling some new ways of working with you.

Following from my email on 25 April 'Talking Parish Communications' I am pleased to provide an update and advise you of the next steps of our pilot aimed to improve the way we work with you to ultimately improve the information and services to residents.

The **pilot is supported by our Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport and includes the following:**

- A dedicated 'Your Voice' webpage – this webpage will be a forum for you to provide feedback to us and for us to share useful information in a timely and user-friendly format.
- A dedicated Parish/Town Council e mail – this e mail will provide you with a way to escalate more complex enquires to WSCC directly.
- A virtual drop-in session – a virtual meeting with WSCC Officers to provide councils with information on the services run by WSCC Highways (Key themes to be agreed with you)

The pilot will run for three months, during June, July, and August after which we will carry out some evaluation and make recommendations for wider roll out.

Next steps

I will be putting a virtual meeting invite in your calendars for week commencing 10 June 2024 which will provide an opportunity to meet each other, give more details of the pilot and deliver a demo for the 'Your Voice' Engagement platform.

Please do reach out if you have any questions.

Kind regards

Steve Hill
(he/him)
Parish & Community Engagement
Business Assurance Group
Highways, Transport and Planning
West Sussex County Council

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

28th May 2024

No questions were asked.

366/24 WEST SUSSEX COUNTY COUNCIL

County Cllr Elkins started by congratulating the council on its events over the weekend, with particular praise for Cllr Chapman's shortbread at the *Come and Meet Your Local Councillors* event on Saturday.

Cllr Elkins said he was aware the council had opened a dialogue with Michele Hulme, lead officer at West Sussex County Council Highways, appealing the decision made not to progress a 20mph zone in Sea Road.

Cllr Elkins said there were ongoing discussions about site access to the Redrow site immediately south-east of the A259/A280 roundabout. Cllr Mathias said he believed the site was contravening a Condition of its Planning Permission as a number of properties appeared to be occupied although the access road from the A259 was not complete. The Clerk confirmed this contravention had been flagged to ADC as a Planning Compliance case, and at least one stop notice had been applied to the site, albeit for a different contravention. Several councillors expressed other concerns about traffic management around the site. Cllr Elkins said he would find out the details of accesses to the site and would share that with this council.

Cllr Elkins reported on a site meeting he had had with Ms Dearing, the Angmering resident campaigning for a safer crossing point in Worthing Road, and the Clerk. Cllr Elkins had found the meeting very useful and had gained a good understanding of the problems faced by schoolchildren and their parents when attempting to cross Worthing Road to get to either East Preston schools or the Angmering School. In response to a question from the Clerk, Cllr Elkins said it may well be this proposal will need to be a Community Highways Scheme.

The Clerk advised the new Southern Rail timetable had gone live on the day of the meeting, meaning an increased number of train movements along the West Coastway route which would, inevitably, increase the downtime at the village's two level crossings. He had, just, managed to get some modelling information from Network Rail on the impact the new timetable should have on the level crossing timings.

Hello Simon,

My apologies. Yes we have this modelling information, which as expected does show an increase in barrier down times at these locations at certain times under the new timetable due to the increased service provision.

For the level crossings we have assessed selected hours in the day; one in the morning peak, one in the mid-afternoon off-peak, and one evening peak. As a reminder, this is how the service provision (Monday-Friday) has changed at those times compared to the Dec23 timetable, and compared to pre-pandemic;

Roundstone & Angmering	June-19	Dec-23	June-24
0800-0859	11	11	12
1300-1359	8	7	12
1700-1759	13	8	12

For both crossings our modelling shows an increase in barrier downtime of around two minutes and 45 seconds in the morning period (0800-0859). We expect longer downtimes in the mid-afternoon period (1300-1359) of around 07:30 and 09:26, respectively. This is because the number of passenger services traversing these crossings is rising from the present seven to 12 in the off-peak. There is a longer expected increase in downtimes for the evening peak (1700-1759) of 09:18 (Angmering) and 07:28 (Roundstone). Interestingly, this is a decrease (by -2:15 and -1:49 respectively) compared to the pre-pandemic timetable within those hour periods.

I hope that this information is useful to you, and please do let me know if there is anything else I can help with at this juncture.

Do note that I won't be attending the planned session on 12 July as I expect to be on parental leave – my colleague Harry (cc'd) is organising the Network Rail representation for that event.

Yours sincerely,

William AJG Knighton
Senior Public Affairs Manager
Network Rail Southern Region

Cllr Elkins had asked for similar information from WSCC Highways, and had again chased earlier in the day; he congratulated the Clerk on having got some information from Network Rail as WSCC Highways had received nothing from Govia Thameslink Railways. The Chairman asked whether now would be a good time to have Network Rail reinstall cameras at the Roundstone Level Crossing as he suspected increased downtime at the gates would lead to increased instances of driving taking a chance at crossing when the lights had started to flash; the Clerk said he would raise this with Network Rail.

Cllr Elkins said the better weather meant there were likely to be more roadworks. He reminded those present they could use the roadworks interactive map on the WSCC website to find out more about almost all roadworks in the county.

In response to a question from Cllr Gunston, Cllr Elkins said he had had agreed with the Clerk he would let him know later in the week if he needed to chase Michele Hulme for details of WSCC Highways representation at the proposed Roundstone Level Crossing meeting on 10th July. He was aware the council had a meeting on 10th June at which it would need to decide whether to proceed with the meeting or cancel it.

367/24 SUSSEX POLICE

Sgt Danny West introduced himself and PCSO Raj Rijo. Sgt West explained it was not always possible to attend parish council meetings but he hoped to attend meetings quarterly, operational matters allowing.

In advance of the meeting, the Clerk had circulated a report from Sgt West, giving some detail of crimes committed in East Preston in the period 1st March to 31st May. Sgt West talked the meeting through his report, and advised East Preston remained a low-crime area, generally safe in which to live.

Some of the points Sgt West made were that violent crime most often took place indoors between people already known to each other. Positive outcomes were pursued when youths were found in possession of a weapon, most often a knife. There were no real trends identifiable in the report, and more reporting by residents should be encouraged.

Cllr Hill talked about her belief coastal communities could work better together to be aware of traveller movements and also to liaise better between traveller communities and local residents. Cllr Hill asked whether residents should contact Sussex Police when they are confronted by aggressive members of traveller communities. Sgt West said most members of traveller communities were respectful but a few let down the others by constant shoplifting and generally confrontational behaviour. Sgt West said yes, aggrieved residents should report incidents to Sussex Police. A collection of reports of bad behaviour would be helpful to Sussex Police when legally moving on a community.

Cllr Gunston said he had found the report very useful and councils could use regular reports to look for trends themselves. Sgt West said it had not been too horrendous a task to compile the report and he would be happy to try and report quarterly. Whilst he would not want the reports to be shared directly with the public, he was happy for councillors to use information in the reports when talking to the public. Fear of crime almost always exceeds the reality.

In response to a question from Cllr Toney, Sgt West admitted staffing levels were difficult and there had been numerous, well-publicised cutbacks since the 2008 financial crisis. However, he felt staffing levels were just beginning to head back in the right direction, with a reshuffle imminent.

(Sgt West and PCSO Rijo left the meeting at the conclusion of this item.)

368/24 ARUN DISTRICT COUNCIL

District Cllr Philippa Bower spoke first, passing on Cllr Ricky Bower's apologies for not attending the meeting. Following the council's Annual General Meeting, Cllr James Walsh was now chairman, Cllr Freddie Tandy was now vice-chairman and Cllr Martin Lury, Leader of the Council.

In response to a question of whether the new Chief Executive was likely to bring stability to the council, Cllr Bower said she believed the new Chief Executive might bring too much stability, apparently not intending to make any immediate changes.

District Cllr Kelly thanked and congratulated the council on its involvement with the Big D-Day Lunch event.

Cllr Bowman asked whether there was more help Cllr Kelly could give in the matter of the East Preston allotments. Cllr Bowman's angle was different to those previously mentioned as she needed information on the allotments she could include in the revised East Preston Neighbourhood Plan, but two different ADC officers had advised ADC had no responsibility for the allotment site, although this council knew different. Cllr Kelly asked the Clerk to respond, and the Clerk said he had gone back to both of the officers Cllr Bowman had referred to advising them this council had had no responsibility for the allotments whilst he had been in post, had received no income from the site, had no agreements with any of the tenants, and perhaps most tellingly had not undertaken the clearance works late last summer, in response to a request from Cllr Kelly. The Clerk had asked the ADC Group Head of Housing, Wellbeing & Communities, Richard Tomkinson, for a meeting as Cllr Gunston also wanted to talk with him about the Local Energy Company project. Closing the discussion, Cllr Kelly suggested a member of the parish council might want to wander through the allotment site and chat to any tenant present about how they got hold of a plot.

(All three county and district councillors left at the conclusion of this item.)

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

Annual Financial Matters – Accounts for year-ending 31st March 2024

Council is asked to approve the accounts for the year-ending 31st March 2024 and can be signed by the Chairman and the Clerk/Responsible Financial Officer.

Cllr McElroy to introduce this item.

The accounts have been checked to the satisfaction of our Internal Auditor. This year, the Finance & General Purposes Committee has not met to review the figures.

Councillors with any questions are invited to call the office prior to the meeting.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

23rd May 2024

The accounts had been circulated as an appendix within the Supporting Papers for the meeting.

The accounts had been checked to the satisfaction of the council's Internal Auditor and were circulated with the supporting papers for the meeting. Cllr Gunston had had some discussions with the council's bookkeeper. With no questions forthcoming,

1867 The council **RESOLVED** unanimously the Chairman of the Council and the Clerk / Responsible Financial Officer could sign the accounts for the year ending 31st March 2024.

The Chairman and the Clerk duly signed the Annual Accounts for the year ending 31st March 2024.

370/24 ANNUAL GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY RETURN (AGAR) FOR YEAR-ENDING 31ST MARCH 2024

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

Annual Financial Matters – Annual Governance and Accountability Return for year-ending 31st March 2024

Council is asked to agree Section 1 – *Annual governance statement 2023/24* - of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return for the year-ending 31st March 2024 can be signed by the Chairman and the Clerk/Responsible Financial Officer.

Council is asked to agree Section 2 – *Accounting statements 2023/24* - of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return for the year-ending 31st March 2024 can be signed by the Chairman and the Clerk/Responsible Financial Officer.

Cllr McElroy to introduce this item.

At the end of each financial year, it is necessary for this council to complete an Annual Governance and Accountability Return which is then sent for external audit.

Appendix B shows the two sections of the form the council needs to agree can be signed by the Chairman and me. Appendix B also includes the Internal Auditor's completed page of the Annual

Governance and Accountability Return. I have circulated the complete Internal Auditor report to all councillors to give them additional confidence in agreeing to sign-off this paperwork.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

23rd May 2024

The appropriate sections of the AGAR had been circulated as an appendix within the Supporting Papers for the meeting.

In advance of the meeting, the Clerk had electronically circulated the Internal Audit report covering Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return.

1868 The council **RESOLVED** unanimously the Chairman of the Council and the Clerk / Responsible Financial Officer could sign Section 1 – *Annual Governance statement 2023/24* of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return for the year ending 31st March 2024.

1869 The council **RESOLVED** unanimously the Chairman of the Council and the Clerk / Responsible Financial Officer could sign Section 2 – *Accounting statements 2023/24* of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return for the year ending 31st March 2024.

The Chairman and the Clerk duly signed Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return for the year ending 31st March 2024.

371/24 FINANCIAL MATTERS

The Accounts for April and May 2024 had been distributed to Members in advance of the meeting.

1870 The council **RESOLVED** unanimously to approve the Outstanding Purchase Orders report for 2024/25, value £2,060.12 (excl. VAT).

1871 The council **RESOLVED** unanimously to approve the Regular Monthly Payments report for April and May 2024 totalling £1,642.25 (inc. VAT).

1872 The council **RESOLVED** unanimously to approve the Supplier BACS Invoices Paid report for April and May 2024 (totalling £72,021.84 inc. VAT).

1873 The council **RESOLVED** unanimously to approve the List of Sales Receipts & Bank Receipts by Bank report for financial year to date totalling £169,596.81 (inc. VAT).

The council NOTED the Bank Reconciliations to 31st March 2024.

The council NOTED the Budget Summary for 2024/25 to date, noting some account reversals for 2023/24 were still required.

Cllr Toney thanked Mr Vyse, the council's Book-keeper, for preparing the above reports. Councillors noted the reports produced using the new software were a lot easier to interpret than those produced by SAGE.

372/24 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 14th May and Amenities (sort of) on 20th May. The draft Minutes from the F&GP meeting have been circulated to all councillors.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

23rd May 2024

Amenities Committee

Cllr Wilkinson is the chairman of this committee.

The committee met on 20th May, but owing to some confusion, it did not believe it was quorate and so reduced the Agenda to items which only needed to be noted, nothing that required a decision.

Warren Recreation Ground – Mound.

East Preston in Bloom completed its planting project at the mound by the Warren Recreation Ground car park. A variety of shrubs that will give colour all year have been planted across the mound.

Northern shops – Queen Elizabeth II's Platinum Jubilee Clock.

The commemorative plaque has been installed at the base of the Platinum Jubilee clock. The plaque was cemented in place for security reasons. East Preston in Bloom has agreed to upkeep the planter troughs at the clock's base, a colourful floral display has been planted for the summer 2024.

The committee's next meeting will be on 24th June.

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

28th May 2024

Audit & Governance Committee

The committee did not meet in May. The committee will comprise the chairmen of the other six committees.

The committee's next meeting is scheduled for 15th July.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

23rd May 2024

Community Engagement Committee

The committee did not meet in May. The committee's next meeting is scheduled for 19:00 on Monday, 10th June.

Cllr Elizabeth Linton –
Chairman of the Community Engagement Committee

24th May 2024

Finance & General Purposes Committee

Cllr McElroy is the chairman of this committee.

The committee met on 14th May. Cllrs McElroy and Gunston were re-elected Chairman and Vice-Chairman respectively.

The committee received a presentation from East Preston Men in Sheds which resulted a in a recommendation to award the group a grant of £15,000, see Agenda Item 13a below.

The committee granted a total of £6,069.92 from this year's Section 137 Grant Aid budget and £2,000 from this year's Section 144 Tourism budget line.

The committee reviewed its Terms of Reference, agreeing no changes were needed at this time, and noted there are new Model Financial Regulations available from the National Association of Local Councils. Cllr Gunston volunteered to carry out an initial review of the council's existing Financial Regulations against the new ones.

The committee's next meeting will be on 19th August.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

23rd May 2024

Major Events Committee

The committee did not meet during May.

The committee's next meeting will be on 17th June.

Cllr Elizabeth Linton –
Chairman of the Major Events Committee

21st May 2024

Personnel Committee

The committee did not meet in May.

Staff appraisals for the past year have been completed.

The committee's next meeting is scheduled for 15th July.

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

22nd May 2024

Planning & Licensing Committee

There were no Planning Applications to be considered during May.

Kingston Parish Council has received notification the Secretary of State for the Department for Communities, Housing and Local Government has refused to review ADC's decision to give Planning Permission for 47 new homes in Kingston Lane. Days later, a General Election was called and days after that, said Secretary of State announced he would not be standing for re-election. This council has not yet received similar notification in response to its request for a review of the planning decision.

The committee's next meeting is scheduled for 10th June.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

24th May 2024

Additionally:

Community Engagement - Cllr Toney thanked everyone who had been part of the *Come and Meet Your Local Councillors* event on Saturday, 1st June. All thirteen councillors had been able to be present.

Major Events – Cllr Linton thanked everyone who had volunteered to be part of The Big D-Day Lunch. This had been another successful village event, as had been heard throughout this meeting.

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

373/24 AUDIT & GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE – INTERNAL AUDIT FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31ST MARCH 2024

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

Audit & Governance Committee – internal audit for year ending 31st March 2024

Council is asked to note the final Internal Audit report for the year ending 31st March 2024.

Cllr Mathias to lead on this item.

Mulberry & Co.'s Andy Beams carried out the second internal audit of the financial year on 15th May. His report has been circulated with these Supporting Papers. Andy found nothing to concern him although the council does need to do some work on its Asset Register and Adrian and I are already aware of that.

Should any further discussion on the report be needed, this will take place at the next Audit & Governance Committee meeting.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

17th May 2024

The council was happy with the content of the report, which will be discussed in greater detail, as necessary, at the next Audit & Governance Committee meeting.

Cllr Toney asked the Clerk to thank Andy for his thorough report.

374/24 REPORTS FROM PARISH COUNCIL WORKING PARTIES

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

Working Parties

Only the Environmental Initiatives met in May.

20mph Working Party

Clr Wilkinson is the chairman of this committee.

As reported above, the council has submitted an appeal to Michele Hulme, WSCC Highways Head of Local Highways Operations, to review the dismissal of the proposal for a 20mph zone covering Sea Road north to the junction of North Lane with Lashmar Road. Several contradictions were found within the reasons for dismissal.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

28th May 2024

Conservative Hall Working Party (CHWP)

The working party did not meet in May.

I would suggest the working party sets a meeting date for this month. I have started to work on a business plan although, as I have no experience of writing such, some assistance would be appreciated.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

23rd May 2024

Environmental Initiatives Working Party (EIWP)

The working party met on 15th May.

A short meeting to discuss the Environment Table to be set up on 1st June on Village Green. Lisa suggested using the badge maker to encourage children to make nature badges. Naomi will try to get some information on hedgehogs. Michał will put together a display to illustrate what we have been doing based on our sustainability framework. I will arrange to get laminated printouts of articles from the Parish Council newsletter. We will also give out walking maps and try to recruit more people for REACH project.

Next meeting 24th June to discuss Neighbourhood Plan.

Clr John Gunston –
Chairman of the Environmental Initiatives Working Party

23rd May 2024

Leases Working Party

No update on the negotiations with East Preston & Kingston Bowls Club.

The club's Open Day on Sunday, 19th May was successful and the club hopes some new members will result.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

23rd May 2024

Additionally:

20mph – Cllr Wilkinson advised neither acknowledgement nor response had yet been received from WSCC Highways regarding the appeal against the 20mph zone.

Environmental Initiatives Working Party – Cllr Gunston thanked two community volunteers, both members of the working party, Naomi Boulter and Michał Zarzecki, for their help with the EIWP stall during *Come and Meet Your Local Councillors* on 1st June. The stall had been very successful with plenty of interaction with the public. Another four local households had agreed to receive further information on the REACH Local Energy Company project.

Cllr Gunston suggested the *Come and Meet Your Local Councillors* event could move to be part of the East Preston Festival Community Market on the Village Green next year. He understood the Community Market would be a slightly shorter event next year, meaning the council only needed to cover maybe six hours next year and with thirteen willing councillors that should not be a problem. The council would not be able to provide hot drinks as it does in the event's current format, but it would still be able to provide Cllr Chapman's sweet treats. This proposal would be discussed at the next Community Engagement Committee meeting.

Cllr Linton asked Cllr Gunston whether he thought the EIWP would like a stall at the forthcoming Food & Drink Festival in August. Cllr Gunston said he would think about it. The Clerk said there was a bit difference between the Community Market which was all about local organisations promoting themselves and a purely social event such as the Food & Drink Festival. This too would be considered at the next Community Engagement Committee meeting.

Cllr Gunston concluded by reminding councillors the working party's next meeting had been scheduled for 24th June.

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

375/24 ANNUAL PARISH MEETING – 13TH MAY 2024

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

Annual Parish Meeting

The Annual Parish Meeting took place on 13th May and included a presentation from the Littlehampton branch of the Royal National Lifeboat Institution. The meeting was followed by drinks and nibbles with some of the members of the public who had attended.

Council is asked to note the draft Minutes from the meeting.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

23rd May 2024

The draft Minutes were circulated with the Supporting Papers for the meeting.

The council was happy with the notes which would be signed off at the next Annual Parish Meeting.

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

West Sussex County Council – safer crossing requirements in Worthing Road

Council is asked to support a highways matter relating to Worthing Road.

An Angmering resident with a child at East Preston Infant School, Annabel Dearing, has started a petition for a pedestrian crossing somewhere in Worthing Road. The resident has the support of both East Preston headteachers and has been advised by County Cllr Elkins to get the support of East Preston and Angmering parish councils, as residents of both parishes are likely affected by safety issues getting to and from school in both directions.

Cllr Elkins and I met Annabel on site on Thursday, 23rd May. Other parents stopped to talk to us whilst we were there, all reporting their concerns and hopes.

I understand both East Preston headteachers are supporting the campaign, and Annabel will be contacting the head at The Angmering School after half-term.

At the time of writing, 336 people have signed the petition which is hosted by change.org. There is the opportunity to comment upon signed petitions, and some of the comments from East Preston residents are:

“I would love to walk with my family to the Northern part of the village safely.”

“The area of road between Clarence Drive and the Roundstone Crossing has no safe crossing area for any pedestrian and is heavily used. View of the road is limited by bends and you almost take your life into your hands crossing it.”

“Children’s safety is paramount.”

“How sad parents are forced to beg the council for a crossing or lolly pop person just so their kids can get to school safely.”

“As a driver, I’m always concerned when I see school children waiting to cross the Worthing Road. I want to stop and let them cross, but am so scared that vehicles approaching from other directions will not. [...] It’s awful and something needs to be done – urgently!”

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

28th May 2024

The Clerk explained the residents’ request and reminded councillors the council had considered asking for a school crossing patroller in the eastern stretch of Worthing Road not that long ago, but at the time it had not been possible to fill the vacancy for a school crossing patroller in North Lane, let alone try and fill a second vacancy.

1874 The Council **RESOLVED** unanimously to support the residents’ petition for WSCC to improve crossing safety in Worthing Road.

The Clerk explained no further detail would be added to this resolution, allowing the petitioner to negotiate with WSCC Highways on their request.

377/24 ELECTRICAL SAFETY FIRST

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

Electrical Safety First – lithium batteries

Council is asked to consider supporting a campaign to improve the safety of lithium batteries.

On 20th May, the council received the following letter:

Dear Local Council

I am writing to ask your Council to support our campaign to improve the safety of lithium batteries (used in e-bike and e-scooters) and their disposal.

Let me begin by introducing myself. I am the researcher for Lord (Don) Foster (hence my email address), who has been campaigning on this issue in the House of Lords. I am also the parliamentary advisor to Electrical Safety First, a UK Charity dedicated to reducing the deaths and injuries caused by electricity.

As you will probably know lithium battery fires are on the increase – there have been over 1000 in the past few years, nearly 200 injuries and a dozen fatalities. Homes have been destroyed. The cost to the UK runs into £billions. You will doubtless know of examples in your area. I attach a spreadsheet of some recent fires – as you will see there have been some in your area.

Lord Foster and Electrical Safety First are promoting the attached Bill (a summary of which is included at the end of this email) to ensure greater safety in the use and disposal of lithium batteries and are aiming to get it into law as soon as possible. It has its First Reading on 5th June.

We have the support of many national organisations, as the attached logos show – including the National Fire Chiefs Council, the Association of Ambulance Chief Executives, the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents and the Royal Society for Public Health. In addition 2 coroners have called for the law to be tightened to ensure greater safety.

We are now contacting more locally based organisations, and it would be great if your Council was able to support this campaign. It would be a great boost.

Please do get in touch if you require any further information.

I look forward to hearing from you,

Yours sincerely,

Ron Bailey

PS Don't worry if you are not meeting before June 5th. That is only the 1st Reading – other stages will follow, so you won't be too late. Your support will be valuable at any time.

Clause 1 would require third party *independent* approval-testing for e-bikes, e-scooters and their batteries before entering the UK market.

Clause 2: incidents of fires and harmful fumes resulting from lithium-ion batteries in waste vehicles and landfills are increasing. There are reportedly more than 200 landfill fires annually, making up 48 percent of all fires, costing £158 million and contributing significantly to pollution. This clause requires the government to establish regulations for the safe disposal of used lithium-ion batteries.

Clause 3 addresses specific fire concerns, ensuring safer access, charging, and storage of lithium-ion batteries. While an outright ban is suggested by some, conversion kits remain a financially practical solution, especially for gig economy workers reliant on sustainable transportation. Implementing a standardised approach to kits could establish design and installation controls, mitigating foreseeable risks.

I have looked at the spreadsheet mentioned, to save councillors needing to, and of the 168 constituencies listed, Worthing West is not one, but we can overlook that detail for the principle of the matter.

For info, e-scooters are not allowed on Southern Rail trains because of “known” safety risks related to the batteries.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

29th May 2024

Cllr Gunston AGREED to do some research and to draft an article for possible inclusion in the Summer 2024 Newsletter. Although there were some concerns about publishing information related to an activity (e-scooter) still illegal in most places, the council overall felt it was sensible to publish information on the responsible disposal of lithium ion (and other) batteries.

1875 The Council **RESOLVED** unanimously to support Electrical Safety First’s campaign to improve the safety of lithium batteries.

378/24 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. Kingston Parish Council meeting, 16th May**
- 6. Rustington Parish Council meeting, 20th May**
- 7. Village Green vermin**
- 8. Social media**
- 9. MailChimp stats**
- 10. A selection of things we have been asked since the last meeting**
- 11. Recent bouquets and complaints**
- 12. Leave**
- 13. June meetings and events**

1. Introduction

This is the report mainly covering May 2024 and matters which may not arise elsewhere on the agenda.

2. Police matters

Nothing to report this month.

3. Anti-social behaviour (ASB) matters

No updates at the time of writing.

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. **Kingston Parish Council meeting, 16th May**

Having received correspondence and visits from ten households within Kingston parish, on the subject of ADC's beach huts proposal, I dropped in to this meeting. A small number of residents were present and did raise their concerns about ADC's beach huts proposal. District Cllrs Bower and Bower were present and were able to confirm the proposals have been referred back to the officer who put the proposal before ADC. I was only able to stay for the first half an hour.

Sussex Police PCSO Raj was present at the very beginning of the meeting. When I joked he did not visit us, he said he and his boss, Sgt Daniel West, were planning on visiting lots of parish council meetings in the coming months. Subsequently, I have been in touch with Sgt West and he has advised he and Raj may well drop in to our meeting on 3rd June.

6. **Rustington Parish Council meeting, 20th May**

I attended this meeting, mainly in support of Cllr Gunston who attended to give a presentation on REACH.

Here too, there were some residents concerned about the ADC beach hut proposal. At least four Rustington parish councillors are also district councillors and were able to shed a little more light on the proposal. Originally mooted in 2022, the proposal had taken this long to get to ADC Full Council, apparently not even known about by members of the proposing committee. Only two officers work in the department behind the proposal, and it is not believed to be a priority for the department. I had written to one on 13th May, asking him for an update. At this meeting, it was announced he had been off sick and had only returned to work on the day of this meeting. There was general agreement amongst the district councillors, this proposal would not progress quickly (if at all).

Affected local councils are due to be consulted, and when that happens I shall let you know.

It was interesting attending even just part of both councils' meetings.

7. **Village Green vermin**

During the month, we received some reports of rats in the gardens of some properties close to the Village Green. These had been seen climbing up fences to get into the gardens from the top. We called out our preferred pest controller who visited the site, with me, on Tuesday, 14th May. He could see no obvious nests or reasons why the rats were visiting that area of the Village Green. He did wonder whether they had been disturbed by very-nearby development work, but there was nothing close taking place. He advised local householders not to leave out food or water for wildlife as this will also attract rats.

I wrote to affected households advising them as above. We received the following replies:

“Thank you for organising this Simon. Both K and ourselves have checked, emptied, cleaned and replaced items in our sheds (and my metal kiln shed). All nooks and crannies have been cleaned out and disinfected. R, at no. [...] will be checking her garden. The rats WERE coming over the fence and gate in our properties and I could see them running along outside our gate. They have

now fully gone and R reports that she hasn't seen them again. The Parish Council works hard for the local residents and Roy and I appreciate all that you do."

"Many thanks."

"Thank you so much for update Simon, very much appreciated"

8. **Social media**

We did not post much during May, but these two posts reached more than 500 people.

- Publicity for One Big Walk! on 29th May, a Healthy Walks in Arun walk to mark over 20 years of such walks in Arun – 2,704 people
- Sea Road closed for treeworks, no advance notice given – 807

(posts up to and including 27th May)

The number of Followers is currently 1,868, an increase of 1 on the last report.

9. **MailChimp stats**

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

Parish Council news – 8th May – sent to 925 subscribers, opened by 646 (70.1%)

Parish Council news – 16th May – sent to 926 subscribers, opened by 658 (71.3%)

Parish Council news – 23rd May – sent to 927 subscribers, opened by 644 (69.8%)

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

"Do you have a telephone number for the Littlehampton RNLI station?"

"Can covenants affect the outcome of a Planning Application?" (Covenants are not usually considered as part of a Planning Application. They could form part of a civil legal case.)

"Please could you explain to me what a parish council does."

"May I run a supercar show on the Village Green?" (Come and talk to us.)

"Have you any bingo tickets?" (No, this is a Festival event.)

"Do you have any George Michael tickets left?" (No, this is a Festival event.)

"Do you have a mast I can attach a D-Day flag to?" (No, we flew our own D-Day flag at the war memorial.)

11. **Recent bouquets and complaints**

(In addition to anything reported above)

Vicky Hartkemeyer, CEO of Waves Music Therapy, wrote to thank the council for including the charity in the Spring 2024 Newsletter.

From a resident of Kingston who asked some questions about the future of the Conservative Hall, “Thank you Simon for this comprehensive reply. The consensus of the people talking about the survey was that it would be a great shame for yet another development to arrive in the village. Have a good day and thank you for what you do to encourage and promote village life.”

From a resident user of the boules piste, “You are a star! Thank you so much for organising this”, a reference to sprucing up the notices on the boules noticeboard.

A resident of Golden Acre, West Kingston, stopped me in Rustington to thank me for the support given to Kingston residents concerned about the ADC proposal to install new beach huts to the east of the existing beach huts at the end of South Strand.

From the administrator at Angmering-on-Sea Lawn Tennis Club, who contacted the council looking for a recommendation for paper-shredding, “Hi Simon. Just to say thank you for passing on the information regarding Peter at ABS and the shredding service he provides. It has worked well for clearing the office. Peter has been very approachable and I will be back for bags as the shredding mounts again!”

12. **Leave**

Caspar is on leave for the week beginning 10th June.

13. **June Meetings and Events**

This list may be incomplete and is subject to change.

- 1st *Come and Meet Your Local Councillors* (09:30 for councillors, Council Office)
- 2nd The Big D-Day Lunch (12:00 -17:00, Village Green)
- 3rd Full Council (18:30, East Preston Infant School)
- 4th *Alpacas on the Village Green* (17:00 for councillors, East Preston Infant School)
- 6th ADC Climate Change workshop (10:00, Civic Centre) (JG only)
- 8th East Preston Carnival Parade (see Cllr Duff for details)
- 10th Local Council Clerk Week begins
Planning & Licensing Committee (18:00, East Preston Infant School)
Community Engagement Committee (19:00, East Preston Infant School)
- 15th East Preston Repair Café (10:00, Vicarage Lane)
- 17th Major Events Committee (19:00, East Preston Infant School)
- 19th Arun Community Transport AGM (13:30, Littlehampton) (HH only)
- 24th Planning & Licensing Committee (18:00, East Preston Infant School)
Environmental Initiatives Working Party (19:00, East Preston Infant School)
- 28th Sussex Police Clerks’ Call (15:00, online) (SC only)

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

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

28th May 2024

Item 8 – Social Media – Cllr Linton was concerned tree works had taken place in Sea Road at a time when there may have been birds nesting in the tree. The Clerk reassured Cllr Linton somewhat, saying the works would only have been emergency works.

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. Where a written report is not included below, please expect a verbal report at the meeting.

Meeting with Applecarte Distribution, 16th April

Council Office, 122 Sea Road, East Preston

Following some concerns about the distribution of the Winter 2024 Newsletter, Cllr Linton and I met with Dana-Jane Fisher, owner of Applecarte Distribution, the delivery company which delivers the parish council's quarterly newsletters.

Councillors were concerned re a possible perception of political bias within the village because the EPPC Winter 2024 newsletter had been delivered with a political flyer and other business literature.

Therefore, the purpose of the meeting was to establish what delivery options were available and at what cost. At present EPPC pays £340.56 per delivery for a shared rate delivery. An alternative option is a single rate delivery at a cost of £545 per delivery and it would be guaranteed EPPC newsletters would be delivered on their own. This will be considered by the Community Engagement committee in due course, and could be budgeted for from next April.

Cllr Helen Hill

22nd May 2024

Field House coffee morning, 2nd May

Council Office, 122 Sea Road, East Preston

Last year, Field House residents invited Parish Councillors to attend their monthly coffee morning once every six months, where we all engage in topics around their everyday living and local community.

Attending today were Cllr Linton and myself. It was lovely to see both regular and new residents present.

Following introductions, the Manager commenced with multiple topics ranging from smoke detectors in their accommodation, Broadband being installed, online banking due to local bank closures to extreme weather and how it effects their daily lives.

It was very evident that the closure of local banks has effected many of the residents, only a handful were able to manage the online banking APP. The majority of the residents spoke about the daily challenges this brings and how it effects their independence.

We have been experiencing some extreme weather conditions of late, residents highlighted some of the difficulties the weather had on them. Heating on longer times than usual, how difficult it is to get out and shop not knowing if they would be caught in heavy rain and how much they missed sitting in the lovely grounds of Field House, socialising with friends. It was highlighted they now have a community room called "Jigsaw Room" named so because many residents spend time doing jigsaws.

One resident brought the topic up around "RESPECT FORMS" which received a little shock response; topics like this have always been quite emotive, however, it did spark a very good awareness to other residents exactly what this entails. A "RESPECT FORM" records a patient's wishes about a range of care and treatments, a "DNA CPR" is an advanced decision not to attempt CPR, it is not about other treatments. Many questions arose from the discussion and most residents were quite philosophical around the topic.

Wanting to end on a happier note, Cllr Linton regaled the group on all the wonderful up and coming community events East Preston Parish Council has to offer. D Day celebrations and the poppy appeal were highlights, for many of whom have contributed to the poppy appeal and very much enjoyed it. We spoke about warm welcome space, Men in Sheds, Repair Café, Come and Meet your local councillor and the Food and Drink Festival.

This drew the visit to a close, where we were thanked for attending, stating they enjoyed our visits and the time they have to generally just chat about anything and everything.

We thank Field House Residents for our invite and look forward to our next visit.

Cllr Helen Hill

26th May 2024

East Preston Repair Café, 11th May

Spire Room, St Mary the Virgin Church, Vicarage Lane

Our first Repair Café was a great success.

Thirteen items were brought in, ranging from ripped trousers to a broken camcorder. Our team of brilliant volunteers managed to fix eight of the items, make some new friends and give advice on items that could not be repaired. Tea and biscuits were provided by members of the Church, ably supported by Helen's grandchildren.

Although we aim not to have volunteers take items home, one volunteer did take home a garden fork, the handle of which had been broken. The owner hoped there would be a fix so he could keep using his beloved fork for a bit longer. Without the right tools to hand, one volunteer was certain he would be able to fix the fork at home, and the owner was happy to agree. Within 48 hours, the repaired fork had been returned to the Council Office and then on to the owner who was delighted by the repair.

Feedback was best summed up by one comment - "I am very impressed with the service and very kind reception". We also received generous donations towards our running costs.

Thanks to the support from Helen in setting up the initiative, Alison for pre-event admin and Lisa and Simon on the day. Next session is on Saturday 15th June from 10-12.



Kerry successfully helping
Lynne with her broken
litterpicker



Sue with her painting newly repaired by Roy and Mark

Cllr John Gunston –
Chairman of the Environmental Initiatives Working Party

13th May 2024

Rustington Parish Council, 20th May

Woodlands Centre, Rustington

I attended the monthly meeting of Rustington Parish Council with Simon to give a short presentation on the REACH project. Questions were mainly about detail - costs, potential damage to roofs, ownership issues and concern was also expressed about potential reputational damage to the Parish Council. I asked for support to set up a public meeting to present the plan to Rustington residents and received unanimous support. Cllr Gary Lee was nominated as the contact on the Council. We left the meeting once our presentation was finished.

Before I spoke six residents asked why there was no information from the Parish Council on the planned Arun Beach Hut programme. An email campaign opposing the project has already been started. They were informed no consultation had yet been made on the idea and advised that it may be better to hold back on the campaign until the proposals were fully developed. Rustington Parish Council agreed to keep them all informed on any progress.

Cllr John Gunston –
Chairman of the Environmental Initiatives Working Party

21st May 2024

Cllrs Hill and Linton agreed they had been very impressed with Applecarte at their meeting. The company director had a positive attitude and seemed to treat her staff well, resulting in a low turnover of staff.

Cllrs Hill and Linton had also found their trip to Field House to be useful.

Cllr Gunston said Repair Café had exceeded his hopes and had been a very successful session. He thanked Cllr Hill for all her work on this project. Cllr Gunston reported the first session had netted £46 in donations, money which would offset future expenditure on kit. Noting four of the gentlemen in the two photographs above, Cllr Wilkinson asked whether check shirts were obligatory.

380/24 RESPONSE TO EXTERNAL MEETINGS AND EVENTS

Nothing was raised.

381/24 NEW ITEMS FOR THE NEXT MEETING (1ST JULY)

Nothing new was suggested.

(Mrs Morley left the meeting at the conclusion of this item.)

382/24 CONSERVATIVE HALL

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

Future of the Conservative Hall

Council is asked to resolve to exclude the press and public from the rest of the meeting. In line with Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the press and public are to be asked to leave the meeting at this point, allowing the following discussion to be held confidentially.

Council is asked to consider the next steps related to the future of the Conservative Hall

At the time of writing, there are no updates since the last meeting.

I propose a meeting of the working party at 18:00 on Monday, 17th June.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

28th May 2024

The Clerk said there was little to update the meeting. He drew attention to his proposed meeting on 17th June. He had started to draft a Business Plan, and believed all members of the Conservative Hall Working Party would have something to contribute to the document.

He reported he had received an email from the council's solicitor on the day of the meeting just saying he had not had some answers back from the Trustees' solicitors.

The meeting concluded at 20.03.

Chairman: *Cllr Steve Toney* Date: **1st July 2024**

END