

MONTHLY MEETING OF THE COUNCIL

7TH OCTOBER 2024 at 18:30

SUPPORTING PAPERS

Please note not every Agenda Item will have a supporting paper.

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Agenda Item 6

Minutes of Monthly Full Council meeting, 2nd September

The draft Minutes were circulated to all councillors on 4th September, asking for suggested amendments by 11th September. None were received.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

30th September 2024

Agenda Item 7

Monthly Update Report

- 1. Introduction**
- 2. Minute 649/24 – Public Session**
- 3. Minute 666/24 – Conservative Hall**

1. Introduction

This is the report covering items discussed during Full Council meetings up to and including the meeting held on 2nd September 2024.

2. Minute 649/24 – Public Session

In the council e-newsletter published on 5th September, I made a general plea for householders to keep their bins off the pavements. I expected some outcry about this, but did not receive one. I also mentioned to ADC Cleansing there was nothing on the ADC website about bin etiquette, and my contact said he would pursue this.

3. Minute 666/24 – Conservative Hall

Cllr Wilkinson and I did draft a couple of versions of a statement we could publish in an e-newsletter, but nothing I was happy with. Aware of the need not to antagonise the Trustees further in case the venue became available to us again, I contacted Terry Chapman as Chairman of the Trustees. He said he would provide me with a suitable statement at the appropriate time. That has not happened yet, but councillors have seen information he has provided in their confidence for the time being.

Agenda Item 9

Committees

Since the last Full Council meeting the following committees have met: Community Engagement, Finance & General Purposes and Planning & Licensing. By the time of this meeting, the draft Minutes from all of these meeting should have been circulated to all councillors.

Agenda Item 9a

Amenities Committee

Cllr Wilkinson is chairman of this committee.

The committee did not meet in September.

Warren Recreation Ground Boundary - Committee recently granted a western resident's request, to lay a gravel pathway adjacent to the properties fencing line backing on to the recreation ground. The resident has also cleared the area behind the cricket nets. Committee agreed this has greatly improved the overall appearance of this section of the boundary. The resident thanked the committee for agreeing to the request and said he is now able to access his fence for regular maintenance work.

Warren Recreation Ground Trees – The further reduction work to the eastern boundary trees is now completed. This work was delayed until the cricket season had finished. Neighbours thanked committee for agreeing to this work and said the amount of light to their property has greatly improved. Neighbours also praised the tree surgeon for doing a marvellous job.

Village Green Car Park – The committee began researching other car park management companies, following an increase in the level of complaints the council office was receiving relating to the current car park management company. Most complaints were about poor customer service and not receiving parking fine notification letters. Committee considered Arun District Council Parking Management, National Parking Control (NPC) and the option of staying with the current provider. After receiving excellent recommendations from Lancing PC, the committee agreed to engage the services of NPC to manage the car park.

The agreement with the current provider will end on Wednesday 16th October 2024, with all equipment being removed by 18th October 2024. NPC indicated it has the equipment ready for installation and can meet the allocated timescale. Realistically there may be a very interim period where the council is unable to charge for parking. Members of the public will be notified of the changeover via the council newsletter.

Village Green storm damage – on 30th September, Caspar reported a fallen White Poplar tree in the south-western corner of the Village Green. This had fallen across and broken a section of low-level fencing and was completely obstructing the pavement. Simon asked Ferring Nurseries if the tree could be removed and this work was completed by 11:00 on the same day.



Memorial Tree warden – the committee accepted the kind offer of Paul Wicks to provide some TLC for the village’s memorial trees. An agreement has been drawn up, and Paul will begin on 1st October. His role will be about ensuring the areas immediately around memorial trees are kept clear and tidy.

The committee’s next meeting will be on 11th November.

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

30th September 2024

Agenda Item 9b

Audit & Governance Committee

The committee has not met since July.

The committee’s next meeting is scheduled for 18th November.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

30th September 2024

Agenda Item 9c

Community Engagement Committee

Cllr Linton is chairman of this committee.

The committee met on 23rd September.

Some of what was discussed follows:

Roundstone Level Crossing meeting, 10th July – the follow-up, online meeting with stakeholders in early October will be attended by Cllrs Toney, Linton and Gunston.

Merchant Navy and Emergency Services Days – the committee agreed both days had been suitably marked and this would continue.

St Mary the Virgin Christmas Tree Festival 2024 – Cllrs Chapman and Duff were still considering what the council's tree could represent.

Newsletter, Autumn 2024 – the committee considered further content for the next paper newsletter.

Village Bus Service – both East Preston and Rustington parish councils considered a further offer from Compass Travel to continue funding the No. 12 bus service at a reduced rate. The committee agreed it was not possible to continue funding the service at this time. Rustington Parish Council made a similar decision.

East Preston Calendar 2025 – an initial design has been finalised although some of the photographs provided need to be of a higher resolution. The print run will be lower this year.

Bleed Control kits – the committee felt there was insufficient need to bleed control kits in the village, a business's First Aid kit would probably be just as useful as the over-sophisticated bleed control kit.

Warm Welcome Space – the committee agreed to start working towards a 2025 offering.

Chairman's Annual Charity quiz – the committee agreed to offer an autumn quiz afternoon in future years to balance the Spring *Funday Sunday* offerings. This initiative will be transferred to the Major Events Committee.

The committee's next meeting is scheduled for 25th November.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

30th September 2024

Agenda Item 9d

Finance & General Purposes Committee

Cllr McElroy is the chairman of this committee.

The committee met on 16th September. This was an additional meeting specifically to consider a limited agenda. Representatives of Sea Road Beach Access Limited and East Preston & Kingston Village Hall Foundation attended.

Sea Road Beach Access Limited – the committee considered a Grant Aid application for up to £10,000 to complete the fundraising for the company’s project to build a boardwalk at the southern end of Sea Road. The committee had concerns and discussed there with Roy Allen, a director of the company. The committee agreed it would consider this application further once a sample of boardwalk had been installed and signed-off by a recognised safety organisation such as RoSPA. Mr Allen explained he was no longer installing a test segment. The committee felt donating money to an unproven scheme was not a good use of public money and, at Mr Allen’s request, included a statement to that effect in the company’s Newsletter No. 12.

East Preston & Kingston Village Hall Foundation – the foundation was represented by Chairman Toni McElroy and Trustee Nicola Adams. As councillors will already know, the hall has recently been subjected to a thorough Fire Risk Assessment and its committee is looking to implement the recommendations quickly in order to keep the hall fully available. Cllrs Toney and Wilkinson had already agreed to work with the hall’s committee and Cllr Bowman on this. The committee agreed the Village Hall could build ramps into the Warren Rec and the Warren Rec children’s play area. A recommendation to grant an initial £10,000 is to be considered later on this Agenda.

Insurance – the committee agreed to a three-year agreement with the council’s insurance.

The committee’s next meeting will be on 18th November.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

30th September 2024

Agenda Item 9e

Major Events Committee

The committee did not meet in September.

Cllr Linton is Chairman of the committee.

The committee’s next meeting is scheduled for 21st October.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

30th September 2024

Agenda Item 9f

Personnel Committee

The committee did not meet in September.

The committee’s next meeting is scheduled for 14th October.

Agenda Item 9g

Planning & Licensing Committee

The committee only met on 9th September, no meeting was needed on 23rd. Cllr Bradshaw chaired the meeting as Cllr Bowman was on holiday.

The committee considered just a single Application for South Strand, and agreed not to object to the proposal to combine two cottages into one. The committee did agree a comment should be made to ADC about this loss of housing stock.

The committee did reconsider an Application for The Ridings and agreed it would object to aspects of this proposal.

The Neighbourhood Plan review is progressing.

The committee's next meeting is scheduled for 14th October.

Agenda Item 10a

Audit & Governance Committee – Annual Governance and Accountability Return for year- ending 31st March 2024

Council is asked to note the conclusion of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return for the year ending 31st March 2024.

Cllr Mathias to lead on this item.

On 25th September, the council received the External Auditor's report on the Annual Governance and Accountability Return for the past financial year.

In the covering letter from the External Auditor, there was the following paragraph:

“The Council is required to approve Section 1 and 2 of the return individually in a specified order and although the minutes record this, the minute references used were the same on both sections 1 and 2 and therefore this was not clear on the face of the return. Best practice would be to provide an individual minute reference or sub-reference for the approval of each section and reflect this reference on the return so the order of approval is more easily identified.”

I have followed the same format for years, for a lot longer than we have had our current external auditor, which is six or seven years. I will accept the advice but question why this has not been raised before.

Within the External Auditor section of the Annual Return itself, the following two comments were made:

“The Council have not been able to provide explanations in an appropriate format for their significant variances in Box 3 to bring them within the acceptable level of 15% or £500. This is required by the Accounts and Audit Regulations and proper practices. Whilst we have been able to review the income lists provided and identify amounts to explain the variance, the council are responsible to undertake this work as part of their budget and monitoring processes. We have concerns therefore regarding the adequacy of their financial management systems in regard to meeting the requirement of proper practice and as such we would have anticipated ‘No’ responses to Assertions 1 and 3 on the Annual Governance Statement.”

“On review of the Council’s notice of public rights for 2024 posted on the website, we have noted that the start and end dated have been incorrectly dated as 2023. We believe this is a human error on completion and that the requirements to publish the notice of public rights were met correctly.”

Regarding the explanation of variances, which Andy, Adrian and I pored over a lot, I have asked the external auditor if they can provide some guidance based upon the statement, “identify amounts to explain the variance”.

I hold up my hand to not changing the dates correctly on the Notice of Public Rights.

The Notice of the conclusion of the audit was published on 26th September (same date as the past two years, coincidentally) on the council’s website and in the Council Office window.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

26th September 2024

Agenda Item 11a

Finance & General Purposes Committee – Sea Road Beach Access Limited

Council is asked to agree a recommendation to pledge conditional financial support to Sea Road Beach Access Limited.

Cllr McElroy to lead on this item.

At its meeting on 16th September, the committee considered a grant application from Sea Road Beach Access Limited for £10,000, the sum required to make-up the shortfall in monies received towards the construction of a boardwalk at the southern end of Sea Road.

After nearly an hour’s discussion, including one of the directors of Sea Road Beach Access Limited, Roy Allen, the committee agreed to recommend to Full Council it offer financial support on condition a safety report was carried out once installation had been completed and any recommendations from such a safety report had been implemented. No sum was set for the extent of this conditional financial support.

Agenda Item 11b

Finance & General Purposes Committee – East Preston & Kingston Village Hall Foundation

Council is asked to agree a recommendation to grant East Preston & Kingston Village Hall Foundation £10,000 for the purposes of completing actions identified in the Fire Risk Assessment dated 29th July 2024.

Cllr Gunston (Vice-Chairman of the committee) to lead on this item.

Following the visit last month of the Chairman of the East Preston & Kingston Village Hall Foundation, Mrs Toni McElroy, councillors will be aware the above Fire Risk Assessment identified a number of actions required at the hall. These are mainly the outcome of tighter legislation followed the Grenfell Tower fire.

An initial quotation received has been for just under £30,000. In light of this, the committee agreed to recommend a grant of an initial £10,000 to enable to Foundation committee to start on the required works.

Agenda Item 12

Working Parties

The Leases and Environmental Initiatives Working Parties met in September.

Agenda Item 12a

20mph Working Party

Cllr Wilkinson is the chairman of this committee.

Traffic speed surveys have been completed for The Street and Sea Road and the data is being considered by Keith Harris, coordinator of the village's Community Speed Watch initiative.

Agenda Item 12b

Conservative Hall Working Party (CHWP)

Cllr Wilkinson is chairman of this working party.

In line with rumours circulating, the Trustees have confirmed the building has been sold, subject to contract. We await further information in the public domain.

Agenda Item 12c

Environmental Initiatives Working Party (EIWP)

The working party met on 30th September.

We discussed a number of new activities.

We agreed to set up a small sub-committee, including Roger an allotment holder who joined us at the meeting, to put together a submission to Arun to take over the maintenance of the East Preston allotments.

A number of parishioners replied to our request with information about hedgehogs and we will be promoting ways to encourage them (hedgehogs rather than parishioners) into gardens.

Wendy is working on green wheelie bin stores with EP in Bloom and Men in Sheds and Michal will be applying for a licence to plant wildflowers on the verge at the end of St Mary's Close.

Repair Café opens again on Saturday 12th October from 10-1.

Next meeting will be Monday 11th November.

Agenda Item 12d

Leases Working Party

The working party met as part of the Finance & General Purposes Committee meeting, and agreed to undertake a professional valuation of the club. I have made initial contact with the company which undertook a valuation of the Conservative Hall. I have informed the club and its solicitors of this fact.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

30th September 2024

Agenda Item 15

Sussex Police

Council is asked to note any report from Sussex Police should one be received.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

30th September 2024

Agenda Item 16

Clerk's Report

1. **Introduction**
2. **Police matters**
3. **Anti-social behaviour matters**
4. **Freedom of Information / Data Protection requests**
5. **Merchant Navy Day, 3rd September**
6. **Emergency Services Day, 9th September**
7. **Community Speed Watch, 11th September**
8. **East Preston Repair Café, 14th September**
9. **Meeting with Stagecoach South, 23rd September**
10. **Half-yearly meeting with ADC Monitoring Officer, 25th September**
11. **Funeral of Fr John Quigley, 26th September**
12. **East Preston Beach Clean No. 22, 29th September**
13. **Social media**
14. **MailChimp stats**
15. **A selection of things we have been asked since the last meeting**
16. **Recent bouquets and complaints**
17. **Leave**

18. October meetings and events

1. Introduction

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

2. Police matters

The council has reported nothing to Sussex Police in the past month.

The WSALC and Police & Crime Commissioner fora Cllr Bowman and I have attended in the past are now being incorporated into each district's Association of Local Council meetings. As a standalone, these meetings were usually scheduled for about ninety minutes; as part of the district meetings, these are now likely to be about half an hour long.

I have lined up Daniel Sykes to attend the Annual Parish Meeting in May. Daniel is the Protect and Prepare Officer for the Surrey and Sussex Cyber Crime Unit, providing bespoke cyber security advice to all individuals and businesses reporting cyber-crime and training our communities to be cyber resilient.

3. Anti-social behaviour (ASB) matters

At the time of writing, a homeless man continues to live on Langmeads Field, now in a tent which has had the whole front panel torn asunder. A third email to ADC again received no acknowledgement. A member of the public witnessed the man swearing at a couple whose dog had perhaps strayed too close to his tent. I encouraged the member of the public to report this to ADC's anti-social behaviour team, and we received the following response on 17th September, "Our rough sleeper initiative team is aware of him and regularly visit to check his welfare and attempt to progress engagement. Unfortunately, he is unwilling to 'play ball' so the next step would be to pursue enforcement action by way of eviction. ADC Parks team is aware of his presence and I am currently awaiting their request to assist with serving eviction notices. As far as the shouting and swearing is concerned, this is a police matter under the Public Order Act and should be reported by the recipient of the abuse if they deem it necessary at the time."

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. Merchant Navy Day, 3rd September

Once again, the council marked Merchant Navy Day with a short event which included raising the Red Ensign by the War Memorial. Cllr Linton led the event, supported by Cllrs Duff, Gunston and Moore. Here is the text Cllr Linton read:

"Merchant Navy Day is dedicated to honouring the contributions of the men and women who embody the Merchant Navy and we are here today to pay tribute to our merchant seafarers, both past and present.

“Today, our merchant seafarers enable approximately 95% of the UK’s trade which moves by sea. Without seafarers, our shops, chemists and supermarkets would face empty shelves. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the UK Government recognised Merchant Navy workers as key workers, reflecting their vital role in maintaining the supply chain.

“In 1928, His Majesty, King George V recognised their invaluable contribution by appointing a member of the Royal Family as the Head of the Merchant Navy, honouring their service with the same respect given to the armed forces.

“Today we celebrate the people behind the Red Ensign, the official flag of Britain’s Merchant Navy. Fondly referred to as the Red Duster, it symbolises the pride and dedication of our merchant seafarers. It also represents the enduring nature of the merchant seafarers who fly it. Despite their critical role and Royal acknowledgement, these hardworking individuals don’t always receive the recognition or support they deserve. Every year on the 3rd September, we have an opportunity to come together to recognise the important role merchant seafarers play and to say “thank you”. Let’s honour these hardworking individuals and raise the public’s awareness of how crucial they are to our economy and security, together as a community.”



Cllr Linton in front of the Red Ensign, flanked by Lt Brian Osborne, Father Richard Bromfield and Midshipman Ella Bartlett.

Subsequently, Midshipman Bartlett has been promoted to Sub-Lieutenant, I believe.

6. **Emergency Services Day, 9th September**

The council marked this simply by raising the Emergency Services flag for the day.

7. **Community Speed Watch, 11th September**

I carried out a Community Speed Watch shift in The Street with Danny Reginiano and Maureen Fraser. We monitored southbound traffic. We were there from 09:30 for an hour and recorded 91 southbound vehicle movements. Almost all drivers were driving within the speed limit but, within the last ten minutes, two vehicles reported to Sussex Police for being driven about the Community Speed Watch threshold.

No advice from members of the public on this occasion. One or two drivers made the usual point of driving past really slowly but no verbal or worse abuse.

8. East Preston Repair Café, 14th September

I attended the first half of this session. This was the first three-hour session.

In addition to any report Cllr Gunston may provide, I arranged for Rachel Carruthers, WSCC Waste Prevention Officer, to attend part of the session. Rachel had been very interested in the council setting-up a Repair Café and had said she would like to attend once the café was up and running. Rachel brought with her a community volunteer and a wealth of information both on paper and in her head. After the session, Rachel emailed, “It was great to see the repair café in action and we were able to have some meaningful conversations with most in attendance, the volunteers there are amazing and so inspirational.”

The next session will be on Saturday, 12th October.

9. Meeting with Stagecoach South, 23rd September

Cllrs Toney and Linton and I met with James O’Neill, Commercial Director for Stagecoach South. The meeting was to discuss the future of bus services within the village. Rob Vince, our usual Stagecoach South contact was unavailable, but James is his manager.

James explained all bus services are licenced by the Transport Commissioner who, in turn, monitors those services to ensure they are running punctually and with the minimum of disruption, such as cancellations. The Transport Commissioner can issue heavy fines for companies who are failing to meet their targets.

Since the introduction of the revised Southern timetable in June, punctuality figures for the 700 have dropped (through no fault of their own). The company has been looking at the rail timetable to see where there are sufficient gaps in level crossing downtime to be able to offer a more punctual service.

Any permanent changes to the published service require 10 weeks’ notice. The company is still considering its options for improving the punctuality of the 700 without building in extended wait times which also upset passengers.

Although the majority of the hour-long discussion was about the 700, there was also some discussion about the future of the 9 and whether there was scope for that to come into the centre of the village.

Throughout the meeting, James stressed he understood the bus requirements of East Preston residents and how he would not leave the village without a regular bus service, although he could not say in what format that would be.

10. Half-yearly meeting with ADC Monitoring Officer, 25th September

This meeting was cancelled owing to the Monitoring Officer’s illness. Had the meeting gone ahead, I would have raised the fact we have received no responses to our questions about the homeless man in Langmeads and nudism on Arun beaches.

11. Funeral of Fr John Quigley, 26th September

Cllr Moore attended this as the council’s official representative. Fr Quigley had been parish priest at Lyminster before retiring into East Preston. During his retirement, he helped out at St Mary the Virgin when he could.

12. East Preston Beach Clean No. 22, 29th September

Another cold and windy Beach Clean, this time attended by thirty members of the public, ranging in age from 2½ into the 80s.

Thanks to Cllrs Toney, Linton, Chapman, Bradshaw, Duff, Gunston and Wilkinson for supporting this event on the day, and to Cllr Moore for helping with some prep ahead of the day.

Thanks also to Melanie and Wanda at SALT Kiosk for subsidising drinks for participants.

Following the usual pattern, next year's Beach Cleans should be on Sundays 6th April and 28th September.

13. Social media

Here are the council's Facebook posts in September which reached more than 500 people.

- Lost: Lashmar Ladies WI postbox topper – 3,900 people
- Found: bicycle – 3,630
- Promotion of revised Littlehampton Community Fridge on Tour Wednesday sessions – 2,651
- Found: dog treat and poo bag case – 1,737
- Post of WSCC notice of temporary closure of Old Worthing Road – 1,621
- Warning of fallen tree on the Village Green, obstructing the Sea Road pavement – 1,345
- Promotion for September Repair Café – 1,254

(posts up to and including 30th September)

The number of Followers is currently 1,886, a further increase of nine on the last report.

14. 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 – 29th August – sent to 936 subscribers, opened by 656 (70.2%)

Parish Council news – 5th September – sent to 939 subscribers, opened by 667 (71.1%)

Parish Council news – 12th September – sent to 938 subscribers, opened by 671 (71.6%)

Parish Council news – 19th September – sent to 940 subscribers, opened by 656 (69.8%)

Parish Council news – 27th September – sent to 941 subscribers, opened by 636 (67.7%)

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

“Are there any venues I have not thought of for my classes at the Conservative Hall?; I have already contacted fifty local venues.”

“Where can I find a March and an April copy of All About East Preston? I want to do the crossword.” (Alison photocopied the relevant pages from the council’s archive.)

“Is it true the [South Strand] community loos will be closed?” (The council has not heard any such rumour and is in close contact with the group which runs the toilets.)

“Is it true you collect small, redundant electrical items?” (Such items can be left with a household’s kerbside rubbish.)

16. **Recent bouquets and complaints**

(In addition to anything reported above)

Thanks received, “Better late than never to let you know that the Angmering Horticultural Club have booked Rod Vincent to talk to them in July 2025 about the Asian Hornets. Many thanks for your help.”

In response to the e-newsletter published on 5th September, a resident of Golden Avenue emailed, “I’ve just read the latest Newsletter and thought I’d like to say how brilliant it still is, with so much information, both legal and events. 5☆.”

Last month, a resident of Sea Road asked whether bins around the Village Green could be made fox-proof and I reported ADC was considering this. I monitored the situation and, seemingly overnight, the problem of foxes grabbing waste out of the particular bin to which the resident referred stopped completely. I contacted the resident for confirmation she agreed with this summation; her reply, “I absolutely agree about the foxes, they must have seen my email! If they become a nuisance again I’ll let you know, thanks for your concern”.

17. **Leave**

I might be off from the 15th to 18th, and am definitely off on the 24th. Adrian is on leave for the week beginning 21st. Dawn will be off on the 7th and Alison on the 14th.

18. **October Meetings and Events**

This list may be incomplete and is subject to change.

- 1st RNL Littlehampton visit (14:30, Littlehampton lifeboat station)
REACH Rustington meet (19:00, Woodlands Centre) (JG only)
- 7th Full Council (18:30, East Preston Infant School)
- 9th Voluntary Action Arun & Chichester (VAAC) AGM Celebration and Networking Lunch (10:00, Council House, Chichester) (JG only)
East Preston Festival donations evening (18:30, East Preston & Kingston Village Hall)
- 10th Roundstone Level Crossing stakeholders’ follow-up (14:30, online) (ST, EL, JG and SC only)
- 12th East Preston Repair Café (10:00, Vicarage Lane)
- 14th Disability Action Group (12:00, British Legion) (DR only)
Planning & Licensing Committee (18:00, East Preston Infant School)
Personnel Committee (19:00, East Preston Infant School)

- 15th Society of Local Council Clerks local monthly meeting (11:00, Littlehampton) (SC and DR only)
- 17th Sussex Community Rail Partnership (10:30, Chichester) (SC only)
- 21st Community Engagement Committee (19:00, East Preston Infant School)
- 22nd WSALC, *The Future Shape of the Planning System* (18:30, online) (CB only (so far))
- 23rd Interim Internal Audit (09:30, Council Office) (GM and RMc only)
- 28th Planning & Licensing Committee (18:00, East Preston Infant School)
- 29th Autumn playscheme (10:00, East Preston Infant School) (AR and AC 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**

1st October 2024

Agenda Item 17

Other meetings and events – Part 1

Council is asked to note any reports.

Meeting with allotment-holders, 9th September

Council Office

Simon kindly arranged for me to meet two East Preston allotment-holders who have been active cultivators for over 30 and 10 years respectively. They have an excellent knowledge of who holds most of the plots and are keen to see the site managed. They have a constant battle to keep weeds at bay from uncultivated areas and they suggested we contact Angmering as the allotments there are well controlled.

Subsequently, I have contacted the groups which manage the allotment sites in Angmering and in Worthing and both have sent me similar details of how they operate so we have some ideas of what can be done. The issue will be raised at the next EIWP meeting on 30th September to formulate an action plan.

Clr John Gunston –
Chairman of the Environmental Initiatives Working Party

9th September 2024

Greenleas MacMillan Big Coffee Morning, 25th September

Greenleas, The Darlingtons, Rustington

Although just over the border into Rustington, the House Manager of Greenleas, Florence John, invited East Preston Parish Council to send representation to this event. Clr Bradshaw kindly offered to attend.

Unfortunately, on the day I had obviously not provided him with sufficient information on the venue as he was unable to find his way in or to attract any attention to the fact he was outside. Better luck next time.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

26th September 2024

Agenda Item 19a

Warren Recreation Ground

Council is asked to note the draft Minutes from the Annual General Meeting held on 9th September. The draft Minutes can be found at Appendix A below.

The annual return was submitted to the Charity Commission on 11th September, the earliest it has been for many years.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

10th September 2024

Agenda Item 20

Full Council meetings

Council is asked to agree to revert to 19:00 as the standard start time for Full Council meetings. Cllr Toney to lead on this item.

For the past several months, Full Council meetings have been starting at 18:30, this to give council longer to discuss matters relating to the future of the Conservative Hall. As it is highly likely the sale of the venue will complete in early October and not involve the council, there seems to be no reason not to revert to 19:00 start time for Full Council meetings.

There would be two exceptions to this; firstly, meetings with a guest speaker will start at 18:30, and the Annual Full Council meeting will start at 18:00 to enable the Annual Meeting of the Parish to occur on the same evening, starting at 19:00ish.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

30th September 2024

Agenda Items 22 and 23

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

As reported above, it is highly likely a sale will be completed in early October and will not involve the parish council.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

30th September 2024

Agenda Item 19a

Warren Recreation Ground

Council is asked to note the draft Minutes from the Annual General Meeting held on 9th September.

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on Monday, 9th September 2024 at East Preston Infant School.

(Reviewed at the Full Council meeting held on 7th October 2024, Minute xxx/24)

Trustees Present: East Preston Parish Council members: Andrea Chapman, Lisa Duff, Barbara Gale, Glyn Mathias, Rick McElroy, David Moore, Steve Toney (Chair) and Steve Wilkinson

Also: Simon Cross (Clerk to East Preston Parish Council, notes)

Trustees Absent: East Preston Parish Council members: Christine Bowman, Kit Bradshaw, John Gunston, Helen Hill and Elizabeth Linton

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Introduction – Cllr Toney, Chairman of East Preston Parish Council, opened the meeting at 19:00. He welcomed those present.

Apologies had been received from Cllrs Bowman, Bradshaw, Gunston, Hill and Linton.

Minutes – The draft Minutes had been reviewed and noted by East Preston Parish Council at its meeting on 2nd October 2023 (Minute 824/23).

The Trustees AGREED that the Minutes of the meeting held on 11th September 2023 and could be signed as a true record of that meeting. Cllr Toney duly completed this action.

Chairman’s Report – The Chairman’s Annual Report had been circulated to all present in advance of the meeting, as follows:

“As always, as chairman of the WRG Charity on behalf of all Trustees I would like to start by thanking East Preston Parish Council, and in particular its Amenities Committee and the Assistant Clerk, Dawn Reid, for the work involved in running the Warren Recreation Ground so smoothly through the reporting year.

“All the information below refers to the period of April 2023 to March 2024.”

“In April 2023, courtesy of Paul Amoo and the East Preston Film Society, an outdoor chess table was located at the entrance to the Warren Recreation Ground from the car-park. Special building works took place around the chess table to provide additional protection from unwanted visitors and also additional planting, maintained by East Preston in

Bloom. Chess pieces can be loaned from Cooper Adams. Our thanks to all three organisations.

“Also in April 2023, the ground dried-out sufficiently for the council’s tree surgeon to carry out some maintenance on the trees along the western boundary. This has led to some concerns for some residents on that boundary who have requested the safety netting be raised to the same height as that on the eastern boundary. Unfortunately, the tree surgeon’s cherry picker did cause some unintended damage to the ground and a resolution to this had to be negotiated with the cricket club.

“In June and July 2023, in conjunction with Angmering-on-Sea Lawn Tennis Club, the council offered three free tennis-coaching sessions to members of the public, aimed at encouraging former players back into the game whilst also offering complete beginners the chance to try tennis for themselves. The sessions were averagely successful and, for the first time, attendees were directed to book directly with the tennis club. Our thanks to the club for its involvement in this scheme, especially Andrew Cook, the head coach.

“Security was also strengthened by new metal gates installed at the entrance from the car-park onto the Warren Recreation Ground grassed area. The sergeant of the Neighbourhood Policing Team visited and said he believed the council had done as much as it reasonably could to protect the site in this way.

“In September, work started on the infrastructure to support three new streetlights to improve security in the Warren Recreation Ground car-park. After some nagging, this work was completed before Christmas. Subsequently, additional work had to be completed after complaints about light spill in to a neighbouring property, but this was resolved quickly to the satisfaction of the householder. We are grateful to the East Preston and Kingston Village Hall Foundation for its cooperation in supplying electricity to these streetlights.

“In October the council considered a proposal to change the tennis court into two Padel courts. The council felt the proposal inappropriate for the Warren Rec and suggested the proposers look at Lashmar Rec. More recently, a proposal for four Padel courts to be built at Worthing Rugby Club, in Angmering, has been in the news.

“Throughout the year and beyond, the council has been negotiating with neighbours about potential tree-works, some of which have been completed to the neighbours’ satisfaction. Additionally, the council has been working closely with East Preston in Bloom, particularly the mound by the chess table and the south-eastern corner which has been improved almost beyond recognition.

“I would like to thank David Macdonald of the Martlet Partnership for keeping the charity’s finances in order. I would also like to thank all East Preston Parish Council staff and councillors for their efforts to keep the WRG a pleasant place so it can be enjoyed by everybody. Finally, may I also ask the users to keep the place in good order for everyone’s benefit.

“Thank you.”

The report had been circulated in advance and all present confirmed they had read it. Cllr Toney thanked those involved with the day-to-day management and upkeep of the recreation ground.

No questions arose from the Chairman’s report.

Treasurer’s Report – The Trustees NOTED a full budget report for the Year 2023-24 prepared by Mr Adrian Vyse (Book-keeper to the Council), which had been distributed to Trustees prior to the meeting (see Appendix 1).

The Clerk reported the charity’s accountants had audited the accounts and had raised no questions nor concerns.

With no questions arising, the Trustees unanimously AGREED the financial report for the year-ending 31st March 2024.

The Chairman thanked Mr Vyse for his production of the report.

Delegation to East Preston Parish Council – The trustees AGREED to delegate formally responsibility for the Warren Recreation Ground for the period 1st April 2025 to 31st March 2026 to East Preston Parish Council.

Questions – on behalf of a resident of Sea Lane, the Clerk reported on a recent newspaper article which, in turn, reported on a banning of sixes at Southwick and Shoreham Cricket Club. The same resident also asked the charity to consider raising the height of the safety netting on the western boundary.

The Trustees present discussed these matters at a high level. Points made included for every case supporting one side of the cricket-preceded-the-current-residents argument, an opposite opinion could be cited. Southwick and Shoreham Cricket Club played on the Village Green at Southwick which may be than the Warren Recreation Ground with a road between it and neighbouring properties. Was it the council's responsibility to ensure the safety netting was sufficient and to increase it if found deficient? A previous request to have sixes banned had been thrown out by the council once it understood the club would be kicked out of its league; this would need to be reinvestigated and the ramifications understood.

In line with the Minute above, the Trustees agreed these matters should be referred to the Amenities Committee.

Anything Else – Nothing was raised.

Close – With no other questions forthcoming, Cllr Toney thanked the council's officers and councillors for their efforts through the year. He then thanked everyone for coming and closed the meeting at 19:12.