



EAST PRESTON PARISH COUNCIL

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

01903 770050

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

Email: clerk@eastpreston-pc.gov.uk

MINUTES: of the Proceedings of the Monthly Meeting of East Preston Parish Council held at 19:00 on Monday, 6th January 2025 at East Preston Infant School, Lashmar Road, East Preston

PRESENT: Councillors Christine Bowman, Kit Bradshaw, Lisa Duff, Barbara Gale, John Gunston, Elizabeth Linton, Rick McElroy, David Moore, Steve Toney (Chairman) and Steven Wilkinson

ALSO: Simon Cross, Clerk to the Council

Cllr Roger Elkins, West Sussex County Council (until 19:28)

Cllrs Philippa Bower, Ricky Bower and Paul Kelly, Arun District Council (until 19:29)

Mr G and Mrs M

ABSENT: Councillors Andrea Chapman, Helen Hill and Glyn Mathias

* * * * *

The following abbreviations may appear in these Minutes:

ADC – Arun District Council;
AoSERA – Angmering-on-Sea Estate Residents' Association
NHS – National Health Service;
NR – Network Rail;
PCSO – Police Community Support Officer;
SLCC – Society of Local Council Clerks;

TRO – Traffic Regulation Order;
VHF – East Preston & Kingston Village Hall Foundation;
WRA – Willowhayne Residents' Association
WSCC – West Sussex County Council;
WSALC – West Sussex Association of Local Councils

* * * * *

The meeting opened at 19.00.

001/25 INTRODUCTIONS

Cllr Toney welcomed everyone to the meeting, explained the meeting protocol and safety information and led a round of introductions. Cllr Toney wished everyone a happy new year.

002/25 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology and a reason for absence had been received from Cllrs Chapman, Hill and Mathias.

1922 The Council **RESOLVED** unanimously to accept the apologies received from Cllrs Chapman, Hill and Mathias (all unwell).

Apologies had also been received from Mrs Linda Denton and Mrs Dorothy Lee.

003/25 DECLARATION OF PERSONAL AND/OR PREJUDICIAL/PECUNIARY INTERESTS

None were declared.

004/25 PUBLIC SESSION

No Agenda Item – Mrs M wished everyone a happy new year and said she was looking forward to seeing what new, exciting and innovative things the council came up with during the year.

005/25 COUNCIL RESPONSES

Councillors thanked Mrs M for her wishes.

006/25 WEST SUSSEX COUNTY COUNCIL

County Cllr Elkins started by also wishing all present a happy new year.

He continued by talking on the “key issue of devolution” and explained the background to the government’s very recent *English Devolution White Paper: Power and partnership: Foundations for growth*. Cllr Elkins explained the government was proposing to develop more unitary authorities with elected mayors. If government agrees with proposed combined authorities, district councils in those areas would cease to exist from 2028.

WSSC had been talking with East Sussex County Council and Brighton & Hove City Council (already a unitary authority) about combining to become an early example of a combined authority, and would be deciding upon that approach later in the month.

If the government agreed the proposal, the county council elections scheduled for later this year would be postponed, but could only be postponed by up to a year. A mayoral vote would be held in 2026, after which a Shadow Council would be created to run until the dissolution of the district councils in 2028.

Cllr Elkins said the role of town and parish councils would largely remain unchanged although they may be granted more powers to work locally than currently.

There followed some lively debate on the pros and cons of the proposed devolution.

Cllr Elkins ended by advising a WSSC Reuse Shop was now open at the Worthing Recycling Centre. On behalf of WSSC, Biffa operated the shop which aimed to provide residents with an opportunity to purchase preloved goods and also accept items for donation. Anything donated needed to be in good working order. The shop would not open on Wednesdays or Thursdays.

(County Cllr Elkins left the meeting at the conclusion of this item.)

007/25 ARUN DISTRICT COUNCIL

District Cllr Kelly wished everyone present a happy new year, a sentiment echoed by District Cllr Philippa Bower.

District Cllr Ricky Bower said the district council had not undertaken much business over the Christmas period but he was happy to answer any questions. None were forthcoming.

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

008/25 MINUTES OF THE MONTHLY MEETING HELD ON 2ND DECEMBER 2024

The draft Minutes were circulated to all councillors on 3rd December asking for suggested amendments by the 10th December. None were received.

1923 The Council **RESOLVED** unanimously the Chairman could sign the Minutes as a true record of the meeting held on 2nd December. Cllr Toney duly did so.

009/25 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 915/24 – Public Session**
- 3. Minute 924/24 – Community Engagement Committee – Roundstone Level Crossing**

1. Introduction

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

2. Minute 915/24 – Public Session

On the morning after the December Full Council meeting, one member of the public called in at the office. She said it was always lovely to see the councillors having a laugh amongst themselves even whilst potentially disagreeing with each other over individual topics. She felt this was a real strength of this council.

3. Minute 924/24 – Community Engagement Committee – Roundstone Level Crossing

Cllr Linton and I agreed the survey should take place on a Monday, Friday and Saturday. I believe this took place over the weekend of 13th to 16th December.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

30th December 2024

The Clerk said he had nothing to add to the above report. No questions were asked.

010/25 FINANCIAL MATTERS

The Accounts for December 2024 had been distributed to Members in advance of the meeting.

1924 The council **RESOLVED** unanimously to approve the Outstanding Purchase Orders report for 2024/25, value £3,078.19.

1925 The council **RESOLVED** unanimously to approve the Regular Monthly Payments reports for December 2024 totalling £1,397.62 (inc. VAT).

1926 The council **RESOLVED** unanimously to approve the Supplier BACS Invoices Paid reports for December 2024 totalling £37,094.76 (inc. VAT).

1927 The council **RESOLVED** unanimously to approve the List of Sales Receipts & Bank Receipts by Bank report for financial year to date totalling £356,666.51 (inc. VAT).

The council NOTED the Bank Reconciliations to 13th December 2024.

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

Cllr Linton questioned an unknown payee of £50 on page 2 of the Cashbook 1 report, a payment banked on 24th April. The Clerk was unsure to what this payment related although it was possibly a pitch fee or, more likely, cash payment for a number of Funday Sunday tickets. He would seek clarification from Adrian Vyse, the council's Book-keeper.

Cllr Toney thanked Adrian for preparing the above reports.

011/25 REPORTS FROM PARISH COUNCIL COMMITTEES

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

Committees

Since the last Full Council meeting the following committees have met: Finance & General Purposes, 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**

19th December 2024

Amenities Committee

Cllr Wilkinson is chairman of this committee.

The committee did not meet in December.

Trees – The annual tree condition and management survey was carried out by ArbTec Tree Care in December 2024. The survey report highlighted that the group of Poplars at the south western corner of the village green are overall in poor condition and the advice given is to fell to ground level, grind out and re-plant. ArbTec Tree Care suggested replacing with either Lime trees or a group of Whitebeams or Birch.

Warren Recreation Ground Rose Planters – The old wooden rose planters at the north side of the car-park have been replaced with three new composite planters. The new planters were repositioned further over to the north western side of the car-park and the white rose bushes transplanted over. One of the planters is to be dedicated to Rose Argles, a member of EP in Bloom, who unfortunately passed away suddenly in 2024; we have confirmed with her partner he is happy for this.

Village Green access points – The council's grounds maintenance team carried out work to improve the two entrance points at the north boundary of the Village Green. Rigid matting has been installed and filled with shingle for additional strength. The work has made the access onto the north end of the village green a lot safer under foot.

Disability Action Group East Preston – the committee will be hosting an extraordinary meeting specifically to discuss matters with the Disability Action Group East Preston. This will take place on 27th January at 18:00.

The committee’s next full meeting will be on 10th February 2025.

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

19th December 2024

Audit & Governance Committee

Cllr Mathias is the chairman of this committee.

The committee did not meet in December and there are no updates.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

20th December 2024

Community Engagement Committee

Cllr Linton is chairman of this committee.

The committee did not meet in December.

Only one update:

Warm Welcome Space – the council has been successful in being awarded a £1,000 grant by Arun District Council – this is the full amount available. At the time of writing, approximately 25 residents have registered for the first Warm Welcome Space, which is taking place on 6th January. Thanks to Cllr Chapman for ringing around some of the regular attendees who do not have electronic communications, and thanks to Cllrs Gunston, Linton and Moore for volunteering to do the same (but Cllr Chapman got there first).

The committee’s next meeting is scheduled for 20th January.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

20th December 2024

Finance & General Purposes Committee

Cllr McElroy is the chairman of this committee.

The committee met on 9th December. In Cllr McElroy’s absence, Cllr Gunston chaired the meeting.

The meeting’s main business was to agree a budget for the coming year, and that is covered at Agenda Item 11a below. The committee agreed to freeze the Band D precept once again.

The committee agreed to recommend to Full Council it donates £10,000 towards improved skate facilities at Lashmar Recreation Ground.

The committee also agreed to recommend revised Financial Regulations and a revised Financial Regulations Schedule to Full Council.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

23rd December 2024

Major Events Committee

Cllr Linton is Chairman of the committee.

The committee met on 16th December.

East Preston Christmas Celebrations 2025 – committee agreed to host a Christmas Celebrations event on either 22nd or 29th November 2025, date to be confirmed shortly.

The committee agreed to set off the Christmas Celebrations 2024 fireworks at 17:00 on Tuesday, 31st December and I contacted every household neighbouring the Warren Recreation Ground, the chosen site.

All other Major Events committee events were running to plan.

The committee agreed to ask Cllr McElroy to be the council’s lead on Martyn’s Law which seeks to reduce the threat of terrorism at public events. Cllr McElroy has subsequently agreed to accept this role.

The committee’s next meeting is scheduled for 17th February.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

30th December 2024

Personnel Committee

The committee did not meet in December.

The committee’s next meeting is scheduled for 13th January.

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

20th December 2024

Planning & Licensing Committee

The committee met on 16th December.

The committee raised no objections to the one Planning Application considered.

Cllr Bradshaw raised and led a discussion about what he perceived to be an anomaly within Licences granted within the village. I have an action to seek clarification from ADC on this.

Ahead of the meeting, ADC had returned its comments from an initial informal review of our revised Neighbourhood Plan and Cllr Bowman and I will be working those comments into the next draft of a revised Neighbourhood Plan early in January.

The committee's next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, 7th January.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

20th December 2024

Additionally:

Community Engagement – Cllr Linton reported twenty-one members of the public had attended today's first Warm Welcome Space session of the season. Two of the attendees had not attended at the British Legion before, and one was a completely new attendee. Cllr Linton reminded any councillor scheduled to work a shift at Warm Welcome Space was asked to contact Cllr Chapman should they be unable to attend as Cllr Chapman was permanent first reserve until further notice.

Major Events – Cllr Linton asked councillors to let her know if they had any suggestions for when the council's Christmas Celebrations fireworks could be let off. Cllr Linton herself suggested the start of Spring / the changing of the clocks, Cllr McElroy suggested Valentine's or St George's Day; Cllr Bradshaw suggested the 40th anniversary of the Live Aid concert (13th July) and Cllr Toney suggested the 80th anniversary of VE Day (8th May). Cllr Linton asked for any other suggestions so these could be considered at the committee's next meeting.

Cllr McElroy welcomed the chance to be the council's lead on Martyn's Law. He said there was no disagreement with the need for the extra security the law sought to introduce but many hospitality venues said they were simply not able to afford the increased physical measures deemed necessary and that was why the law had not yet been finalised.

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

012/25 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT COMMITTEE – NEW CHRISTMAS LIGHTING EARMARKED RESERVE

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

Community Engagement Committee – Christmas Lighting

Council is asked to agree a recommendation to set up an earmarked reserved for New Christmas Lighting and to transfer up to £4,000.

Cllr Linton to lead on this item.

The council added £4,000 to the New Christmas Lighting budget line for 2024/25. Although it has attempted to place an order for additional tree lights at the northern shops, the chosen (and recommended) supplier simply has not been able to deliver. On behalf of the Community Engagement Committee, the Major Events Committee agreed to ask Full Council to set up an earmarked reserve for New Christmas Lighting and to put as much of the £4,000 as is not spent this financial year into the reserve.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

23rd December 2024

Cllr Linton spoke in support of this item.

1928 The council **RESOLVED** unanimously to create a new earmarked reserve for the purchase of new Christmas Lighting and to transfer up to £4,000.

The money would be taken from the council's general reserves.

013/25 FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE – BUDGET AND PRECEPT 2025/26

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

Finance & General Purposes Committee – budget and precept for 2025/26

Council is asked to agree to a recommended budget of £331,829.00 for the financial year 2025/26.

At its meeting on 9th December, the committee agreed to recommend a budget of £328,329.00 to Full Council. This sum has subsequently been amended upwards slightly to account for the new National Insurance implications on the council. Each budget-holding committee has considered its financial requirements for the coming year. Proposed figures to make up the £331,829 are below. The budget is lower than the current year's mainly because of no longer supporting the No. 12 bus service, although there is a much smaller provision in the budget in case an alternative bus service can be achieved.

2025/26 Budget

Committee	2024/25 net expenditure	2025/26 net expenditure	Difference
Amenities	£45,625.00	£48,096	£3,471
Audit & Gov.	£1,000	£1,000	£0
Admin (F&GP)	£113,651.00	£129,820	£16,169
Comm. Eng.	£68,300.00 *	£38,150	- £30,150
F&GP	£50,725.00 *	£42,480	- £8,245
Major Events	£10,100.00	£8,150	- £1,950
WRG Trust (Amenities)	£70,683 *	£64,133	- £6,550
Total net budget	£359,084.28	£331,829	- £27,255

Whilst the council has such healthy reserves, the committee agreed it was not necessarily to have a specific Contingency budget line covering the whole council. That figure has previously been set to £10,000 per year.

2024/25 figures marked with an asterisk have been adjusted when the council was set up in the new accounting software.

On 6th December, ADC sent a letter advising the Council Tax base for the coming financial year would increase from 2,803 to 2,918. This increase was explained as “most of the increase is due to our additional 100% premium rate on 2nd Homes. Anyone with a 2nd home will be charged 200% for Council Tax.”

Council is also asked to agree a recommended precept of £98.43 per Band D property, i.e. no increase on the current financial year. With the above decrease in the Council Tax base, the council will be asking ADC to collect £287,218.74 precept on its behalf.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

30th December 2024

Cllr McElroy spoke in favour of the proposed budget for 2025/26 and of freezing the Band D precept for a further year.

1929 The council **RESOLVED** unanimously to set the budget for 2025/26 at £331,829.00.

1930 The council **RESOLVED** unanimously to keep the precept for a Band D property at £98.43 for 2025/26, meaning ADC will raise a precept for the council of £287,218.74 (figure confirmed correct by ADC on 13/01/25).

014/25 FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE – LASHMAR SKATEPARK

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

Finance & General Purposes Committee – ADC Lashmar Park skatepark renovations

Council is asked to agree a recommendation to take £10,000 from reserves towards the costs of an upgraded skatepark at Lashmar Recreation Ground.

Cllr McElroy to lead on this item.

Following a public consultation, ADC is proposing to improve the skatepark at Lashmar Recreation Ground. £10,000 from the parish council will enable a better end result. The Finance & General Purposes Committee has seen two plans, one with £10,000 of parish money, one without.

At the request of the committee, I received confirmation from ADC £10,000 is definitely less than half the budget sum for the project. Knowing that, the committee is happy to make this recommendation to council.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

30th December 2024

Cllr McElroy spoke in support of this recommendation, explaining the benefits to local children and young people.

1931 The council **RESOLVED** unanimously to donate £10,000 to Arun District Council for its refurbishment of the skatepark at Lashmar Recreation Ground.

015/25 FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE – FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

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

Finance & General Purposes Committee – Financial Regulations and Financial Regulations Schedule

Council is asked to adopt revised Financial Regulations for the council.

Cllr Gunston to lead on this item.

Cllr Gunston has kindly worked with Adrian and me to tailor the latest NALC Model Financial Regulations for this council. An electronic draft is circulated with these papers.

Council is also asked to adopt an updated Financial Regulations Schedule for the council.

The Finance & General Purposes Committee has also reviewed the Financial Regulations Schedule and is recommending approval of a new version. An electronic copy is circulated with these papers.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

30th December 2024

Cllr McElroy explained the work carried out to uplift the council’s Financial Regulations to bring them back into line with the national model Financial Regulations.

1932 The council **RESOLVED** unanimously to adopt revised Financial Regulations for the council.

These will become Financial Regulations 2025 v1.

1933 The council **RESOLVED** unanimously to adopt an updated Financial Regulations Schedule for the council.

This will be dated January 2025, and will require signing by Cllrs Toney and McElroy.

016/25 REPORTS FROM PARISH COUNCIL WORKING PARTIES

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

Working Parties

None of the council’s working parties met standalone during December.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

30th December 2024

20mph Working Party

Cllr Wilkinson is the chairman of this committee.

No update on this at the time of writing.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

30th December 2024

Environmental Initiatives Working Party (EIWP)

Cllr Gunston is the chairman of this working party.

A further meeting about the future of the East Preston allotments was held on 12th December.

The working party's next meeting is on Monday 27th January at 19:00.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

30th December 2024

Flat and Frontage Working Party (FFWP)

Cllr Wilkinson is chairman-elect of this working party.

The working party has not yet set a date for an initial meeting.

The new tenant did move in on 6th December. There have been some teething problems but all seems quiet at the time of writing.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

30th December 2024

Leases Working Party (LWP)

Cllr Wilkinson is the chairman of this working party.

No further update following the meeting with the solicitor on 29th November.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

30th December 2024

Additionally:

Environmental Initiatives Working Party – Cllr Gunston said he hoped by the end of the month the working party would have a working proposal to take to ADC regarding the future management of the East Preston allotments.

Flat & Frontage – Cllr Wilkinson reported the new tenant had been in the flat since early December, and the Clerk had worked with the agents to iron out any initial teething problems, which were now mostly sorted.

Leases – the Clerk said the solicitor had said he would provide a recommended surveyor by the end of December, but that had not happened, most likely because of the Christmas and New Year leave.

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

017/25 ENVIRONMENTAL INITIATIVES WORKING PARTY - REACH

The following report had been circulated ahead of the meeting:

Environmental Initiatives Working Party – REACH

Council is asked to confirm it is still happy for the council to continue being associated with the REACH project.

We are soon to receive the first stage payment of the £40K grant from the Community Energy Fund. A Project Manager has been appointed and the 3 Parish Councillors, one each from

Angmering, East Preston and Rustington, are now having regular meetings with him and other members of the project team.

The grant will be used to further develop the business case based on :-

- Market intelligence on the cost of equipment,
- Engaging with UK Power Networks to build grid services.
- Developing peer to peer benefits.
- Securing funding to support Pay As You Go service and the production of a contract set.
- Producing a set of engagement materials including a website and customer relationship management system to track communications.

WSCC are crucial in developing and promoting this offer to the residents of East Preston. Angmering and Rustington and although pretty supportive of this project up until now, officers seem to be stepping back somewhat now we are at this crucial phase. We will be focussed in the New Year on pushing for more support through our respective County Councillors.

If Councillors still feel this is a project worth pursuing I would ask for a couple of other councillors to stand alongside me working on the project. There may be little involvement required, but there would be times I would need to discuss matters with them, just for a different perspective or to confirm that I am on the right lines.

Cllr John Gunston –
Chairman of the Environmental Initiatives Working Party

17th December 2024

Cllr Gunston explained he was looking for evidence the council still supported his work on this project, preferably in the form of at least a couple of councillors he could use as a sounding board rather than always reverting to the Clerk.

1934 The council **RESOLVED** unanimously its happiness to continue to be associated with the REACH project. Cllrs Linton and McElroy agreed to work more closely with Cllr Gunston when needed.

018/25 SUSSEX POLICE

No report had been received.

019/25 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. East Preston Repair Café, 7th December**
- 6. Meeting with Rustington Parish Council, 10th December**
- 7. Social media**
- 8. MailChimp stats**
- 9. A selection of things we have been asked since the last meeting**

10. Recent bouquets and complaints

11. Leave

12. January meetings and events

1. Introduction

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

2. Police matters

On 23rd December, the council reported a crime to Sussex Police for the first time in over four years. Someone over the weekend prior to the 23rd had driven into one of the wooden posts at the back of the car-park and had taken that and a cycle hoop and a couple of fence panels out. At the same time as reporting this to the police, I also opened an insurance claim. Thanks to Cllrs Gunston, Linton and Wilkinson for their assistance in tidying the damage and making the area somewhat safer, and thanks to other councillors for their willingness to help. Following a Facebook post asking for information, a member of the public called in to say the damage had occurred when an elderly driver reversed by mistake.

3. Anti-social behaviour (ASB) matters

No developments in anti-social behaviour matters in the village.

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. East Preston Repair Café, 7th December

Cllrs Gunston and Hill and I ran this session. Donations on the day were back up, possibly because the refreshments were served in the church, keeping its own counsel.

The weather was rainy with strong winds and this did affect the number of customers, although, conversely, we had more volunteers than we have had before. We also had our first repairer over the age of 90 join in.

We took the necessary but reluctant decision to close at midday, one hour early, when it appeared nobody else was going to attend. Volunteers had started to leave when a woman arrived, having driven over from Chichester in spite of the weather. The woman was peeved to say the least and did not soften in her outrage we had taken the decision to close early. When I said there were other Repair Cafes much closer to her home, her retort was, "They're not open today." When Helen, and others, asked her what she had for repair, she ignored the question.

The next session will be on Saturday, 11th January.

6. Meeting with Rustington Parish Council, 10th December

I met with Carole Ward, Clerk at Rustington Parish Council, and Rosie Costan, Assistant Clerk, to discuss their council's progress with commissioning a bus service to fill some of the void left by the removal of both councils' funding from Compass Travel's No. 12 bus service. The information received from RPC will form an Agenda Item for the Community Engagement Committee's January meeting.

7. **Social media**

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

- A post advising the cancellation of the 31st December fireworks – 4,551 people
- A post asking for information on accidental damage to the Village Green car-park – 1,189

(posts up to and including 30th December)

The number of Followers is currently 1,904, a further increase of five on the last report.

8. **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 – 28th November – sent to 948 subscribers, opened by 666 (70.3%)

Parish Council news – 5th December – sent to 947 subscribers, opened by 697 (73.7%)

Parish Council news – 12th December – sent to 947 subscribers, opened by 681 (72%)

Parish Council news – 19th December – sent to 946 subscribers, opened by 693 (73.4%)

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

“Kamsons sent me here. How do I dispose of needles now I'm injecting insulin?” (ADC uses a company called Medisort for collection of domestic clinical waste and I gave the asker the company's contact details.)

“Do you know where the AoS office is?” (Yes. The Angmering on Sea estate office is in Sea Lane, Rustington.)

“Can you help me direct a parcel to [name] which has been delivered to me by mistake? The delivery company would not take it back.”

“Do you sell Christmas cards? You're not a shop are you?”

10. **Recent bouquets and complaints**

(In addition to anything reported above)

Thanks from Kingston Parish Council for allowing it to use our meeting room on the morning of 31st October.

I have been working with a resident of South View in trying to get the double yellow lines at the western end of Vermont Drive repainted. Following one update, the resident wrote, “Thank you so much. Thank you for all your efforts, do appreciate it.”

Various residents thanked the council for running a partial Christmas Celebrations event rather than cancelling it all. Very few comments in writing, but this is from a resident of Lavinia Way, "So sorry that so much had to be curtailed because of the ghastly weather when you must have worked so hard to make it a great day. Only made worse by the Conservative Hall being unavailable for some indoor fun. Never mind all your efforts are still appreciated." A pair of residents from Hillview Crescent called in to the office to say the day had been "Brilliant, worth travelling back from holiday for." A contact of Cllr Linton's emailed her to say, "There was a lovely atmosphere in the village hall with the music and lots of cheerful people."

Thanks from the library manager for alerting her to a homeless person sleeping in the library doorway on a morning it would be opening.

Thanks from a resident of Saxon Close for passing on a request to Angmering Parish Council to move a particular dog bin in Old Worthing Road. This was happily actioned by APC.

Seeing me out litter-picking during Caspar's leave, a resident of Sea Road thanked me for all I do for the village.

Thanks from a resident of Crown Place for getting WSCC Highways out to fix the broken ties on the recently-planted trees in Sea Road.

From a resident of Normandy Lane who expressed concern about a man sleeping rough in the doorway of the Conservative Hall, "Thank you for your help and prompt response."

From the resident with the wrongly-addressed parcel, "Hello Simon.....Re parcel for the umpteenth time, just to repeat our grateful thanks for your help in finding the owner." (My initial attempt to locate the right owner was to contact a family in the village of the same surname. This looked successful until the dad had been to collect the parcel and it was not the parcel the family had been expecting. My second thought was to ask the Infant School, and although not a pupil at the school yet, the office knew how to contact the family.)

From a resident of Sea Lane, "While I get the chance, may I thank you and all your colleagues for all that you do for us residents of East Preston. It is so appreciated and your efficiency and dedication makes this a very good place to live."

From a resident of Sea Lane for reporting dubious driving at the bottom of said road, "Star, thank you, I did hope that you were possibly on the case, as others must have noted the mess. The Christmas tree event at the church was lovely. No poem challenge from you this year but I've entered the one I wrote for you a few years ago into a national poetry competition- who knows, and thank you for the impetus!"

From a resident of Sea Road, "please could you thank the Councillors for their support of the Christmas Trees at St Mary's. We thoroughly enjoyed our visit there and so did our granddaughter. Merry Christmas to you, Dawn and the team and thank you for your support during the year and the work you all do to keep EP a lovely place to live."

From a resident of Sea Lane, "Thanks to you and your team for the sterling work."

From the Trust Fundraiser at St Barnabas House, Chestnut Tree and Martlets hospices, "Thank you for your generous support this year. Thanks to organisations such as East Preston Parish Council, we have been able to care for hundreds of adults with life-limiting conditions and their families in the Worthing, Adur, Arun and Henfield areas. As you may have seen in the news, hospices are facing significant financial challenges. We are more reliant on the support of our local community than ever before. Your generosity means that more people can make special memories together with their loved ones throughout the year. You have helped to change lives in 2024 – thank you, from everyone here at St Barnabas House."

Following the publication of an e-newsletter on 19th December, a resident wrote to express appreciation of the opening paragraph which recognised not everyone celebrates Christmas,

“Thank you for the way you worded the first paragraph of the newsletter btw, that was very thoughtful!”

From a resident of Golden Avenue who had sought some advice on the condition of the carriageway in this private road, “Your thoughts are welcome and I’ve started the ball rolling through our WhatsApp group.”

An email from two residents of Hillview Crescent, “Thank you Simon, Dawn, Alison, Adrian and the Councillors for all that you do for the village, it gets better every year. Let us hope 2025 will be another fantastic year for the village.”

From a resident of Sea Road after I had let her know I had reported to WSCC Highways the poor state of the roadworks site near her property, “Thank you for doing this. I was going to contact West Sussex County Council- I’m sure an email from you will have more effect than mine !! ”

11. **Leave**

Adrian is on leave the week beginning 6th January, and I am off 16th to 20th, but will be back in for that evening’s meetings.

12. **January Meetings and Events**

This list may be incomplete and is subject to change.

- 6th Full Council (19:00, East Preston Infant School)
- 7th Planning & Licensing Committee (18:00, East Preston Infant School)
- 11th East Preston Repair Café (10:00, Vicarage Lane)
- 13th Personnel Committee (18:00, East Preston Infant School)
East Preston Cricket Club meeting (19:00, East Preston Infant School) (ST, SW, JG and SC only)
- 20th Planning & Licensing Committee (18:00, East Preston Infant School)
Community Engagement Committee (19:00, East Preston Infant School)
- 27th Amenities Committee (18:00, East Preston Infant School)

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

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

31st December 2024

Item 2 – police matters – council discussed the incident on 20th December, which had seen an older driver reverse out of a parking space in a relatively quiet Village Green car-park, late afternoon, and knock over a solid wooden post, a bicycle hoop and two fence panels. The Clerk’s attempts to get the driver’s details had so far proved fruitless although he was still trying to get information from the car park management company. A plea in the most recent e-newsletter for help in identifying the driver had so far not helped. Reports to Sussex Police did not seem to be going anywhere either.

Item 10 – recent bouquets and complaints – the Clerk advised councillors they could report any homeless people via Streetlink, and he would circulate the link. Such reports were then referred back to the district council for officers to attempt to contact the homeless people in question.

No item – Cllr McElroy reported there had been a thread on the village Facebook page from a lady very concerned about the Conservative Hall being rumoured to become a funeral venue. Cllr McElroy said he felt the conversation had died, no pun intended, after a member of his household had pointed out the transaction between the Trustees and the purchaser did not involve the council. The Clerk said the lady had called the office this morning and had planned on coming to the meeting, but had, presumably, been unable to do so. He had already had a telephone conversation with her and a 15-minutes conversation on the doorstep attempting to allay her fears which seemed to be the venue would be a daily reminder of people’s mortality

within the village. Apparently, the existing funeral directors in the village did not provide the same reminder of people's mortality. The lady was also concerned about traffic management in the area of the Conservative Hall, but the Clerk said up until its closure there had often been events at the hall which saw the car-park full, that would not change. The Clerk could only remember one other call from a local resident concerned about the rumour; she lived in Chestnut Court directly behind the Conservative Hall and seemed reassured by the Clerk's responses to her questions.

020/25 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.

Roundstone Level Crossing and local councils, 4th December

Council Office

On the 4th December Simon and I met with the representatives of Angmering and Kingston Parish Councils. Angmering was represented by Chairman Cllr Nikki Hamilton-Street, Vice-Chairman Cllr Alison Reigate and Office Manager, Tracy Lees on behalf of the Clerk, Katie Herr. Kingston Parish Council was represented by Chairman Cllr Geraldine Walker, Vice-Chairman Cllr Roger Wetherell and Clerk, Val Knight.

The meeting discussed joint collaboration regarding the Roundstone Crossing. We agreed to find out how much it would cost to extend the consultation to include the Angmering Station level crossing and Blue Star Roundabout and possibly the A280/A259 roundabout and both Chairs were happy to put forward a request for funding to their respective councils.

Once we have the costs a joint decision will be made as to how to proceed.

Cllr Elizabeth Linton –
Chairman of the Community Engagement Committee

4th December 2024

Baytree Lunch Club Christmas Lunch, 20th December

East Preston & Kingston Village Hall

I attended the lunch in the village hall with 85 diners, who normally pay £6 for lunch. However, on this occasion we were invited to give donations to charity, there were a lot of notes in the collection box.

I sat on a table with Colin, Fola, Peter, Chandra, Stephen, Anita and we all enjoyed a traditional Christmas Lunch.

The lunch is produced by ten volunteers, three preparing, cooking, with seven serving the meal and it all works like clockwork.

The Baytree Lunch Club meets every Friday and has been in existence for c30 years.

From the Council Office, Alison had been an official attendee at the lunch. This would help her promote the lunch club to suitable local residents. Alison thoroughly enjoyed her visit.

Cllr David Moore

23rd December 2024

Cllr Linton said she had left the meeting about the Roundstone Level Crossing feeling positive and the Clerk had subsequently provided some further information for Angmering Parish Council to consider at its meeting later this month. Hopefully, that council would provide some form of commitment which would enable this council to move forward on this. In the meantime, additional information had also been provided to the traffic management consultancy to enable it to produce a revised or broadened report.

Cllr Moore said he had nothing to add to his report on the Baytree Lunch Club Christmas Lunch on 20th December.

021/25 RESPONSE TO EXTERNAL MEETINGS AND EVENTS

Nothing was added.

022/25 NEW ITEMS FOR THE NEXT MEETING (3RD FEBRUARY)

Nothing new was suggested.

Cllr Linton offered her apologies for the meeting.

The meeting ended at 20:13.

Chairman: *Cllr Steve Toney* Date: **3rd February 2025**

END