



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, 3rd March 2025 at East Preston Infant School, Lashmar Road, East Preston

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

Cllr Roger Elkins, West Sussex County Council (until 19:42)

Cllr Paul Kelly, Arun District Council (until 19:42)

Chris Baker and Ian Hart, Ian Hart Funeral Services (both until 19:09)

Sioned Vos, East Preston and Kingston Preservation Society (until 19:54)

Ann Mathias, Linda Coleman, June Savory and Vicky Tuck, East Preston Floral Club (all until 19:09)

Dean Jones, Dean Jones Funeral Service (until 19:09)

Mr Allen (until 19:54), Mrs B (until 19:09), Mr D (until 19:44), Mrs D (until 20:42), Mr D (until 19:44), Mr H (until 19:44), Ms K (until 20:42), Mrs L (until 19:58) and Mrs M (until 20:42)

ABSENT: Councillor Barbara Gale

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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

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The meeting opened at 18:30.

179/25 **INTRODUCTIONS**

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

180/25 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

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

1942 The Council **RESOLVED** unanimously to accept the apologies received from Cllr Gale (unwell).

Apologies had also been received from Arun District Councillors Ricky and Philippa Bower and from Julian Ellis, Malcolm and Pauline McLelland, Alastair Sharp and Philip Sherwin.

181/25 IAN HART FUNERAL SERVICES – CONSERVATIVE HALL

Cllr Toney introduced Ian Hart who talked about the future use of the Conservative Hall which his business, Ian Hart Funeral Services had very recently bought. Mr Hart explained his family had been in the funeral direction business since 1901. The business was still a family business.

Mr Hart was accompanied by his project manager, Chris Baker.

Mr Hart planned to rename the Conservative Hall the June Sutherland Chapel, in memory of a former colleague. His company already ran the Gordon Chapel in Worthing, the venue offering a “complete funeral service”, “a service and wake in one location”. Onsite catering would be available.

When the June Sutherland Chapel was not being used for funerals, Mr Hart said the venue would be available to be used by local organisations as they had prior to the venue’s closure at the end of September 2024.

All councillors and the Clerk were given a paper copy of Mr Hart’s presentation. Several members of the public were also given a copy, but copies ran out.

Mr Hart invited questions from those present.

Representing East Preston & Kingston Preservation Society, Mrs Vos asked how much of the internal mouldings and suchlike would be retained. Mr Baker replied he had already been approached by someone wanting to take the mouldings away, but the plan was to retain the mouldings in situ. Mrs Vos asked about possible re-roofing of the property and Mr Hart replied this would take place but not until after a bat survey had been completed and its results analysed. Asked whether the Preservation Society preferred clay over slate tiles, Mrs Vos replied clay as per the original; Mr Hart said that would be possible, and suggested Mr Baker and Mrs Vos talk together about such matters.

In response to a question from Mrs Mathias of East Preston Floral Club, Mr Hart said the chapel area would be capable of seating up to 100 people, and that capacity would be the same for meetings. Mr Hart understood the Floral Club would miss the stage which had been removed, but he would look at the provision of temporary staging.

Mrs M thanked Mr Hart for saving this village asset and asked whether any new chairs provided could be supportive for people with bad backs. Mr Hart said he would ensure chairs provided were comfortable for everyone.

Mr Dall asked whether Change of Use was required for Mr Hart’s proposed complete funeral service and what parking provision would be made to ensure there was not traffic chaos on funeral days. Mr Baker replied parking would be created around the perimeter of the site for approximately thirty vehicles. Mr Hart said many people travelled to funerals together and predicted for the thirty spaces would be sufficient for most funerals at the venue. His company would undertake a traffic survey before the chapel opened.

Asked when he hoped the venue would be operational, Mr Hart said he hoped July or August of this year.

Most funerals take place between 10:00 and 15:00, outside those times, the venue would be available for private hire. Cllr Linton stated many organisations liked to know they had a secure, regular booking and that they would not be cancelled at short notice because of a funeral taking precedence. Mr Hart said once an organisation had made a booking that would be honoured.

Cllr McElroy predicted there would be parking problems on funeral days, not everyone parks well and that could reduce the number of spaces in use on the site, people did not all travel together to funerals and people might take on-street parking if they saw it before they parked on site. The village already had a funeral director who offered a complete funeral service within the village. Cllr McElroy asked whether there would be a morgue on site, storing dead bodies. As a public enterprise, would the business undertake all the necessary health and safety measures. Cllr McElroy concluded by saying traffic surveys had been completed when the schools had extended in the mid-2010s, but they were of little value when people still chose to drive their children to school causing bedlam in the area. Mr Hart replied there would be no morgue on site and, referring to the existing funeral director in the village, competition was good. His business would, of course, adhere to all relevant public safety measures.

In response to questions from the Clerk, Mr Hart said his business had directed nineteen funerals so far this year for families in the East Preston, Rustington, Angmering and Littlehampton area. He predicted he would direct between 50 and 75 funerals at the venue each year, and generally these would be on weekdays and would only be one a day.

Mr Hart confirmed the venue would have full disabled access.

There being no further questions, Mr Hart thanked the council and audience for their time and for allowing him to talk about his plans.

(Mr Hart and Mr Baker, all four representatives of East Preston Floral Club, Mrs B all left the meeting at this point.)

182/25 ARUN DISTRICT COUNCIL

District Cllr Paul Kelly asked the council for an update on its plans for the allotments site in the village. The Clerk replied this council was working with a group of residents willing to get involved with the management of the site on behalf of ADC. A draft Service Level Agreement had been sent to ADC and the Clerk had been advised an officer had set time aside to review it during the week beginning 10th March after which the Clerk predicted there would be some negotiation before a proposal came to this council for it to manage the site in conjunction with the group of residents. The Clerk added he was not sure how or whether devolution would affect this plan. Cllr Kelly thanked the Clerk for the update.

183/25 WEST SUSSEX COUNTY COUNCIL

County Cllr Roger Elkins reported the council had set its budget and, once again, it had increased by 2.99% for council business and 2% for adult social care.

Cllr Elkins urged everyone to follow the 100th Anniversary celebrations taking place within the Library Service across the county this year.

Devolution was progressing and a public consultation was now open. Meanwhile, WSCC, East Sussex County Council and Brighton & Hove City Council were working together to shape what a devolved administration might look like. As part of this, there would definitely not be any county council elections in May of this year.

Families had today been advised of to which secondary school relevant children had been allocated. The percentage of families getting their first choice was reportedly high.

Mrs L asked Cllr Elkins for an update on the provision of double yellow lines at the junction of Lashmar Road and North Lane, explaining people dropping off and picking up children at East Preston schools caused chaos in that area, were rude to residents and the school crossing patroller and churned up grass verges in the area making it unsafe for pedestrians after wet weather. Cllr Elkins replied a scheme had been designed and analysed and had had to undergo some adjustments for, he believed, legal reasons.

Cllr Mathias questioned why county councils, strapped for cash, did not work together to challenge the government to provide them with more money from central funding. Cllr Elkins replied central government only had a finite amount of money raised by other taxes and increasing those taxes would further affect the significant number of people suffering hardship because of current tax levels. That left the county council with difficult decisions to make about raising money locally but, thanks to careful financial management over a number of years, the county council had not been in the dire financial straits some other councils had been.

184/25 WEST SUSSEX COUNTY COUNCIL – TRAFFIC REGULATION ORDER FOR SEA ROAD

West Sussex County Council – Sea Road parking restrictions

Council is asked to agree to support residents further in their campaign to increase parking restrictions in Sea Road.

As reported to the last meeting, Cllrs Moore and Wilkinson and I met with three residents of Sea Road on 24th January. Last April, the council supported a proposal from residents in this section of Sea Road to increase the seasonal single yellow line parking restriction to a year-round parking restriction.

County Cllr Elkins had advised the residents they needed to show greater public support for the proposal but, for various personal reasons, it has not been possible to gather that support, and with those personal reasons still in place, the residents are asking the council to help.

Initial support would be in the form of setting up an online survey and including details of that in an e-newsletter. This would hopefully garner the right level of interest and support ahead of the residents submitting the application to WSCC. The residents understand there is the risk any survey results will not be in their favour, particularly if the survey comes from the council, but they are prepared to take that risk.

The residents believe the safety issues in the stretch of Sea Road opposite the Village Green affect residents across the village. Additionally, as residents on the western side of the road, they have concerns about exiting from their driveways when others have parked very close to those driveways, and they also have experienced verbal abuse from those same drivers.

I believe three of the residents will attend the meeting to put forward further their case.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

25th February 2025

Mr Do said he and his neighbours were present to follow-up on their request for increased parking restrictions in the park of Sea Road directly opposite the Village Green, where the road narrowed. There was a seasonal restriction in force between April and September but, since that had been implemented several years ago, traffic volumes had increased greatly and the need for restrictions was no longer just seasonal. A recent Planning Permission meant another business would be starting at the southern end of the village with, very likely, several of its employees driving to work and needing to park somewhere. Already residents in this strip of houses had been abused for pointing out drivers had parked over driveways, making access and egress more difficult than necessary. Mr Do said he and his neighbours felt unsupported by WSCC in this matter.

The Clerk explained the parish council had given support to a request for additional parking restrictions in the area in April 2024, at which point Cllr Elkins had explained to the gentlemen the need to get evidence of public support for their proposal. The Clerk believed the gentlemen felt they themselves did not have a wide enough spread of contacts to get the level of public support required and were here tonight to ask the parish council to assist them in this.

Cllr Elkins again explained the Traffic Regulation Order process to the residents and said WSCC had recently simplified the process in an attempt to implement more schemes across the county, but each scheme was in competition for priority with every other scheme in the county. For that reason, solid evidence of solid public support was essential.

Cllr Linton questioned when the weight of the people most affected came into play and said there was a risk in going out for public support which, for other reasons, might not be forthcoming. Cllr Elkins replied the system had been designed to ensure the most merit-worthy schemes were the one the county council implemented; the needs of the residents would be considered but the county had to be sure a proposal would not have undue impact on neighbouring roads and residents. A public consultation would often highlight such issues.

Mr Dall asked the parish council to consider at the same time the removal of charging for use of the Village Green car-park. Living opposite the Village Green he regularly saw the car-park empty and believed free use of the car-park would, effectively, stop up to sixteen cars from parking on the roads around the Village Green.

The Clerk said had at least two options at this time. Firstly, they could ask the council to agree to seek support for the proposal to increase the parking restrictions to year-round or they could wait while the council discussed Mr Dall's suggestion of removing parking charges in the car-park, a discussion for which the council did not have time this evening.

Mrs M suggested Access Protection Lines could be provided outside the properties in question. Cllr Elkins said they could but they came at a cost.

District Cllr Kelly reminded the meeting how previously free use of the car-park meant it was often full of trade vehicles and vehicles left there for prolonged periods of time, rendering it unusable by members of the public, and that was why the council had introduced charges.

Cllr McElroy confirmed Cllr Kelly's comments and said the council had discussed long and hard before introducing charges which, at 50p an hour, were lower than almost anywhere else and yet people were still not willing to pay that. As Cllr Elkins had said, restricting parking in one place often caused a problem in another area. Cllr McElroy added the council had discussed at length, more than once, the pros and cons of charging for the car-park, both before and since charging was implemented. Revenue showed the car-park was not as little-used as Mr Dall had suggested.

Cllr Gunston said the parish council had already committed support to the residents' original proposal to make the current seasonal restriction year-round and agreed with the Clerk's suggestion there were two ways forward tonight, but waiting for the council to have a considered discussion about future use of the Village Green car-park could take some time, longer than the residents may wish to wait.

Mr Allen thought increasing the parking restrictions may result in increased usage of the car-park.

(County Cllr Elkins and District Cllr Kelly left the meeting at this point.)

The Chairman said the residents did not have to decide at the meeting, they could let the Clerk know as and when. The residents accepted this.

(Messrs Dall, Do and H left the meeting at this point.)

185/25 DECLARATION OF PERSONAL AND/OR PREJUDICIAL/PECUNIARY INTERESTS

None were declared.

186/25 PUBLIC SESSION

No Agenda Item – Mrs M asked how many parish councillors had been on the new boardwalk at the bottom of Sea Road “and enjoyed the magic of it.” Some replied they had.

Agenda Item 15 – West Sussex County Council – Mrs L said the proposal for devolution and unitary authorities was “utterly horrendous” as any money raised by local residents will be spent by bigger places. Was it a done deal? Cllr Toney replied there was a public consultation open at the moment and Mrs L confirmed she knew about that.

Agenda Item 8 – Monthly Update Report – Item 5 – Minute 098/25 – Stagecoach South – Mrs L said every bus driver she had asked had said they did not feel the proposed changes to local buses would make any improvements at all. Mrs L said she would not want to go over Windmill Bridge on a double-decker bus, and how long would the bridge cope with being used by buses. Mrs L felt Rustington was particularly well-served by buses whereas East Preston and Ferring were not. Delays on the 700 were not just the result of the level crossing gates being down a long time but were because of greatly increased volumes of road traffic following unprecedented development in the area. Mrs L said she challenged a senior Stagecoach South representative to travel with her on local bus services at different times of a day to see how often no. 700 buses stacked up long before they reached East Preston. The Clerk advised he had mentioned Mrs L's challenge to a senior Stagecoach South contact who had replied the company fully understood delays between Worthing and Littlehampton were, “not just railway crossings - the current recipe of trains, congestion, road capacity, roadworks is the problem, with railway crossings perhaps being the biggest because they affect us all day/every day, with a different level of delay to each passing bus. The new routes and timetables are designed with additional running time and/or more recovery time at the end of the route with this in mind. It's also why we're less keen these days to run long routes, because the risk of delay is much higher.”

Cllr Bradshaw advised Mrs L the council had, via a team of three councillors, provided a response to the Stagecoach South public consultation on changes to local bus services and had raised the points Mrs L had made. The council had, in Cllr Gunston's opinion, received a much better response to its consultation contribution than it had to its contribution to the Southern Rail consultation in 2023 which had led to increased trains running through the village's two level crossings.

Agenda Item 11b – Amenities Committee – To agree to spend up to £2,500 on the provision of four replacement bollards at the Village Green car-park – Mr A asked whether there was any update on the replacement of the bollards at the very bottom of Sea Road. The Clerk replied the Amenities Committee was still investigating its options here. However, personally he questioned why there was a need to get emergency vehicles on to the beach as, almost certainly, any vehicle which drove on to the beach would be heavy enough to get stuck in the pebbles.

(Mr Allen and Mrs V left the meeting at the conclusion of this item.)

187/25 COUNCIL RESPONSES

There were no further council responses.

188/25 MINUTES OF THE MONTHLY MEETING HELD ON 3RD FEBRUARY 2025

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

1943 The Council **RESOLVED** unanimously the Chairman could sign the Minutes as a true record of the meeting held on 3rd February. Cllr Toney duly did so.

189/25 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 817/24 – Clerk's Report – Item 10 – South-East Community Rail Partnership, 17th October**
- 3. Minute 924/24 – Community Engagement Committee – Roundstone Level Crossing**
- 4. Minute 014/25 – Finance & General Purposes Committee – Lashmar skatepark**
- 5. Minute 098/25 – Stagecoach South**

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 817/24 – Clerk's Report – Item 10 – South-East Community Rail Partnership, 17th October

As part of the Railway 200 celebrations, attendees at the meeting were asked to propose temporary blue plaques for local railway stations, and I proposed one for Angmering Station to commemorate its history in delivering locally-grown fruit and vegetables to London from the 1840s onwards. On 12th February, we were informed our proposal has been put forward for final agreement, and it is possible the plaque will be in place by the end of April. The only other Coastway West stations nominated were Hove, Lancing and Littlehampton.

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

The latest proposal from the traffic consultant has been received and has been seen by Cllr Linton and shared with Angmering Parish Council. I have not had time to give it much consideration yet, and will refer this to the Community Engagement Committee meeting scheduled for 24th March.

As an aside, last week I asked what was the latest on the Lancing signalbox operations moving to the Network Rail Three Bridges Rail Operating Centre (TBROC). My contact replied, “I’m not sure when you visited, but the Three Bridges Rail Operating Centre (TBROC) is certainly a very busy location these days, controlling a substantial part of the railway. Just last November we introduced the newest workstation at TBROC covering part of the south London railway around Tulse Hill, Peckham and Crystal Palace. As I understand it at some point all (or almost all) operations in this part of the country will be transferred to TBROC, but I don’t know the timescales for the section controlled from Lancing – it of course would require a major resignalling project, which would be a few years away. I will check in with colleagues and see if I can find more information on this.”

4. **Minute 014/25 – Finance & General Purposes Committee – Lashmar skatepark**

No installation date has yet been provided by ADC, but the tarmac work has been completed.

5. **Minute 098/25 – Stagecoach South**

Cllrs Bradshaw, Chapman and Gunston met on 5th February and constructed a council response to the public consultation into proposed changes to bus services affecting East Preston. Their comments included concern there would be fewer buses but possibly no greater reliability; increased waiting time between services; customers may need to leave as much as an hour earlier to get to appointments; East Preston residents may then be less likely to use the service; a service every 20 minutes would be better than a service every 30 minutes; the last No. 11 of each day is earlier than the last No. 700 of the day is currently; where will bus stops be located on the A259 for the No. 701.

This was submitted to Stagecoach South on 6th February, and James O’Neill providing comments back almost immediately. Cllr Gunston said of James’s comments, “I’m impressed with Stagecoach’s response. Much better than Southern Rail. Sounds like we are being listened to although not sure it will mean more buses in EP.”

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

25th February 2025

The Clerk had nothing to add to the above report but was willing to answer questions. None were asked.

190/25 FINANCIAL MATTERS

The Accounts for February 2025 had been distributed to Members in advance of the meeting.

- 1944** The council **RESOLVED** unanimously to approve the Outstanding Purchase Orders report for 2024/25, value £1,530.00.
- 1945** The council **RESOLVED** unanimously to approve the Regular Monthly Payments reports for February 2025 totalling £903.40 (inc. VAT).
- 1946** The council **RESOLVED** unanimously to approve the Supplier BACS Invoices Paid reports for February 2025 totalling £22,000.87 (inc. VAT).

1947 The council **RESOLVED** unanimously to approve the List of Sales Receipts & Bank Receipts by Bank report for financial year to date totalling £387,748.56 (inc. VAT).

The council NOTED the Bank Reconciliations to 14th February 2025.

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

Cllr Toney thanked Adrian for preparing the above reports.

191/25 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: Amenities, 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**

24th February 2025

Amenities Committee

Cllr Wilkinson is chairman of this committee.

The committee met on 10th February.

Village Green accessibility – the committee has agreed to approach local resident, Michał Zarzecki, the designer of the scheme proposed by the Disability Action Group for improving access to the Village Green. The committee believes it can explain to Michał the constraints of the Village Green, and Michał will be able to interpret those alongside the needs of the Disability Action Group.

Warren Recreation Ground boundary fencing – The section of broken fencing along the northern boundary has been replaced. The committee had previously obtained Land Registry documents to assess ownership of each section of the boundary fencing, on this boundary there was no definitive owner. The committee agreed to contribute 50% of the cost.

Warren Recreation Ground Outdoor Gym Equipment – The committee has been researching types of new gym equipment with a view to replace the existing failing equipment. The new equipment would be located at the same place, next to the tennis court and include a Calisthenics Unit and resistance type pieces of equipment. The committee is currently consulting with the Cricket Club regarding this proposal. The committee will be approaching Full Council to fund in the region of £35 - £40,000.00 to complete this project.

Bus Shelters – Following the removal of the North Lane damaged bus shelter in March 2024, the committee deferred making its decision on whether or not to replace the shelter until after the winter months. This allowed further time to gauge public response regarding the need for a replacement shelter. Over a ten-month period, the committee received four enquiries, three of which asked for the shelter to be reinstated. The committee took into consideration the locations of all shelters in the village and the proposed new bus routes. After a great deal of consideration, the committee agreed not to replace the North Lane bus shelter.

The committee's next full meeting will be on 19th May 2025.

Audit & Governance Committee

Cllr Mathias is the chairman of this committee.

The committee did not meet in February and there are no updates. The committee's next meeting is on 10th March.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

21st February 2025

Community Engagement Committee

The committee will next meet on 24th March.

Cllr Elizabeth Linton –
Chairman of the Community Engagement Committee

21st February 2025

Finance & General Purposes Committee

Cllr McElroy is the chairman of this committee.

The committee met on 17th February.

The committee agreed to donate £3,000 to Kingston Parish Council which had had its request for a Judicial Review into the Planning Permission granted for a development of 47 homes on land north-east of Kingston Lane, reference K/27/24/PL. The Judicial Review had been refused and further costs of £10,000 had been awarded against Kingston Parish Council. In response to an email informing her of the council's decision to donate, my Kingston Parish Council counterpart, Val Knight, wrote, "Fantastic! Thank you EPPC. It is great to have the support of EPPC."

On behalf of the council, the committee agreed to set up some new ear-marked reserves and close down some others – full details in the meeting's Minutes.

Cllr Gunston led an initial discussion on whether or not this we as a council would like to be at the forefront of devolution discussions, see Agenda Item 13a below.

Cllr Gunston also led a discussion about the format of the financial reports presented to council each month. The committee agreed he could discuss this further with Adrian and make changes he felt appropriate. Subsequently, Cllr Gunston has had an initial discussion with Adrian.

The committee started a discussion on funding for possible future projects.

Cllrs Chapman and Duff joined the final ten minutes of the meeting at my invitation as on the day of the meeting, I had received a call from estate agents commissioned by WSCC to market its East

Preston Youth Centre building. The committee was interested enough to ask me to arrange a site visit immediately before this meeting.

The committee's next meeting is on 13th May.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

25th February 2025

Major Events Committee

Cllr Linton is Chairman of the committee.

The committee met on 17th February and Simon has circulated the draft Minutes from the meeting.

The theme of **Funday Sunday** on 27th April is Spring and Councillors Chapman and Duff will be decorating the hall accordingly. Councillor Hill is the lead councillor and will arrange a new poster for this event. Valerie Eschbæcher has been doing a sterling job selling tickets at Warm Welcome Space sessions. Councillors, if you are available to help on the day, please let Helen and me know.

The **Food and Drink Festival** will be held on the 23rd August and, hopefully, the whole of the village hall will be booked in case of inclement weather so a smaller scale event can still be held.

The **Autumn Quiz** will be held in the Junior School on 12th October and Councillor Duff is contacting a quiz master. Councillors, if you are available to help on the day, please let me know.

Christmas Celebrations will be held on 22nd November and initial planning for this is underway, but will move up a gear in a few weeks' time.

The committee began consideration of an EIWP idea, **Green Day**, at which local and select national organisations will have the opportunity to display their green credentials and initiatives to local residents. The proposed date for this is 13th September, and considerations are continuing.

Martyn's Law, officially **The Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Bill**, was discussed and this committee is aware of the legislation but, at the moment, the council is not affected. Cllr McElroy is the council's lead on this.

We are hoping to celebrate the arrival of Spring on the 21st March and will, weather permitting, let off the **Christmas Celebrations 2024 fireworks** at 20:00 on the Warren Rec. – these should last about five minutes. We are ordering barriers and hope Councillors will be available to help with crowd control!

Cllr Elizabeth Linton –
Chairman of the Major Events Committee

24th February 2025

Personnel Committee

The committee did not meet during February, and there are no updates.

The committee's next meeting will be on 14th April.

Planning & Licensing Committee

The committee met on 10th and 24th February.

On 10th February, the committee considered two Applications and agreed to object to an Application in Pinewood Close. On 24th February, the committee agreed not to object to the one Application before it that evening.

Work continues on revising the Neighbourhood Plan. The Steering Group believes it will not be long now until the reviewed plan can be put before stakeholders and public for comment.

The committee's next meeting is scheduled for Monday, 10th March.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

25th February 2025

Additionally:

Amenities – the Clerk quoted from a letter from a resident of Roundstone Drive, and asked the committee to reconsider its decision not to reinstate the bus shelter in North Lane, "Please can we have our bus shelter back? Like a lot of other elderly people which may I stress is the vast amount living in East Preston cannot stand in the cold, wet windy weather, my husband for one has COPD so his breathing is not good, in fact without a bus shelter he is not able to go out...". Cllr Linton reminded the meeting replacing this bus shelter was still part of an open insurance claim so could cost the council little to no money. Cllr Wilkinson, Chairman of the committee, agreed to the committee discussing this matter again. The Clerk thanked Cllr Wilkinson.

(Mrs L left the meeting at this point.)

Finance & General Purposes – Cllr Gunston reported he had met with Adrian and they had agreed improvements Adrian will try to implement to the committee reports. Adrian has also said he will collate all bank account signatory information in time for the Finance & General Purposes Committee meeting in May.

Major Events – Cllr Linton reported the British Legion had approached the council with a request it insured the street party element of its proposed VE-Day party, as the Legion's own insurance no longer covers such events. This was and had never been an event the council planned to be part of, so insuring seemed an unusual request. The Clerk AGREED to contact the council's insurers to ascertain to what extent the council would need to be involved for it to be happy to insure the event.

Planning & Licensing – Cllr Bowman said she had sent the latest copy of the Neighbourhood Plan to Oneill Homer for his comments after which she hoped it would be possible to put the draft out to public and stakeholder consultation.

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

192/25 AMENITIES COMMITTEE – WARREN RECREATION GROUND – OUTDOOR GYM EQUIPMENT

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

Amenities Committee – Warren Recreation Ground outdoor gym equipment

Council is asked to set aside up to £40,000 for the provision of replacement outdoor gym equipment on the Warren Recreation Ground.

Cllr Wilkinson to lead on this item although he may hand over to Cllr McElroy who has been working closely with Dawn on this matter.

The current outdoor gym equipment towards the north-western corner of the Warren Recreation Ground was donated by East Preston Film Society and opened officially on 15th May 2015. The equipment has reached the end of its useful life and the committee has agreed to replace it.

Dawn is just awaiting a final quote and then a decision of supplier can be reached. All quoting suppliers have visited the site.

Dawn believes £40,000 will be the most this project will cost the council. If the council agrees, this money will be taken from the general reserve.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

28th January 2025

Cllrs McElroy and Wilkinson explained the background to this request. Cllr McElroy said he was a qualified health and fitness instructor and believed the outdoor gym provided an invaluable opportunity for people of all ages and abilities.

1948 The Council **RESOLVED** unanimously to set aside up to £40,000 for the provision of replacement outdoor gym equipment on the Warren Recreation Ground.

This sum would be taken for the council's general reserve.

193/25 AMENITIES COMMITTEE – VILLAGE GREEN

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

Amenities Committee – Village Green car-park

Council is asked to spend up to £2,500 for the provision of four replacement bollards at the Village Green car-park.

Cllr Wilkinson to lead on this item.

Part of the damage at the Village Green car-park caused by the accident on 20th December was the removal of one of four large wooden bollards, placed between car-parking spaces and the ticket machine and cycle hoop area. The bollards are of an age and have probably been weakened by local weather and the accident showed the bollards were no longer capable of providing the protection they should. To that end, the committee would like to replace all four wooden bollards with stainless steel bollards.

This upgrade would not be covered by the insurance claim covering the damage of 20th December. Dawn has a quotation for the installation of four stainless steel bollards, 114mm diameter with reflective bands at a current cost of £2,230. If the council agrees, this money will be taken from the general reserve – this work was unexpected and no provision was made for it in the 2024/25 or 2025/26 budget.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

25th February 2025

Cllr Wilkinson explained the insurance claim only covered one of the four wooden bollards the committee would like to replace.

1949 The Council **RESOLVED** unanimously to spend up to £2,500 on the provision of four replacement bollards at the Village Green car-park.

This sum would be taken for the council's general reserve.

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

Community Engagement Committee – Sussex and Brighton devolution public consultation

Council is asked to agree this council should respond to the government consultation, Sussex and Brighton devolution.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/sussex-and-brighton-devolution>

Central government has opened the public consultation into its devolution proposals to bring together East and West Sussex County Councils and Brighton and Hove City Council.

I emailed details to councillors on 20th February asking for any councillors willing to be part of the council's response to let me know. To date, nobody has.

Closing date for comments is 13th April.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

25th February 2025

Cllr Bradshaw said he felt the council should not take part in the public consultation as the whole matter of devolution was a done deal and no amount of public consultation would change that.

Cllr Gunston countered saying he believed responding to the public consultation would, at least, show the village the council had taken the matter seriously enough to respond.

Cllrs Chapman and Linton said they would help Cllr Gunston formulate a response on behalf of the council.

1950 The Council **RESOLVED** the council should respond to the government public consultation, *Sussex and Brighton devolution*.

Three councillors abstained in this vote.

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

Community Engagement Committee – A railway fit for Britain's future public consultation

Council is asked to agree this council should respond to the government consultation, A railway fit for Britain's future.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/a-railway-fit-for-britains-future>

Central government has opened the public consultation into its proposals for the future of Britain's railway network and services.

I emailed details to councillors on 19th February asking for any councillors willing to be part of the council's response to let me know. Cllr Gunston has volunteered so far.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

25th February 2025

The Clerk advised Cllrs Gunston and Moore had so far volunteered to work together to respond to this consultation.

1951 The Council **RESOLVED** unanimously Cllrs Gunston and Moore should work with the Clerk to respond to the government public consultation, *A railway fit for Britain's future*.

196/25 FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE – SUSSEX AND BRIGHTON DEVOLUTION

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

Finance & General Purposes Committee – Sussex and Brighton devolution

Council is asked to agree this council should nominate itself to be a participant in discussions concerning the future of local councils after devolution.

Cllr Gunston to lead on this item.

The committee would like this council to be in at the start of discussions on devolution and how local councils will look after 2027 and how they will work with the Mayoral Combined County Authority after that date.

The committee agreed, if council agreed with the above proposal, our first contact would be with County Cllr Elkins.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

25th February 2025

Cllr Gunston explained his belief the council should try to get involved in discussions about devolution at the earliest opportunity.

The Clerk said he was aware there were already some discussions between the county and district and borough councils as they needed to propose how the future might look before the end of March. There would be much detail to be negotiated after that proposal had been accepted.

There was some confusion about what this would achieve, but...

1952 The Council **RESOLVED** to put itself forward to be a representative parish council in any future discussions to be had on the role of town and parish councils after devolution.

One councillor abstained.

Possibly the best way to do this would be through the Chief Executive of ADC, Dawn Hudd, who was communicating regularly with town and parish councils on the subject of devolution.

197/25 REPORTS FROM PARISH COUNCIL WORKING PARTIES

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

Working Parties

The 20MPH and Environmental Initiatives Working Parties met in February.

20mph Working Party

Cllr Wilkinson is the chairman of this committee.

Councillor members of this working party met on Monday, 24th February. We discussed the way forward for this as suggested by Keith Harris, outgoing coordinator of the village's Community Speedwatch group.

The working party agreed it would like to meet face-to-face with representatives of WSCC Highways to explain why we believe a three-road 20mph zone covering Sea Road, The Street and Fairlands is the best for this village, and to hear from WSCC Highways why it has not agreed with this proposal to date. Again, this should be directed to WSCC via County Cllr Elkins.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

25th February 2025

Environmental Initiatives Working Party (EIWP)

The working party met on 24th February.

As it is likely the Green Day will now be arranged by either the Community Engagement or Major Events Committee, we felt there is little we do that is not being covered by the parish council as a whole. There is therefore a proposal to disband the Environmental Initiatives Working Party which will be voted on at our next meeting on Wednesday 12th March at 7.00pm.

As Chairman I must thank fellow councillors and parishioners who have helped make the group such a worthwhile experience. Just some of the projects we have completed between us: we have planted hedgelings, put up bird boxes, hosted a talk by Southern Water, surveyed villagers for their environmental awareness and ambitions, enabled hedgehog highways in the village, encouraged more residents to plant wildflower beds at home, produced a walking map, set up a Repair Cafe as well as contributing numerous articles to the quarterly newsletter and a green thought for the day for the regular e-newsletter. The greener buildings fund we suggested has contributed to insulation for the bowls club and the Village Hall as well as LED lighting for the Tennis Club and solar panels for the Scout Hut. We feel sure the parish council will keep up the good work we have started.

Cllr John Gunston –

Chairman of the Environmental Initiatives Working Party

25th February 2025

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.

At the time of writing, a new tenant has passed all required letting agency tests and is due to move in on 5th March.

Leases Working Party (LWP)

Cllr Wilkinson is the chairman of this working party.

By the time of the meeting, I will have attended a site valuation with the council's valuer and a representative of East Preston & Kingston Bowls Club.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

25th February 2025

Additionally:

Environmental Initiatives Working Party – Cllr Gunston said the working party had recently met at which he had proposed disbanding the working party as its objectives were mainly currently being met by the council's committees. Regardless of a decision on that, he would be resigning as chairman of the working party at its next meeting which was scheduled for 12th March and which would decide about disbandment.

Cllr Gunston said he would continue to work alongside residents on the new model for management of the village's allotments.

Leases – the Clerk reported he had met the council's surveyor on-site and with representatives of the bowls club. The surveyor was confident he should be able to provide a report to the council by the end of March.

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

198/25 WEST SUSSEX COUNTY COUNCIL – ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGING POINTS

The following report had been circulated ahead of the meeting:

West Sussex County Council – electric vehicle charging points

Council is asked to consider an offer to install electric vehicle charging points in the Village Green car-park.

WSCC Highways is already about to install some electric vehicle charging points (EVCPs) in the Northern shopping area, but has recently approached the council about installing some in the Village Green car-park. The council has discussed this before and at that time felt this was not a practical suggestion.

This offer has come about as WSCC Highways has been working with the county's district and borough councils and, for a long time in negotiations, ADC thought it was still the owner of the Village Green car-park even though it sold it to us in July 2007 and has been taking business rates from us ever since and not once spent any money on the car-park in the past 17+ years. Highways had progressed a proposal a long way before ADC realised its mistake. Highways did not want to waste that work, hence it called on us. This installation would be at no cost to this council and would be part of the West Sussex Chargepoint Network.

The proposal would be to install six EVCPs in the six bays on the north side starting from the Sea Road end as that is closest to the electricity feeder pillar.

I have contacted our car-park contractor, National Parking Control to confirm it is happy for us to consider this.

More information can be found in the attached document.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

26th February 2025

The attached document was a report about the West Sussex Chargepoint Network. The council was interested but not if the points were slow charge. The council's preference would be for just four rapid charging points, and the Clerk would see if this was possible.

1953 The council **RESOLVED** to accept an offer to install electric vehicle charging points in the Village Green car-park.

One councillor voted against this proposal.

199/25 SUSSEX POLICE

No report had been received.

200/25 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. Warm Welcome Space, 3rd February**
- 6. Trip to WSCC / Biffa Materials Recycling Facility, 18th February**
- 7. Community Speedwatch meeting, 19th February**
- 8. Warm Welcome Space, 24th February**
- 9. Social media**
- 10. MailChimp stats**
- 11. A selection of things we have been asked since the last meeting**
- 12. Recent bouquets and complaints**
- 13. Leave**
- 14. March meetings and events**

1. Introduction

This is the report mainly covering February 2025 and matters which may not arise elsewhere on the agenda.

2. Police matters

Regarding the damage done at the Village Green car-park on **20th December**, on 13th February, the council received a letter from Sussex Police containing the paragraph:

We have now completed our investigation and after careful consideration of the facts it has been decided that Sussex Police will be taking no further action. The reason for this decision is: We have now identified the driver and upon reviewing the evidence conclude this case requires no further investigation.

On 19th February, the council received notification, "I can confirm payment has been issued in the sum of £1200.00 which is net of your excess. This should be in the account in the next 3 – 5 working days. The insurer will pass to the recovery team to get back your excess." On 25th February, Adrian confirmed this sum had been received into the council's bank account.

Meanwhile, on 9th February, I was advised by Toni McElroy, Chairman of the East Preston & Kingston Village Hall Foundation, of damage done to the retaining wall for the ramp to the Hoist Assisted Toilet (HAT) at the Sea Road toilet block. Our Biffa contractor also advised us of this. The wall was completely compromised, and Dawn and I taped it off first thing on 10th February. Mrs McElroy kindly watched Village Hall CCTV footage and was able to identify the damage had occurred on the afternoon of **7th February** and the driver had driven off without even getting out to inspect the damage. I made a formal request to Toni for the CCTV footage and other information and this was passed to both our insurance broker and Sussex Police. Through our broker, we persuaded our insurer we needed to get the repair work completely quickly and Dawn liaised with Cloud9 as it had built the wall originally.

The perpetrator contacted the council on 20th February and said she had not realised her nudging the wall had caused such damage. I believe, she was only prompted to contact the council after a letter from Sussex Police. She asked for photographs of the damage and said she was willing to pay but once she had seen the damage, she realised the amount was more than she wanted to pay.

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. **Warm Welcome Space, 3rd February**

This was my turn to be the council's officer at the session. Cllr Hill was the on-duty councillor and Naomi Boulter was the official community volunteer on duty. Cllr Gale made a guest appearance talking to attendees, and Chris and Valerie Eschbæcher helped out when needed.

Joy Bradbury-Ball, ADC Senior Wellbeing Partnerships Officer, dropped in to see how the sessions were going. The following day, Joy emailed, "Yes, it was lovely to see what a nice time people were having, and I found out about some other groups which were running in the village." Joy gave out some leaflets introducing the Arun Wellbeing team and some of these have subsequently been delivered to the office for distribution to local residents.

6. **Trip to WSCC / Biffa Materials Recycling Facility, 18th February**

I organised two visits to the WSCC / Biffa Materials Recycling Facility for the 18th February. Further down these papers you will be able to read Cllr Chapman's report on the visit.

The morning visit comprised Cllrs Gunston and Gale, Dawn and members of the Environmental Initiatives Working Party, Sue Morley and Michał Zarzecki, together with Angmering Parish Council reps Cllr Alan Evans, Katie Herr, Tracy Lees, Rachael Wilkes and Roy Squires.

The afternoon visit comprised Cllrs Moore, Bradshaw, Chapman and Duff, Linda Denton as a member of the EIWP, David Cross, Richard and Angela Rayner as Repair Café volunteers, Kingston Parish Council Clerk, Val Knight, and me.

We were warmly welcomed by Biffa Education Officer, Jo Norman, and after an informative, in-depth presentation and conversation about the current state of recycling in the county, those able to were taken into the heart of the processing area to see household waste being sorted. Overall, the visit lasted about two hours.

7. Community Speedwatch meeting, 19th February

Following pleas in both the Autumn 2024 and Winter 2025 Newsletters, early in February, Gavin Bernard came forward interested in taking over the Community Speedwatch coordinator role from Keith Harris.

Having had an initial meeting with me, Gavin then met with Keith and me, an opportunity for Keith to explain his version of the role in greater detail and for Gavin to ask any questions. The meeting ended positively, with Gavin agreeing to do the online training after which Keith will take Gavin out for roadside training. Training complete, Keith will liaise with his Sussex Police contact about the official handover of the coordinator role.

The council has just paid for its Genesis Radar (“speed gun”) to be recalibrated, a task it likes to undertake every few years.

8. Warm Welcome Space, 24th February

It was my turn again to represent the office at Warm Welcome Space. I worked alongside Cllr Gunston and, as community volunteer, Linda Denton. This session had 26 attendees, the highest number this season. All attendees had been before, but one was attending her first session this year.

Although the sessions start officially only at midday, many of the twenty-six were in and seated by that time. Similarly, although the sessions end officially at 16:00, by 14:00 only about five attendees were still present, and those were preparing to leave.

The sessions are being enjoyed and appreciated by all. There are five sessions in March and that will bring this year’s Warm Welcome Space to an end.

9. Social media

Here is the council’s only Facebook post in February to reach more than 500 people.

- A post announcing the Hoist-Assisted Toilet was closed until further notice following accidental damage inflicted upon the retaining wall of the ramp – 5,960 people

(posts up to and including 24th February)

The number of Followers is currently 1,908, an increase of 5 on the last report.

10. MailChimp stats

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

Parish Council news – 29th January – sent to 946 subscribers, opened by 670 (70.8%)

Parish Council news – 5th February – sent to 947 subscribers, opened by 664 (70.3%)

Parish Council news – 13th February – sent to 945 subscribers, opened by 665 (70.4%)

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

“Is the Parish Council still secretly funding the No. 12 bus service?” (Absolutely not.)

“Are there any ex-cons living in the village?”

“Do you think Network Rail would extend an invitation to a small party from EP to visit their railway signalling hub to see what goes into the management and control of our gated crossings? The chosen ones could then report back to the many who moan about the service. Might be a good PR exercise for Network Rail and get into local papers, etc. Shows there is some empathy.” (I forwarded this suggestion to Network Rail which replied, as I already had to the author, the signalbox is very small and not ideal for visits. My Network Rail contact suggested a video could be made and used on social media to similar effect.)

“Please could you check if my email address has been removed as I have not received any e-newsletters for a few months now?” (System checked, e-newsletters were still being sent to the correct email address but not being received. New email address provided successfully.)

12. **Recent bouquets and complaints**

(In addition to anything reported above)

From a resident of Saxon Close, “Dear Simon. I am so grateful to you for forwarding my email suggesting that a dog poo bin be relocated to Angmering Parish Council. They have indeed had the bin in question repositioned as I suggested. Often the man or woman in the street feels impotent in matters of governance but on this occasion, I truly feel heard. I would appreciate it if you would forward this as well.”

From a resident of Vermont Way who called in to talk about a play she wants to put on, “Thanks for your help and encouragement today.”

From a resident of Golden Acre who asked for information on any timetable links between buses and trains, “I regard myself as an honorary EP resident! Thank you for the update and for all your good work. Keep it up!”

From a resident of Milliers Court who thought she had unsubscribed from the e-newsletter (she hadn't), “I am so delighted to be able to receive my East Preston Parish Council Newsletter and thank you for your kind help. I enjoy the information and content so much. Particularly the information with regard to the boardwalk and the work carried out by the amazing volunteers - I am 93 years old and shall get so much pleasure out of taking my wheelie on the boardwalk. I shall be dropping a donation into the Council offices. Keep those Newsletters coming my way.”

From a resident referring to the filling of a pothole in Vicarage Lane, “thank you for your swift response! on the ball as usual” – I'm not sure whether that is genuine or sarcastic.

From the resident who suggested the visit to Lancing signalbox, “Sounds good about the video. Well done.”

13. **Leave**

Dawn will be on leave for the week beginning 10th March and I might be on leave for the week beginning 17th March.

14. **March Meetings and Events**

This list may be incomplete and is subject to change.

- 3rd Full Council (19:00, East Preston Infant School)
- 8th East Preston Repair Café (10:00, Vicarage Lane)
- 10th Planning & Licensing Committee (18:00, East Preston Infant School) (tbc)
Audit & Governance Committee (19:00, East Preston Infant School)
- 12th Environmental Initiatives Working Party (19:00, Council Office)
- 24th Planning & Licensing Committee (18:00, East Preston Infant School) (tbc)
Community Engagement Committee (19:00, East Preston Infant School)
- 26th VAAC Community Green Initiatives (14:00, Chichester) (JG)
East Preston Film Society 100th presentation (19:00, 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**

25th February 2025

Item 11 – Things we have been asked since the last meeting – Cllr Linton asked whether the council was or should be informed of when particular former prisoners moved into the area. The Clerk replied they were not as this was surely an infringement of those people's human rights. Several councillors agreed with this viewpoint. Cllr Bradshaw was aware of independent databases which were compiled from local knowledge, but these were unverified and had led to some appalling mistaken identity incidents. Cllr Duff said it was possible to have the police check upon your partner, but nothing else.

Item 6 – Trip to WSCC / Biffa Materials Recycling Facility, 18th February – Cllr Gunston thanked the Clerk for having organised this interesting trip. His thanks were echoed by councillors and members of the public who had attended.

201/25 **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.

Southern Water Your Water Matters, 12th February

St Mary's Centre, Felpham

This event had a wealth of information on work being done by Southern Water. At least 20 Southern Water employees at a number of stalls talked about the following - major investment projects, unflushables, wastewater treatment and flooding, community and education, developer services, customer service and support, water supply and treatment, clean rivers and seas and illegal connections. They are willing to support anything we want to do in East Preston. Contact yourwatermatters@southernwater.co.uk

Cllr John Gunston –

12th February 2025

Home-Start Arun, Worthing & Adur – Meet The Charity 25th Anniversary Lunch, 13th February

Arundel Town Hall

I was lucky enough to attend and celebrate the 'Meet The Charity' event at Arundel Town Hall. Home-Start are celebrating their 25th anniversary and the Post Office in Arundel had provided lunch for everyone. It was a great opportunity to find out more about the work they do and its impact.

What they do and why

Home-Start's volunteers and staff provide support to parents across Arun, Worthing and Adur who are really struggling. All their services are free of charge and open to anyone who has at least one child under the age of 5 years. Despite West Sussex being considered an affluent county, there are still many children living in poverty, with areas of Bognor Regis and Littlehampton in the poorest neighbourhoods in England. The cost-of-living crisis is making it harder than ever for parents to cope.

How they do it

Home-Start is a community-run service of local parents, Grandparents and professionals using lived experience to make life easier for families. They give compassionate, confidential, practical and emotional support to parents in their home, over the phone, at one of our family groups or in the community. They also run an in-house counselling service.

Of all the families that were supported by Home-Start in 2023-2024:

- 56% had at least one family member with a physical health condition.
- 87% were living with a mental health condition.
- 25% living in top 30% most deprived areas of England.
- 24% living in entirely inadequate housing.
- 46% were experiencing financial difficulties.
- 17% were experiencing domestic abuse.
- 85% of referred families have complex needs.

How you can help

Volunteer – if you can spare 2-3 hours a week after a short initial training programme and have experience as a parent, grandparent or working with children, contact admin@home-startawa.org.uk for an informal chat.

Keep in Touch – keep you up to date with their work, the outcomes our families achieve, events and relevant news. Sign up to their newsletter by visiting their website www.home-startawa.org.uk

Donate – If you are able, please donate monthly or give a one-off donation so that they can continue to improve the lives of local children and their families. Call **01903 953799** or visit www.home-startawa.org.uk

Finally – Parents – If you need support or perhaps just need to clear your head-please call Home-Start on **01903 953799**

Cllr Andrea Chapman

17th February 2025

With time pressing on, Cllr Toney thanked Cllrs Gunston and Chapman for their reports which he always enjoyed reading.

202/25 RESPONSE TO EXTERNAL MEETINGS AND EVENTS

Cllr Chapman offered a vote of thanks to Cllr Gunston for the good work he had done in setting up the Repair Café. Cllr Gunston thanked Cllr Chapman and noted the assistance he had received from Cllr Hill and others in getting to this point.

(The remaining members of the public left the meeting at this point.)

203/25 EAST PRESTON YOUTH CENTRE

Late in February, the council had been contacted by Justice & Co. estate agency on behalf of WSCC, advising the county council was looking to lease the East Preston Youth Centre building for offers in excess of £25,000 per year.

The Clerk had arranged a viewing for 17:00 on the afternoon of the meeting and Cllrs Toney, Chapman, Duff, Gunston, Mathias and Moore had attended with him. Some discussion needed to be had following the visit as the council would need to let the agency know quickly if it was interested in pursuing the building further.

Several councillors generally agreed the building would make a lovely community hub of some description which could be made available to organisations daytime and evenings, but there would always be the problem of protecting the school's pupils from a regular stream of members of the public crossing the schools' sites unchecked. It was felt the obstacles were too insurmountable.

After some discussion...

1954 The council **RESOLVED** it was simply not feasible to express an interest in the East Preston Youth Centre building at this time.

One councillor voted against this decision.

204/25 NEW ITEMS FOR THE NEXT MEETING (7TH APRIL)

Village Green car-parking, possibly.

The meeting ended at 20:52.

Chairman: Date: **7th April 2025**
Cllr Steve Toney

END