



# EAST PRESTON PARISH COUNCIL

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**MINUTES:** of the Proceedings of the Monthly Meeting of East Preston Parish Council held at 18:30 on Monday, 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2024 at East Preston Infant School, Lashmar Road, East Preston

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

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

Sgt Danny West and PCSO Raj Rijo, Sussex Police (both until 18:55)

Mrs Toni McElroy, East Preston and Kingston Village Hall Foundation (until 18:55)

Mrs D, Mrs L (from 19:00) and Mrs M (all until 19:40)

**ABSENT:** Councillor Kit Bradshaw

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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.

## **646/24 INTRODUCTIONS**

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

## **647/24 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

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

**1882** The Council **RESOLVED** unanimously to accept the apologies received from Cllrs Bradshaw (attending a funeral).

Apologies had also been received from County Cllr Roger Elkins and District Cllrs Philippa Bower, Ricky Bower and Paul Kelly.

#### **648/24 DECLARATION OF PERSONAL AND/OR PREJUDICIAL/PECUNIARY INTERESTS**

No interests were declared.

#### **649/24 PUBLIC SESSION**

**Agenda Item 9c – Community Engagement Committee** – Mrs M asked whether there was anyway householders could be asked to keep their bins within their own curtilages on collection days. On roads with relatively narrow pavements, such as Sea Road, bins standing on those pavements presented an additional hazard to pedestrians. The Clerk said he would talk to ADC Cleansing about this.

**Agenda Item 9e – Major Events Committee** – Mrs D praised the councillors and officers who had been in the Council Office before, during and after the decision was made on 24<sup>th</sup> August to cancel that day's Food & Drink Festival. Having popped into the office, in passing, Mrs D had seen for herself the amount of work the cancellation itself entailed, and the disappointment it brought.

**Agenda Item 9c – Community Engagement Committee** – Mrs D asked whether there were any updates on the Nos. 12 and 700 bus services through the village. The uncertain future, particularly of the No. 700, was a concern for many residents.

**Agenda Item 21 – Conservative Hall** – Mrs D reported a rumour the Conservative Hall had been sold as “a going concern,” and asked whether the council knew any more.

**Agenda Item 9d – Finance & General Purposes Committee** – Mrs McElroy attended the meeting as the Chairman of the East Preston & Kingston Village Hall Foundation. The Foundation had recently undertaken a Fire Risk Assessment, a copy of which had been made available to the council and had been distributed to and noted by the Finance & General Purposes Committee. A lot of work needed to be done in a relatively short space of time to keep the Village Hall compliant with new legislation and the Foundation was asking the council for assistance.

#### **650/24 COUNCIL RESPONSES**

**Agenda Item 9c – Community Engagement Committee** – The Clerk said he would talk to ADC Cleansing about people's bins. It would also be possible to include something in an e-newsletter and possibly the next paper newsletter.

**Agenda Item 9c – Community Engagement Committee** – Cllr Linton reported she and Cllr Gunston had travelled on the No. 12 bus earlier in the day, although the council's financial support had ceased on Friday, 30<sup>th</sup> August. The Clerk said the Managing Director of Compass Travel had said he would continue to run the service, at a loss, whilst he sought other funding streams. Cllr Linton added it was impossible to know how long that was sustainable.

The Clerk said the council was in regular contact with the Business Development Manager for this area of Stagecoach South. Stagecoach was concerned about the negative impact the new Southern Rail timetable had been having on No. 700 timetable reliability as the increased number of train services increased the downtime of level crossing gates at Ferring and Roundstone, and this had a negative impact upon customer satisfaction. The Business Development Manager was very familiar with the bus needs of East Preston residents and had asked for a meeting with council representatives probably sometime this month.

**Agenda Item 21 – Conservative Hall** – Cllr Toney said the council would be discussing the Conservative Hall at the end of the meeting.

**Agenda Item 9d – Finance & General Purposes Committee** – the Clerk said the Finance & General Purposes Committee had already assigned Cllrs Toney and Wilkinson to help the Village Hall Foundation committee in respect of the Fire Risk Assessment report. The Clerk said there was an extra Finance & General Purposes Committee meeting called for 16<sup>th</sup> September, with one specific item on the Agenda. In light of what Mrs McElroy had said this evening, the Clerk proposed

the meeting added this matter to its Agenda. The committee's members AGREED to this proposal, and Mrs McElroy said she would be able to attend the meeting.

#### **651/24 SUSSEX POLICE**

Sgt Danny West and PCSO Raj Rijo attended from the Neighbourhood Policing Team. A confidential report provided by Sgt West had been circulated to councillors in advance of the meeting.

Sgt West talked through his report, which covered the period 4<sup>th</sup> July to 28<sup>th</sup> August.

In response to a question from Cllr Linton on how many of the crimes reported resulted in a prosecution, Sgt West said he had not sought that information but he could for the future.

In response to a question from Cllr Toney, Sgt West said the crime rate in this and neighbouring villages currently compared favourably to some other similar-sized villages in the Arun district.

Responding to a question from Mrs Denton, Sgt West said there was an excellent Youth Officer within the team, who took part in lessons in schools, and interventions around poor behaviour in schools.

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

#### **652/24 MINUTES OF THE MONTHLY MEETING HELD ON 1<sup>ST</sup> JULY**

The draft Minutes were circulated to all councillors on 2<sup>nd</sup> July asking for suggested amendments by the 9<sup>th</sup> July. None were received. Cllr Moore had commented, "I have carefully read the draft Minutes and found them a true reflection of the meeting."

**1883** The Council **RESOLVED** unanimously the Chairman could sign the Minutes as a true record of the meeting held on 1<sup>st</sup> July. Cllr Toney duly did so.

#### **653/24 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 366/24 – West Sussex County Council**
- 3. Minute 368/24 – Arun District Council - allotments**
- 4. Minute 490/24 – West Sussex Beekeepers' Association**

### **1. Introduction**

This is the report covering items discussed during Full Council meetings up to and including the meeting held on 1<sup>st</sup> July 2024.

### **2. Minute 366/24 – West Sussex County Council**

As councillors will be aware, on the night, Cllr Joy Dennis, WSCC Cabinet Member for Highways & Transport was unable to attend the Roundstone Level Crossing meeting owing to ill health.

### **3. Minute 368/24 – Arun District Council - allotments**

On 25<sup>th</sup> June, following an Environmental Initiatives Working Party meeting, I submitted a request to Johanne Batty for ADC to consider a community allotment at the Roundstone site. Apart from an immediate acknowledgement, I have heard nothing further on this matter. As you will see from Cllr Gunston's report at Agenda Item 11c below, there has been a further, higher-level conversation about allotments.

#### 4. **Minute 490/24 – West Sussex Beekeepers' Association**

Members of the public present for Mr Vincent's talk were complimentary and we received a request from Angmering Horticultural Club for Mr Vincent's contact details so he could give them a similar talk.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

28<sup>th</sup> August 2024

The Clerk said he had nothing to add but was willing to answer any questions. None were asked.

#### 654/24 **FINANCIAL MATTERS**

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

- 1884** The council **RESOLVED** unanimously to approve the Outstanding Purchase Orders report for 2024/25, value £0.00.
- 1885** The council **RESOLVED** unanimously to approve the Regular Monthly Payments reports for July and August 2024 totalling £1,985.90 (inc. VAT).
- 1886** The council **RESOLVED** unanimously to approve the Supplier BACS Invoices Paid reports for July and August 2024 totalling £48,513.07 (inc. VAT).
- 1887** The council **RESOLVED** unanimously to approve the List of Sales Receipts & Bank Receipts by Bank report for financial year to date totalling £188,963.16 (inc. VAT).

The council NOTED the Bank Reconciliations to 12<sup>th</sup> July and 14<sup>th</sup> August 2024.

The council NOTED the Budget Summary for 2024/25 to date.

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

(Mrs L arrived at the conclusion of this item.)

#### 655/24 **PUBLIC SESSION**

**Agenda Item 9c – Community Engagement Committee** – Mrs L spoke passionately about the future of the No. 700 bus service, and how any loss of the service would set the village back 50 years or more. Mrs L said the parish council should be holding a public meeting so members of the public can hear from Stagecoach direct or, at the very least, petitioning Stagecoach. Even an hourly service would be better than nothing. Mrs L understood how much harder councillors work nowadays than when she was a councillor, but this matter cannot be allowed to slip by. Mrs L said the council needed to let residents know about this situation.

The Clerk replied the council was in regular contact with the Stagecoach South Business Development Manager and he had asked for a meeting to which some councillors would be invited so they too could express the concerns raised by Mrs L. He also advised the council had included a statement from the Business Development Manager in the Summer 2024 Newsletter which, the council estimated, was delivered to about 95% of the village (the other 5% being blocks of flats to which the council did not have access).

Cllr Linton added the council was very interested in supporting public transport options for local residents, citing the funding of the extended No. 12 service as evidence of that. Cllr Linton confirmed the council was liaising regularly with Stagecoach South. The current situation had arisen from the increase in the number of trains running through local level crossings since the Southern Rail timetable changes at the beginning of June resulting in greater downtime of level crossing gates. Following the public meeting the council held on 10<sup>th</sup> July about the Roundstone Level Crossing, some improvements were starting to be visible in level crossing downtimes, and hopefully continued improvements would remove the risk of the No. 700 being withdrawn from the village.

## **656/24 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: Amenities, Community Engagement, Major Events and Planning & Licensing. By the time of this meeting, the draft Minutes from all of these meeting should have been circulated to all councillors.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

27<sup>th</sup> August 2024

### **Amenities Committee**

Cllr Wilkinson is chairman of this committee.

The committee met on 12<sup>th</sup> August.

**Public Seating** – A new composite memorial bench has been installed on the western boundary of the Village Green. The Norman and Ann Brown memorial bench has replaced one of the council's old wooden benches.

Two new composite benches have been installed at the Northern shops. The two benches are identical to the two 'Happy to Chat' benches already located at the shops. The council's logo and name are on the side of the benches.

**Children's Playground** – The annual ROSPA inspection took place in June 2024. This year's inspection report was received in August and the report indicates that very little remedial work is required.

**Outdoor gym equipment** – the current outdoor gym equipment is coming to the end of its life. Committee is looking at a rig type replacement with individual stations as has recently been installed at Mewsbrook Park. Cllr McElroy and I met with a supplier today to see what is possible.

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

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

27<sup>th</sup> August 2024

### **Audit & Governance Committee**

The committee met on 15<sup>th</sup> July.

Cllr Mathias was co-opted to fill the one vacancy on the committee and was then re-elected Chairman. Cllr McElroy was re-elected Vice Chairman.

The committee carried out the annual review of its Terms of Reference and agreed no changes were required. The committee also carried out the annual review of the council's Terms of Reference and agreed no changes were required.

Cllrs Mathias and McElroy volunteered to meet with the Internal Auditor, Andy Beams, Mulberry Local Authority Services, when he next visits.

The committee's next meeting is scheduled for 18<sup>th</sup> November.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

15<sup>th</sup> August 2024

## **Community Engagement Committee**

Cllr Linton is chairman of this committee.

The committee met on 22<sup>nd</sup> July.

Some of what was discussed follows:

**Roundstone Level Crossing meeting, 10<sup>th</sup> July** – the committee felt the meeting had been successful and was aware interested parties were working on various matters in the background, all designed to improve life in the village. Representatives of the council will attend a follow-up, online meeting with stakeholders in early October.

**Playschemes** – the committee agreed to suggest Tuesday, 29<sup>th</sup> October to Sussex Forest Activities for a half-day playscheme.

**St Mary the Virgin Christmas Tree Festival 2024** – the committee agreed the council should again sponsor a tree. Cllrs Chapman and Duff will again lead on the tree decorations and will be happy to hear any suggestions you have.

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

**Warm Welcome Space** – understanding some locations start their winter Warm Welcome Spaces in October, the committee agreed that would not be the case in East Preston this year.

The committee's next meeting is scheduled for 23<sup>rd</sup> September.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

15<sup>th</sup> August 2024

## **Finance & General Purposes Committee**

Cllr McElroy is the chairman of this committee.

The committee met on 19<sup>th</sup> August. Representatives of the following three organisations attended: East Preston Festival Committee, 1<sup>st</sup> East Preston Scout Group, Sea Road Beach Access Limited.

The Festival Committee simply wanted to update the council on its ambitions to become a Community Interest Company (CIC) which will give committee members better protection. The 1<sup>st</sup> East Preston Scout Group were successful in applying for a donation from the council's Greener Buildings Fund to help with installing solar panels on the Scout Hall. A decision upon a grant request for help with materials for the Sea Road Beach Access project was deferred pending further research by the council.

The committee considered and agreed a request for "a contribution of £100 towards the core funding costs of Arun and Chichester Citizens Advice." The grant will "enable us to develop our digital platforms".

The committee deferred a request from ADC for assistance in funding an upgraded skatepark at Lashmar Rec.. The committee has asked ADC to provide greater detail on the proposals.

The committee noted a new Fire Risk Assessment had been carried out by the Village Hall Foundation committee. Cllrs Toney and Wilkinson agreed to be available for any discussions resulting from the exercise.

The committee agreed all three PIR sensors in the Council Office should be replaced. This is scheduled for the morning of 3<sup>rd</sup> September.

The committee's next meeting will be on 18<sup>th</sup> November.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

23<sup>rd</sup> August 2024

## **Major Events Committee**

The committee met on 19<sup>th</sup> August.

Cllr Linton was re-elected Chairman of the committee with Cllr Toney re-elected Vice-Chairman.

Some of what was discussed follows:

Preparations for the East Preston Food & Drink Festival, 24<sup>th</sup> August, and East Preston Christmas Celebrations, 23<sup>rd</sup> November, were both well on-track.

As councillors will be aware, a very reluctant decision was taken on the morning of the Food & Drink Festival to cancel it because the weather simply was not on our side, nor likely to improve in time. Thanks to Cllrs Chapman and Bowman and Dawn for ringing around all the stallholders, some of whom were, perhaps understandably, less than gracious in learning of our decision. That said, one of the ungracious still came to the Village Green to see the situation for himself and he then contacted Alison to apologise for his earlier attitude and to say he agreed the right decision had been made. For probably only the second time, I sent out a second e-newsletter within a calendar week, advising recipients of the cancellation of the event. This elicited a nice number of emails all of which supported the council's decision, many recognising how much work the council had put into the event. Not all the Facebook comments were as understanding, but it's easy to be a keyboard warrior and talk absolute nonsense. Thanks also to Cllr Linton for arranging for an email to be sent to all members of the tennis club. The committee is having a debrief / feedback meeting on Friday, 30<sup>th</sup>.

The committee agreed a proposed date for the next Funday Sunday, 27<sup>th</sup> April, and I have submitted a booking request to the Village Hall for that date. If the 27<sup>th</sup> is unavailable, the next best date would be 13<sup>th</sup> April.

The committee's next meeting is scheduled for 21<sup>st</sup> October.

## **Personnel Committee**

The committee met on 15<sup>th</sup> July.

I was re-elected chairman of the committee and Cllr Gale newly elected vice-chairman.

Personnel met this month and discussed mental health training for council. We are currently looking at an online option called “conversations in the community” provided by Mind. <https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/helping-someone-else/conversations-in-the-community/>

Committee also agreed to taking out HR support for the next 5 years to support us all with legislation changes and best practice.

We discussed movement of councillors around committees and groups and that we would encourage all councillors to visit a meeting they may not have attended to increase our knowledge and experience in different areas. Please consider this in the next few months.

The committee agreed councillors attending event should only wear hi-vis whilst they are actually and officially on duty. To do anything else could confuse members of the public.

The committee’s next meeting is scheduled for 14<sup>th</sup> October.

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

17<sup>th</sup> July 2024

## **Planning & Licensing Committee**

The committee met twice during June. At its first meeting of the new council year, Cllr Bowman was elected Chairman and Cllr Bradshaw was elected Vice-Chairman.

At its meeting on 22<sup>nd</sup> July, the committee considered four Applications and agreed not to raise any objections. At its meeting on 12<sup>th</sup> August, the committee considered three Applications and agreed not to raise any objections. At its meeting on 27<sup>th</sup> August, the committee agreed not to object to the three Applications put before them, two being for the same property in Sea Road.

The Neighbourhood Plan review is progressing. The Steering Group has secured a further grant of £2,477 towards the costs of the review.

Although not deemed worthy of the status of an official local council consultee, this council has submitted comments, via Kingston PC, to the ADC consultation on proposals for new beach huts. Although proposed to be located in Kingston, vehicular access would be via East Preston as closer roads are private.

The committee’s next meeting is scheduled for 9<sup>th</sup> September.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

28<sup>th</sup> August 2024

Additionally:



Amenities – Cllr McElroy reported he had met with a supplier of outdoor gym equipment as the existing equipment, which had been commissioned in the Spring of 2015. The committee was looking at providing more of a multigym-type piece of equipment, and an example had recently been installed at Mewsbrook Park. Cllr McElroy felt a multigym would be better used than single pieces of kit and went on to explain some of the add-on available to make the equipment even more attractive to users.

Community Engagement - Cllr Linton reminded the meeting the day after the meeting was Merchant Navy Day and there would be a short event at the War Memorial during which the Red Ensign would be raised and members of the Merchant Navy would be commemorated.

Major Events – Cllr Linton said it was regrettable it had been necessary to cancel this year’s Food & Drink Festival at such short notice but said this had led the committee to consider ways in which this could be improved for future years. This would be considered further at the committee’s next meeting. Stallholders were being given a blanket 25% refund of their pitch fees as a goodwill gesture.

Personnel – Cllr Duff asked any councillor or officer interested in undertaking the MIND Mental Health training should advise her. Cllr Duff said the committee had also discussed greater movement of councillors between committees and she urged councillors to attend a meeting of any committee they had not previously attended, just to experience that committee’s workload first-hand.

There were no updates from the council’s other three committees.

#### **657/24 PERSONNEL COMMITTEE – HUMAN RESOURCES SUPPORT**

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

### **Personnel Committee – HR support**

**Council is asked to agree to a five-year contract with Council HR and Governance Support for the provision of HR support to the council.**

At its meeting on 15<sup>th</sup> July, the committee reconsidered purchasing this support for the council. Following the change of government at the beginning of July, a lot of HR changes are predicted for the first year. The committee agreed to recommend to Full Council purchase of the five-year package, which is the most cost-effective. The cost to the council will be £1,400 per year.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

16<sup>th</sup> July 2024

Cllr Duff spoke in support of this proposal.

**1888** The council **RESOLVED** unanimously to enter into a five-year contract with Council HR and Governance Support for the provision of HR support to the council.

#### **658/24 REPORTS FROM PARISH COUNCIL WORKING PARTIES**

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

### **Working Parties**

The Conservative Hall and Environmental Initiatives Working Parties met in July and August respectively.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

27<sup>th</sup> August 2024

## **20mph Working Party**

Cllr Wilkinson is the chairman of this committee.

The appeal the council had submitted to Michele Hulme, WSCC Highways Head of Local Highways Operations, has been rejected. A meeting of the working party on the evening of 27<sup>th</sup> August, agreed to pursue the same original Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) request but as a Community Highways Scheme (CHS) as financially the proposal is above the threshold for a TRO. This pursuit will depend upon the results of speed surveys, see Agenda Item 12a below.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

28<sup>th</sup> August 2024

## **Conservative Hall Working Party (CHWP)**

Cllr Wilkinson is chairman of this working party.

On 17<sup>th</sup> July, I found an email, sent to my old email address on 11<sup>th</sup> July. A letter from the Trustees was attached, advising the council of a branch committee meeting which had taken place on 9<sup>th</sup> July, “At that meeting the Committee resolved to withdraw the offer to transfer the freehold of the Hall to the Parish Council and instructed the Trustees to act accordingly, hence this letter.”

On 26<sup>th</sup> July, a For Sale board was erected at the Conservative Hall.

The Working Party met on 29<sup>th</sup> July, and agreed Cllrs Wilkinson and Linton should offer to meet with the Trustees. To date, the Trustees have not agreed to meet with any council representatives.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

23<sup>rd</sup> August 2024

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

The working party met on 12<sup>th</sup> August.

We discussed a number of new projects. Following a meeting with Arun District Council (see below) we will be contacting Worthing Allotment Management who manage allotments in Worthing to find out how we may be able to set up an association to manage East Preston allotments.

Other actions included speaking to the Tennis Club about rain gardens, finding out where hedgehogs are in the village, production of green wheelie bin storage systems and producing plans for a pilot verge project.

The REACH solar panel and battery project now has a project manager and Rustington will be holding a public meeting to launch the project on Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> October at the Samuel Wickins Centre at 7pm.

Next meeting Monday 30<sup>th</sup> September 7pm.

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The third session of the East Preston Repair Café took place on 13<sup>th</sup> July, and was as popular as the two previous sessions have been. The commemorative plate which had first been brought along to the June session, was brought back and carefully repaired by Mark. This plate was part of a collection for a local resident suffering with dementia but able to take much joy from the full collection. Just a few of the other items through the door were a toaster, a violin and an electric golf trolley.



A real team effort, including our own Lisa, helped to weave a basket back to full health.

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On 13<sup>th</sup> August, together with Simon Cross and Alex Tatham from Community Infrastructure I met Richard Tomkinson the Group Head of Housing for Arun District Council. We ran through the details of the REACH project and Richard asked us to send him a proposal to present to the relevant committee with a view to including Arun’s housing stock in the project. We have now sent details to Richard and should hear back from him in November.

Richard confirmed that he will be visiting the site in East Preston to assess if it can be used for development as the land is not yet designated as allotments. As Arun DC does not have the manpower to manage allotments Richard would welcome a proposal to manage the plots from a “friends of” group. We will consider this proposal at the next meeting of the Environmental Working Party.

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

23<sup>rd</sup> August 2024

## **Agenda Item 11d**

### **Leases Working Party**

No update on the negotiations with East Preston & Kingston Bowls Club. The club has submitted a counter-proposal, but the working party has not yet been able to meet to consider a response.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

22<sup>nd</sup> August 2024

Additionally:

Environmental Initiatives Working Party – Cllr Gunston advised the working party was in touch with Worthing Allotment Management, with a view to coming up with a proposal for the future management of the East Preston allotments site agreeable to Arun District Council.

Following an article in the e-newsletter published on 29<sup>th</sup> August, Cllr Gunston had received four emails giving details of hedgehog haunts in the village.

The September session of the East Preston Repair Café was scheduled for Saturday, 14<sup>th</sup> September. Cllrs Gunston and Hill had asked volunteers whether they would be willing to run a long session, perhaps 10:00 to 13:00.

The working party's next meeting was scheduled for 30<sup>th</sup> September.

Leases Working Party – Cllr Wilkinson reminded the meeting the Clerk had called a meeting of the Leases Working Party for Monday, 16<sup>th</sup> September to discuss the latest correspondence received from East Preston & Kingston Bowls Club.

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

## 659/24 20MPH WORKING PARTY – TRAFFIC SPEED SURVEYS

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

### Working Parties

**Council is asked to agree to fund traffic speed surveys in Sea Road and The Street, at a cost of approximately £700, this to be funded from the council's contingency budget line for this financial year.**

Cllr Wilkinson to lead on this item.

In support of the council's request for a 20mph speed limit on The Street, Sea Road and Fairlands, the working party would like up-to-date traffic speed data for The Street and Sea Road. WSCC Highways no longer provides such information for local councils, but will allow external companies to undertake such work. In the past, this council has used Obtrada for this work, and it is to it we would turn again. We last used Obtrada in January 2023, at which time each survey cost £250 (excl. VAT), with a £75 fee payable to WSCC.

Likely impact upon reducing crime and disorder – difficult to say.

Likely impact upon the environment – ultimately the data received may lead to the successful implementation of a 20mph speed limit on three roads in the village, which will be good for the environment.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

28<sup>th</sup> August 2024

Cllr Wilkinson spoke in support of this proposal.

The Clerk said the up-to-date information was needed not to confirm the situation was any better or worse than last time the council carried out such surveys but to ensure WSCC Highways did not reject the council's next request because the data was too old. Cllr McElroy questioned the effectiveness of a 20mph speed limit if there was insufficient or no enforcement. The Clerk said the Community Speed Watch view was the majority of East Preston residents would adhere to the 20mph limit which would reduce traffic speed overall. Cllr Gunston reminded the meeting the current coordinator of the village's Speed Watch team had presented to the council previously and had provided evidence showing traffic kept to 20mph was intrinsically safer than that kept to 30mph. Cllr Gale said she regularly saw vehicles travelling up and particularly down Sea Road at far too high a speed.

**1889** The council **RESOLVED** to fund traffic speed surveys in Sea Road and The Street, at a cost of approximately £700, to be funded from the council's contingency budget line for this financial year.

Two councillors abstained.

#### **660/24 WEST SUSSEX COUNTY COUNCIL**

County Cllr Elkins had sent apologies for this meeting and had provided the following written report:

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The Clerk added he had received correspondence from a resident which he intended to pass on to Cllr Elkins. On 23<sup>rd</sup> August, the resident had emailed, "I see we are now reaping the benefit of the shortsightedness of the road planners in that the roundabout at the bottom of the Angmering By-Pass is now the biggest bottleneck around here. The queue coming south today, late afternoon, was probably 300 yards long, with queues in both directions on the A259, and of course the gates were down when we got into Old Worthing Road!. This situation will only get worse as the additional new houses are built and occupied with the main access to the A259 coming out at the roundabout. When I responded to the Consultancy document I suggested that what was proposed would not solve the problem and that at each junction, the A259 should fly over the roundabouts with local traffic filtering off and on from slip roads. This is the way roads like this are dealt with all over the UK, apart from West Sussex!"

#### **661/24 ARUN DISTRICT COUNCIL**

All three district councillors had sent their apologies for the meeting.

Cllr Linton advised she had intended asking the district councillors for guidance on nude bathing on local beaches as she had been approached about this by a local resident who had witnessed a man sunbathing nude on East Preston beach. The Clerk had twice emailed ADC but had received no reply and there was no guidance on the ADC website. A couple of councillors felt this might be classed as indecent exposure.

#### **662/24 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. Society of Local Council Clerks' monthly networking meeting, 16<sup>th</sup> July**
- 6. East Preston Men in Sheds, opening reception, 2<sup>nd</sup> August**
- 7. East Preston & Kingston Horticultural Society Summer Show, 3<sup>rd</sup> August**
- 8. Community Speed Watch team meeting, 15<sup>th</sup> August**
- 9. Waves Music Therapy charity fun day, 17<sup>th</sup> August**
- 10. East Preston & Kingston Village Hall Foundation Annual General Meeting, 17<sup>th</sup> August**
- 11. Community Speed Watch, 21<sup>st</sup> August**
- 12. Social media**
- 13. MailChimp stats**
- 14. A selection of things we have been asked since the last meeting**
- 15. Recent bouquets and complaints**

**16. Leave**

**17. September meetings and events**

**1. Introduction**

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

**2. Police matters**

Concerns about youths smoking cannabis in the south-eastern corner of the Warren Recreation Ground have been passed to Sussex Police.

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

The homeless man continues to live on Langmeads Field, now causing concern to at least two local residents. I have emailed the ADC Homeless Outreach team twice, but received no acknowledgement. I understand the team is rarely office-based, feel I could have received an acknowledgement by now, my first email having been sent on 17<sup>th</sup> July.

As mentioned in the item above, there are concerns about cannabis-smoking in the Warren Rec, and this has also been submitted as a case to the ADC anti-social behaviour team.

**4. Freedom of Information / Data Protection requests**

No Freedom of Information requests received since the last report.

No Data Protection requests received since the last report.

**5. Society of Local Council Clerks' monthly networking meeting, 16<sup>th</sup> July**

Dawn and I attended this meeting which took place at the offices of Littlehampton Town Council. Councils in Arun and Chichester districts were represented, ranging in size from Littlehampton itself down to Apuldram.

Steve Hill attended from West Sussex County Council Highways. He talked about the pilot scheme in which this council is a participant. The pilot scheme had been underway for about a month by the time of the meeting, and I was not alone in being a bit confused about what its objective is, so we talked about that.

The infrequency and standard of grass-cutting around the county. One village reported not only had the grass-cutting team gone through a designated wild meadow for the second year running, it had also mowed only half of a roundabout. Steve suggested communities feeling there is a need for more grass cuts each year should lobby their county councillors. Interestingly, this had happened on Facebook on the afternoon before the meeting when some residents published a call to arms on the subject of insufficient grass-cutting and how much of a problem this can be for some dogs.

Steve also talked about a pilot in West Sussex called Greenprint. This is one of seven schemes across the country, centrally-funded, working on converting grass cuttings into biofuels and suchlike. If the pilot is successful, the future may see more grass-cuts per season than the five we have currently.

All councils seem to have trouble getting contractors to provide quotes and to commit to works.

WSCC has appointed a new officer to oversee the installation of electric vehicle charging points (EVCs) in the county. He is now looking at provision of on-street points and I have asked councillors to suggest possible locations in the village. Closing date for suggestions is the end of this month.

#### 6. **East Preston Men in Sheds, opening reception, 2<sup>nd</sup> August**

Councillors and officers were invited to attend the official opening reception of the East Preston Men in Sheds shed, as recognition of the support the council has given this initiative from the outset. The following attended: Cllrs Toney, Linton, Bradshaw, Duff, Gale, Gunston, Hill, Mathias and Moore whilst I was joined on the officer side by Dawn and Alison.

The reception was held in the Miller Barn. After an initial speech by the group's Chairman, Neil Ellis, everyone was invited outside to admire the shed. Tony Page then took over in order to thank two people who the group felt had been intrinsic to getting the group to this point. One was me but, more importantly, the other was our own Pat Gander who was given the honour of cutting the ribbon to the shed. Pat also made her own, emotionally-charged speech, Pat being the councillor who initially wanted to pursue the idea of setting up a shed in the village.

Following the speeches, attendees were able to see inside the shed and admire its range of equipment.



Photograph courtesy of Littlehampton Gazette

#### 7. **East Preston & Kingston Horticultural Society Summer Show, 3<sup>rd</sup> August**

This annual event took place on the Warren Recreation Ground in less than ideal weather.

Entries were possible in over 100 classes covering flowers, crafts, fruit and vegetables, baking and confectionery and photography. Although a few classes had only one entrant, most classes were well supported.

Celia Buckley, Chairman of the Horticultural Society, reported, "There were 53 exhibitors and 391 exhibits. We can only estimate the number of visitors in the afternoon because we charge £1 for adults and 50p for children (young children free). We took £317 on the gate and the majority will have been adults."

Additionally, outdoors was a number of stalls including groups such as East Preston & Kingston Preservation Society, Friends of St Mary's, The Baytree Club, Worthing MENCAP, and entertainment was provided by Robbie the Magician and a silver band.



Just a few examples from the Summer Show

**8. Community Speed Watch team meeting, 15<sup>th</sup> August**

I attended the regular Community Speed Watch team meeting, at which the shifts for the coming few months are populated and the group discusses various related matters.

The main news was Keith Harris's decision to stop being coordinator after about six years. The meeting agreed Keith had achieved much in that time. Keith himself felt he had given the initiative all he had to give it, and it was time for a new coordinator to move the group forward. Keith will continue to work with the council on whatever variation of the 20mph zone the council next puts forward to WSCC Highways.

**9. Waves Music Therapy charity fun day, 17<sup>th</sup> August**

I popped in to the very start of this event. Councillors will already be aware Waves Music Therapy is based in East Preston and provides music therapy for people of all ages.

This event was run in conjunction with Melanie Martin of the SALT Kiosk and is believed to have not only raised the profile of the charity, but also raised money for both Waves Music Therapy and for the Reach the Beach initiative.

**10. East Preston & Kingston Village Hall Foundation Annual General Meeting, 17<sup>th</sup> August**



From the Waves event, I went straight to the Village Hall for the Foundation's Annual General Meeting. Cllrs Bowman and McElroy also attended, and Cllr Toney had given his apologies.

Four of the existing Trustees were re-elected: Toni McElroy, Nicola Adams, Liz Taggart and John Penny. The fifth, Roy Allen, stood down for personal reasons as advised at last year's Annual General Meeting. On behalf of the council, I thanked the whole committee for the good work they had completed over the year in running the hall, and then I thanked Roy too for the good work he has done as Premises Manager for just over five years. Members of the public, hirers, also thanked Roy for his excellent service to the Village Hall.

Roy's resignation means the committee is now down to just four members. I have suggested to the Chairman, Toni, we run a Use It or Lose It type article in the Autumn 2024 Newsletter. Although people are using it, too few are helping to run it. Roy gave a list of tasks which individuals could take on such as weekly fire alarm testing and monthly emergency lighting testing. If responsible people could be found to take on these tasks, it would help greatly.

A few comments were made about the future of the Conservative Hall, but I did not get the impression people at the meeting were that fussed.

#### 11. **Community Speed Watch, 21<sup>st</sup> August**

I carried out a Community Speed Watch shift in Sea Road with Keith Harris and Danny Reginiano. At this location, the team can monitor traffic in both directions. We were there from 09:00 for an hour and recorded 222 vehicle movements. Almost all drivers were driving within the speed limit, but one was reported to Sussex Police for travelling at 36mph.

Only one resident really had any advice for the team, and she believed our time would be better spent tackling petty vandalism to which she has been subjected, the latest incident apparently being gravy and onions poured over her windscreen. She did not say whereabouts in the village this had taken place.

#### 12. **Social media**

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

- Post announcing the cancellation of the Food & Drink Festival – 10,281 people
- Lost key – 1,227
- Announcing the operational readiness of the East Preston Men in Sheds shed – 1,140
- Post advising residents of ADC's public consultation on Lashmar Rec skatepark - 884

(posts up to and including 26<sup>th</sup> August)

The number of Followers is currently 1,877, an increase of nine on the last report.

#### 13. **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 – 26<sup>th</sup> June – sent to 933 subscribers, opened by 671 (72.2%)
- Parish Council news – 5<sup>th</sup> July – sent to 934 subscribers, opened by 658 (70.8%)
- Parish Council news – 11<sup>th</sup> July – sent to 936 subscribers, opened by 667 (71.5%)
- Parish Council news – 31<sup>st</sup> July – sent to 936 subscribers, opened by 666 (71.5%)
- Parish Council news – 7<sup>th</sup> August – sent to 937 subscribers, opened by 680 (73%)
- Parish Council news – 15<sup>th</sup> August – sent to 937 subscribers, opened by 653 (70.6%)
- Parish Council news – 22<sup>nd</sup> August – sent to 936 subscribers, opened by 650 (69.7%)
- Parish Council news – 24<sup>th</sup> August, cancellation of the Food & Drink Festival  
- sent to 933 subscribers, opened by 653 (70.1%)

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

“How can I get rid of an old boiler?” (Through Biffa, ADC has a large items collection service, (01903) 734520.)

“Is there anything that can be done about the smell of cannabis coming from a neighbour? It's vile, make me and my children feel sick and we have to close all our windows and doors in this heat so we don't smell it?” (I suggested the resident start a diary and contact the anti-social behaviour team at ADC.)

“Is it possible to know what is happening at Pizza Perfect? Is it reopening as Pizza Perfect?” (No, the council would be unlikely to hear anything much upfront in this situation.)

“Please could you do me a favour? Please could you fix my phone, it's no longer ringing?” (Pressed a few buttons, sorted.)

“Please could I have a tree outside my property in Mendip Close, to replace a WSCC replacement tree which died?” (I contacted the WSCC Highways tree guy and he said this site was already on his list, with a tree due to be planted sometime between November and February.)

“Please could we have fox-proof bins on the Village Green?” (ADC is considering this.)

#### 15. **Recent bouquets and complaints**

(In addition to anything reported above)

From a resident of Willowhayne Crescent, following some council treeworks on the Village Green, “A rather belated thank you for trimming the trees to the rear of the Village Green. It has certainly improved the light and maybe BT won't keep whinging that they can't repair my phone line using Health & Safety as an excuse!!”

In response to the e-newsletter sent at 06:00 on 5<sup>th</sup> July, the morning after the General Election, a resident of Tamarisk Apartments emailed, “Thanks Simon for getting up at the crack of dawn to send this.”

From the resident with the cannabis neighbour, “Thanks so much Simon, this is so helpful. I don't know why I didn't think to contact you before!”

In response to the e-newsletter of 31<sup>st</sup> July, a resident of Upper Drive wrote, “Many thanks for all your work on our behalf and please continue, it's well appreciated by the majority of residents ✓”

In response to the news the council was donating a small amount of Lego to the library's new Construction Club initiative, Sarah Brand, Library Manager, wrote, "That's lovely news that the council has a donation to make to Construction Club – we'll certainly be pleased to receive it. Thanks again for being so supportive of this new activity – the Parish Council is a great Library advocate and we genuinely really appreciate you!"

From a resident of Angmering Lane, "I just wanted to thank you for all your effort getting a meeting organised regarding the railway crossing. I wasn't able to attend the meeting as I was out of the country. However, I hear it was very interesting and I do feel that I'm not getting stuck at the crossings as much and for as long, so I'm truly grateful. Thank you also for everything that you do for our lovely village."

From a resident of Sea Road, after helping her with a Community Concern Reporting Form to ADC's anti-social behaviour team, "Thank you for pointing me in the right direction Simon. Although it is low priority I am pleased it has been logged with anti social behaviour team."

Thanks received from the resident of Mendip Close looking for a replacement tree.

## 16. **Leave**

Adrian is on leave for the week beginning 2<sup>nd</sup> September. Dawn is on leave from 17<sup>th</sup> to 25<sup>th</sup> September inclusive. I am on leave on 26<sup>th</sup> September.

## 17. **September Meetings and Events**

This list may be incomplete and is subject to change.

- 2<sup>nd</sup> Finance & General Purposes Committee (18:00, East Preston Infant School)  
Full Council (18:30, East Preston Infant School)
- 9<sup>th</sup> Disability Action Group (12:00, British Legion) (DR only)  
Planning & Licensing Committee (18:00, East Preston Infant School)  
Warren Recreation Ground AGM (19:00, East Preston Infant School)
- 14<sup>th</sup> East Preston Repair Café (10:00, Vicarage Lane)
- 19<sup>th</sup> Society of Local Council Clerks local monthly meeting (11:00, Bersted) (SC only)
- 20<sup>th</sup> Chairmans' Networking Meeting (19:00, Bersted) (ST only)
- 23<sup>rd</sup> Planning & Licensing Committee (18:00, East Preston Infant School)  
Community Engagement Committee (19:00, East Preston Infant School)
- 25<sup>th</sup> ADC Monitoring Officer Clerks' Meeting (10:00, Bognor Regis) (SC only)  
Greenleas Coffee Morning (10:30, Rustington) (KB only (so far))
- 29<sup>th</sup> East Preston Beach Clean (11:00, Sea Road)

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**

27<sup>th</sup> August 2024

Cllr Linton thanked the Clerk for his comprehensive report.

**Item 12 – Social Media** – Cllr Linton said she was very impressed the post reporting the cancellation of the Food & Drink Festival had reached over 9,000 people; Cllr Linton hoped they had not all intended to attend. The Clerk reported the lost key had not been found as far as he was aware.

## 663/24 **EXTERNAL MEETINGS AND EVENTS**

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

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

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

### **Welcome Café, 1<sup>st</sup> July**

#### **St Mary the Virgin Church, Station Road**

I had a very enjoyable and informative time at the monthly Welcome Café coffee morning. I was able to promote the Food & Drink Festival and the Repair Café. Lots of concerns about WSCC Highways matters, such as the potholes in Station Road. I found attending the event very worthwhile.

Cllr Andrea Chapman

10<sup>th</sup> July 2024

### **ADC Housing Strategies Consultation, 17<sup>th</sup> July**

#### **Civic Centre, Littlehampton**

I attended the Housing Strategies Consultation at Arun Civic Centre at 5pm on Tuesday 16th July.

As far as I could tell I was one of only 2 Parish Councillors from the Arun District who attended - the other being from Aldingbourne.

The rest of the congregation was made up of Arun District councillors, Arun employees and some third-party employees too.

There was an IT issue so we were handed paper copies of the slide-show and talked through the plans of the district housing initiative.

As far as I could tell there are 5 main objectives of the Housing Strategy I was able to glean from the presentation and conversations which took place:

1. Delivering the right homes in the right places
2. Improving the quality of housing
3. Environmental impact
4. Providing housing for the elderly
5. Preventing rough sleeping

A few interesting things I learnt whilst there were the following:

1. There is currently an up to 18 month wait for a studio flat in Arun and a wait of “many many years” for a house. But this is apparently very good in comparison with other councils.
2. 26p of every pound spent by ADC spent on housing goes towards combatting homelessness
3. Surprisingly, there is actually no requirement written in law for any council in England to actually have a Housing Strategy in place
4. The housing needed mostly is a mixture of 1 bed apartments and more luxurious large houses

There was also a long debate about homelessness and housing benefits between the Arun District Councillors which seemed to be misplaced from one of their own meetings, but other than that it was an edifying visit. Ultimately, I learnt some information that may be useful in the future at Planning and Licencing meetings.

Cllr Kit Bradshaw

18<sup>th</sup> July 2024

Cllr Toney thanked Cllr Bradshaw for his comprehensive report and for enabling the council to be one of only two local councils represented at the meeting.

#### **664/24 RESPONSE TO EXTERNAL MEETINGS AND EVENTS**

Cllr Hill said she had unofficially dropped into the Welcome Café earlier on the day of the meeting. The event had been very busy but there had been nothing to report.

#### **665/24 NEW ITEMS FOR THE NEXT MEETING (7<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER)**

Nothing new was suggested.

(Mrs D, Mrs L and Mrs M left the meeting at the conclusion of this item.)

#### **666/24 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**

As reported above, the council has invited the Trustees to meet with Cllrs Wilkinson and Linton, but no agreement to meet has yet been reached.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

27<sup>th</sup> August 2024

The Clerk reported he had spoken to the estate agent who had advised him an offer had been accepted and was being progressed. However, if the offer fell through, “the owner” (presumably the Trustees) might be willing to talk to the council again.

Cllr Bowman triggered a lively debate by asking when the council might make a public statement about the situation as she suspected most councillors would be fielding questions from members of the public and a single response would be useful. Councillors then discussed the level of detail such a statement should provide and what the aim of the statement should be.

**1890** The council **RESOLVED** unanimously Cllr Wilkinson, as Chairman of the Conservative Hall Working Party, should work with the Clerk on a statement which can be issued in the next e-newsletter.

There was some discussion as to what else the council could be doing in this matter at the moment, as most councillors were still keen for the hall to come into public ownership, for the benefit of the village. No additional actions were identified at this time.

After a short general discussion on this topic, the meeting concluded at 20.00.

Chairman: *Cllr Steve Toney* Date: **7<sup>th</sup> October 2024**

END