



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, 2nd June 2025 at East Preston Infant School, Lashmar Road, East Preston

PRESENT: Councillors Kit Bradshaw, Lisa Duff, Barbara Gale, John Gunston, Helen Hill (from 18:47), Elizabeth Linton, Glyn Mathias, Rick McElroy (from 18:37), David Moore, Steve Toney (Chairman) and Steven Wilkinson

ALSO: Simon Cross, Clerk to the Council

Cllr Roger Elkins, West Sussex County Council (until 19:11)

Katy Rushton and Tina Humphries, Below the Belt (until 18:56)

Mrs Denton, Mr and Mrs Longman (both until 18:56)

ABSENT: Councillors Christine Bowman and Andrea Chapman

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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 18:33.

426/25 INTRODUCTIONS

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

427/25 BELOW THE BELT

The meeting received a presentation from Katy Rushton, introducing a newly-formed group in the village, looking to support those affected by prostate cancer.

The Clerk mentioned an organisation called Prostate Cancer Support Organisation was hosting free prostate specific antigen (PSA) screening in Angmering on 7th June. Katy replied Below the Belt was in touch with the organisation attempting to bring a testing session to East Preston. Below the Belt was also contacting local GP surgeries.

Mrs Longman said that although access to the PSA test was not as easy as it should be, once Mr Longman had been diagnosed the level of care was exemplary.

At Cllr Toney's request, members to show their support for the new organisation.

(Cllr McElroy arrived partway through this item.)

428/25 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

1984 The Council **RESOLVED** unanimously to accept the apologies received from Cllrs Bowman (away) and Chapman (unwell).

Apologies had also been received from District Councillors Paul Kelly, Philippa Bower and Ricky Bower, Hayley Backley, Julian Ellis, Dean Jones and Sue Morley.

429/25 DECLARATION OF PERSONAL AND/OR PREJUDICIAL/PECUNIARY INTERESTS

None were declared.

430/25 PUBLIC SESSION

Agenda Item 17 – West Sussex County Council – Mrs Denton thanked the council for its work with WSCC Highways in reviewing speed limits in the village, in particular in Clarence Drive and Sea Road. Mrs Denton hoped for some positive outcomes in the near future.

Agenda Item 12a – Amenities Committee – Mrs Denton thanked the council for its refurbishment of the wooden bus shelters in the village. She had only heard positive comments from other members of the public.

Agenda Item 12c – Community Engagement Committee – Mrs Denton showed her support for Mrs Lee's comments at the last meeting on the subject of St George's Day. Mrs Denton felt strongly the council should be marking St George's Day in some way.

Cllr Linton replied the subject was on the Agenda for the Community Engagement Committee meeting scheduled for 9th June.

(Cllr Hill arrived at this point in the meeting.)

Agenda Item 18 – Arun District Council – Mrs Denton was concerned at the increased numbers of foxes apparently happy to live in close proximity to humans across the village. Not only had preventative measures cost her money, she had also had the distressing sight of four fox cubs drowned in her garden pond. Mrs Denton felt there needed to be some action taken where, maybe, families of foxes were caught and then released in local woodland where they should be living. Mrs Denton suggested an article could be published in the council's newsletter.

The Clerk replied pest control was a responsibility of ADC, and it published advice for measures which could be taken to deter foxes from visiting one's garden. These mainly involved removing sources of food and ensuring there were no easy accesses into your garden. He added the council had previously published advice in a newsletter and had received backlash from residents who feel it is important to feed such wildlife. Councillors reported some of their neighbours regularly fed foxes quite gourmet food; Cllr Bradshaw said he had noticed how many more foxes were hanging around the centre of the village, apparently happily, than there used to be – he was conflicted between his love of the beauty of foxes and the need for some action to be taken. Cllr Wilkinson mentioned the damage foxes were now doing to brake pipes on certain makes of car.

(Mr and Mrs Longman, Katy Rushton and Tina Humphries left at the conclusion of this item.)

431/25 COUNCIL RESPONSES

There were no further council responses.

432/25 WEST SUSSEX COUNTY COUNCIL

Before inviting County Cllr Elkins to address the meeting, Cllr Toney thanked Cllr Elkins and WSCC for the new parking restrictions and double yellow lines at the junction of North Lane with The Street and Lashmar Road. He was hopeful this would make the school crossing patrol a safer place again.

Cllr Elkins said there were currently two Traffic Regulation Orders for the village being considered, both in Sea Road. They were with the Parking Strategy Team for consideration.

The council was consulting on pharmacy services in the county and Cllr Elkins noted the Clerk had publicised this in the most recent e-newsletter from the parish council.

Similarly, the Clerk had publicised the Donate A Tree scheme run by WSCC. To be in with a chance of planting next autumn, applications needed to be in by the end of July.

The county council had launched Carewise, an advice line for members of the public navigating funding for the care of loved ones. According to the county council website, Carewise, “provides information and advice about care and support options, guiding you to the most suitable way of paying for long-term care. There is also access to the general money advice service at Age UK West Sussex, providing advice in a range of areas including pensions, benefits, managing debt and budgeting.”

With reference to the latest news on Local Government Reorganisation, Cllr Elkins referred to the WSCC Leader’s statement issued on 16th May, which the Clerk had circulated to all councillors. There was no clear way forward yet. Cllr Elkins said there was no update yet on where Crawley would end up after devolution nor whether or not a government White Paper would still be published in July.

In response to a question from Cllr Hill, Cllr Elkins said there were not site visits for every Traffic Regulation Order application, many relying upon desktop surveys and the input from the local Highways Officer.

The Clerk asked whether Cllr Elkins had seen the new double yellow lines mentioned by Cllr Toney above and, in particular, how the contractor had not refurbished the existing portion of double yellow lines whilst on site. Cllr Elkins said he had noticed this and would raise it although he knew this had long been a concern across the county.



With reference to the parish council’s request for him to facilitate a meeting with WSCC Highways about the rejected Traffic Regulation Order to impose a 20mph speed limit in The Street, Fairlands and Sea Road, Cllr Elkins reported the new Highways Officer was now in post and was working through a backlog which included such a meeting.

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

433/25 MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING HELD ON 12TH MAY 2025

The draft Minutes were circulated to all councillors on 13th May asking for suggested amendments by the 20th May. None were received.

- 1985** The Council **RESOLVED** unanimously the Chairman could sign the Minutes as a true record of the meeting held on 12th May. Cllr Toney duly did so.

437/25 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 336/25 – Community Engagement Committee – Stagecoach South bus services**
- 3. Minute 344/25 – Clerk’s Report Item 8 – South Strand Community Toilets AGM, 30th April**

1. Introduction

This is the report covering items discussed during Full Council meetings up to and including the meeting held on 7th April 2025.

2. Minute 336/25 – Community Engagement Committee – Stagecoach South bus services

The day after the meeting, I did report the concerns raised to our main contact at Stagecoach South, James O’Neill, Commercial Director. I added in a couple of other matters which had been mentioned to me at the same time.

My comments are in black with James’s replies in blue:

A resident stated she and several other residents felt victimised at the lack of bus services in the village compared to, for example, Rustington. This is not a view we have heard mentioned by many, and I just flag it here for info. *Noted - as we've discussed before, ideally we would still run more buses closer to the village, but we can't justify so many buses becoming delayed at the crossings (especially when Roundstone is such an awkward junction from the EP direction). The 11 (and 700 before it) are fully commercial and operate based on customer volume without subsidy, which does mean we'll always be reviewing according to demand - more people ultimately will push us towards more buses, if that's where the trend is.*

Kind of in support of the above resident, a councillor said she had caught the 11 back from Worthing a few times. She reported the reduced frequency and the smaller buses meant the service had been very busy for most of the journey. How quickly will the frequency be reviewed? *We've got a limited amount of data so far - we regularly review passengers numbers on every trip and every boarding stage to understand our areas of strength and weakness. Partly because Easter has muddled year-on-year comparisons, we haven't yet got a clear picture of where we are and this will need a few months of data before we can take a longer-term view. The numbers I've seen so far don't suggest there's a capacity issue, although 0930 is still a peak which distorts the picture (but this would happen even if buses were every 20 mins!). We aren't in a position to make further changes in the immediate future, because it would be too knee-jerk, but we are keeping a close eye on everything.*

A resident travelled on the 06:55 No. 11 from Fairlands on 30th April. He asked for a ticket to Brighton and was told that was not possible. Changing at Worthing, he boarded an onward bound No. 700 and was happily allowed to use his ticket to get him to Brighton. Returning much later in the day, he was issued with a single ticket to cover this Nos. 700 and 11 journey back to East Preston. I believe he has contacted Customer Services. *There isn't a through ticket between 11 and 700 - the reason being, although there is between Coastliner 700 and 701. The reason being that to add one in would trigger requests for similar on the 9, and then the 10... etc. In a normal non-fare cap set-up, which we're*

expecting to apply again from January, our £8.50 DayRider would probably be the best value ticket for a Brighton Return anyway, but at the moment the £3 cap is distorting the choice. So - on this occasion the customer has been permitted a cheaper ticket by the driver, but should really have paid £8.50 rather than £6 total.

All our DayRiders are 20% cheaper when bought in packs of 5 on our app, which means the difference is only 80p if the customer is likely to make repeated trips beyond Service 11.

Finally, now the Lyminster bypass has opened, have you been able to decide upon the route of the No. 9 where the bypass runs parallel to the A284 Lyminster Road? We are talking to WSCC about options to serve Hampton Park, which is dependent on funding. This isn't necessarily a question for Service 9, which has some customer demand through Lyminster village, but it's part of a wider conversation.

Meanwhile, on Friday 23rd May, the council received the following email from a resident of Roundstone Drive:

Good morning Simon:

We have had numerous E Mail exchanges regarding busses through East Preston.

I don't know whether you've had any reaction from either other residents or Stagecoach themselves now the new service has been operating for a few weeks but here's my tuppenceworth.

I printed out the timetable you sent me some while ago and my experience so far is that virtually every time I see a bus pass close to my house a quick glance at the clock confirms it's pretty much on time within a minute or two.

We need to get to Wick regularly and it seems whether by accident or timetable design that the service 11 and service 701 connect almost seamlessly in both directions.

Finally my daughter is very happy with the early morning service which gets her to Worthing in good time for work.

Overall very pleased so far.....What do other people think?

Kindest Regards

3. **Minute 344/25 – Clerk's Report Item 8 – South Strand Community Toilets AGM, 30th April**

On 20th May, Amanda from South Strand Community Toilets group let stakeholders know the group had been paid £356.02 by Easyfundraising. This money is raised by supporters visiting the Easyfundraising website and then shopping online from there. This money reflects one quarter's worth of fundraising in this way.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

27th May 2025

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

438/25 **ANNUAL ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31ST MARCH 2025**

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

**Annual Financial Matters – Accounts for year-ending
31st March 2025**

Council is asked to approve the accounts for the year-ending 31st March 2025 and can be signed by the Chairman and the Clerk/Responsible Financial Officer.

Cllr McElroy to introduce this item.

There is a complication this year as this is the first year our accounting software has produced the year-end paperwork, and it does not have access to last year's figures, hence the list of 0s on the left-hand side of each of the three relevant sheets. The accounts have been checked to the satisfaction of our Internal Auditor and can be found at Appendix A of these papers. This year, the Finance & General Purposes Committee has not met to review the figures.

Councillors with any questions are invited to call the office prior to the meeting. Adrian will be in the office on the morning of the meeting, although I will not be.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

28th May 2025

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

The accounts had been checked to the satisfaction of the council's Internal Auditor and were circulated with the supporting papers for the meeting.

1986 The council **RESOLVED** unanimously the Chairman of the Council and the Clerk / Responsible Financial Officer could sign the accounts for the year ending 31st March 2025.

The Chairman and the Clerk duly signed the Annual Accounts for the year ending 31st March 2025.

The following report, covering the next three Minutes, had been circulated in advance of the meeting:

Annual Financial Matters – Annual Governance and Accountability Return for year-ending 31st March 2025

Council is asked to note the Annual Internal Audit Report 2024/25 page of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return for the year-ending 31st March 2025.

Council is asked to agree Section 1 – *Annual governance statement 2024/25* - of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return for the year-ending 31st March 2025 can be signed by the Chairman and the Clerk/Responsible Financial Officer.

Council is asked to agree Section 2 – *Accounting statements 2024/25* - of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return for the year-ending 31st March 2025 can be signed by the Chairman and the Clerk/Responsible Financial Officer.

Cllr McElroy to introduce this item.

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

Appendix B shows the section of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return form completed by the council's internal auditor, Andy Beams of Mulberry Local Authority Services Limited. Andy's full report is covered by Agenda Item 13a below. I have circulated the complete Internal Auditor report to all councillors to give them additional confidence in agreeing to sign-off the paperwork in Appendix C.

Appendix C shows the two sections of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return form the council needs to agree can be signed by the Chairman and me.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

23rd May 2025

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

439/25 ANNUAL GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY RETURN (AGAR) FOR YEAR-ENDING 31ST MARCH 2025 – ANNUAL INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT 2024/25

The Council **NOTED** the *Annual Internal Audit Report 2024/25* section of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return for the year-ending 31st March 2025.

440/25 ANNUAL GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY RETURN (AGAR) FOR YEAR-ENDING 31ST MARCH 2025 – SECTION 1, ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT 2024/25

- 1987** The council **RESOLVED** unanimously the Chairman of the Council and the Clerk / Responsible Financial Officer could sign Section 1 – *Annual Governance statement 2024/25* of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return for the year ending 31st March 2025.

The Chairman and the Clerk duly signed Section 1 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return for the year ending 31st March 2025.

441/25 ANNUAL GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY RETURN (AGAR) FOR YEAR-ENDING 31ST MARCH 2025 – SECTION 2, ACCOUNTING STATEMENTS 2024/25

- 1988** The council **RESOLVED** unanimously the Chairman of the Council and the Clerk / Responsible Financial Officer could sign Section 2 – *Accounting statements 2024/25* of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return for the year ending 31st March 2025.

The Chairman and the Clerk duly signed Section 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return for the year ending 31st March 2025.

442/25 FINANCIAL MATTERS

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

- 1989** The council **RESOLVED** unanimously to approve the Outstanding Purchase Orders report for 2025/26, value £0.00.
- 1990** The council **RESOLVED** unanimously to approve the Regular Monthly Payments reports for May 2025 totalling £810.23 (inc. VAT).
- 1991** The council **RESOLVED** unanimously to approve the Supplier BACS Invoices Paid reports for May 2025 totalling £41,450.06 (inc. VAT).
- 1992** The council **RESOLVED** unanimously to approve the List of Sales Receipts & Bank Receipts by Bank report for financial year to date totalling £1,317.50 (inc. VAT) for May 2025, (Year to Date, £158,522.45).

The council **NOTED** the Bank Reconciliations to 14th May 2025.

The council **NOTED** the Budget Summary for 2025/26 to date.

Cllr Toney thanked Adrian for preparing the above reports.

Cllr Wilkinson noted one bank account had now moved significantly above the £85,000 Financial Services Compensation Scheme (FSCS) limit. Cllr Linton replied she had flagged this to Adrian who needed to find another bank account to open. The Clerk added any new bank account needed to be with a bank which was not part of a banking group the council already used as the FSCS limit only applied to accounts held in different banking groups; this was easier said than done.

443/25 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 and Planning & Licensing. By the time of this meeting, the draft Minutes from all three meetings should have been circulated to all councillors.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

27th May 2025

Amenities Committee

Cllr Wilkinson is chairman of this committee.

The committee met on 19th May. Cllrs Wilkinson and Toney were, respectively, re-elected Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the committee. Below are some of the topics discussed.

Village Green car-park – Following the 20th December accident where a vehicle reversed into part of the car-park's fencing, causing considerable damage to both the fence and bollards. The work to replace the fencing has been completed. The bollards have been replaced with new stainless steel bollards with reflective bands. The appearance of the area has greatly improved. As requested by the Disabled Action Group (DAG), the cycle hoop in front of the car-park's ticket machine has been removed to improve accessibility in the area.

Bus Shelters – At the May Amenities Committee meeting, the committee agreed to reinstate the North Lane Bus shelter. The committee is exploring the possibility of building a shelter from composite materials.

Warren Recreation Ground boundary work – Following the heavy reduction work to the eastern boundary trees, areas of the cricket nets were in need of repairs. The committee agreed to donate £1,000.00 towards the cost of the urgent nets work.

Warren Recreation Ground - The committee is in discussions with neighbours from the western boundary of Warren Recreation Ground regarding misuse of the tennis court for playing football, stray cricket balls and possible damage to property and opposing the proposal for new outdoor gym equipment.

Sea Road Bollards – The committee is considering a request from Roy Allen, Director of Sea Road Beach Access Ltd, to replace the bollards at the end of Sea Road. The committee will meet with Philip and Zoë Steel, owners of the caravan park, to take their views in to account before making its decision.

The committee's next full meeting will be on 11th August.

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

27th May 2025

Audit & Governance Committee

Cllr Mathias is the chairman of this committee.

The committee did not meet in May. The final Internal Audit for the year ending 31st March 2025 took place on 19th May and the report has been circulated to councillors and will be considered by the committee at its next meeting, currently scheduled for 14th July.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

27th May 2025

Community Engagement Committee

Cllr Linton is the chairman of this committee.

The committee did not meet in May.

The timetable for the next quarterly newsletter will be sign-off on 21st July for delivery during the first two weeks of August. Any suggestions for articles should be sent to Cllr Linton and me.

The council’s chosen contractor has had an initial meeting with WSCC Highways about possible improvements to the Roundstone Level Crossing and associated roundabouts. Some initial drawings will be considered by the committee at its next meeting.

The committee’s next meeting will be on 9th June.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

27th May 2025

Finance & General Purposes Committee

Cllr McElroy is the chairman of this committee.

The committee on 13th May. Cllrs McElroy and Gunston were, respectively, re-elected Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the committee. The main business was the consideration of Grant Aid applications received. Grants were made to the following organisations:

Organisation – charity no	Reason	Acknowledgement
4SIGHT Vision Support 1075447	“to support 8 [...] clients for a period of 12 months”	“Thank you for letting us know that East Preston Parish council have again agreed to support our services in your area. We would love the opportunity to come and talk to you about our services in your area.”
Air Ambulance Charity Kent Surrey Sussex 1021367	“Contribution to operating costs of HEMS (Helicopter Emergency Medical Service)”	“Many thanks to you once again for letting us know the outcome of our grant application, and to your Council for its generosity. Both are much appreciated. The grant will be put to very good use.”
Arun Counselling Centre 293053	“towards counselling for clients in East Preston only”	“We are very grateful to East Preston Parish Council for choosing to support us. This funding will be vital in allowing clients in East Preston who are struggling financially, as well as experiencing mental health difficulties, to receive the mental health support they need.”

East Preston in Bloom n/a	“to enhance and regenerate the current green public spaces owned by East Preston Parish Council”	“On behalf of the East Preston in Bloom group I would like to thank the Parish Council for considering our request and agreeing a donation.”
East Preston Junior School Family Support n/a	“To support families of EPJS with food support as needed.”	“That’s fantastic news! Thanks!”
East Preston Repair Café n/a	“6 months hall hire + annual insurance”	“On behalf of the volunteers I would like to thank the Parish Council and particularly the office staff for all their support in setting up the Repair Café. Without this grant and your help we would have been unable to carry on so please pass on my thanks.”
East Preston Yarnbombers n/a	“purchase public liability insurance”	“Thank you Simon and please express our gratitude to the Parish Council.”
Family Support Work (FSW) 285337	“funding to provide outreach for vulnerable families and their children through after-school clubs”	“This is wonderful news – please pass on our grateful thanks to the committee.”
Friends of Angmering Station n/a	“display on Angmering Station of “Rail 200” Poster Competition entries	“Thank you for suggesting this funding possibility to me. Our thanks too, to all the committee for agreeing to sponsor our poster work.”
Friends of East Preston Infant School 1108710	“music sessions to the pupils of East Preston Infant School – many of whom live in East Preston – to give them a broader and exciting curriculum experience”	“That is great news, it is much appreciated – the PTA will be very grateful as they are trying to help with a larger project in resurfacing the Year R playground so their funds are stretched and not able to help us as much as they would like.”
Friends of Oak Grove College 271168	“towards library books and supporting materials for Oak Grove College. Every child in East Preston who cannot attain mainstream attends this SEND school, and the transport buses are a familiar sight on term days! Over the past 3 years we have turned the conference room into a wonderful library space where formerly we only had a locked bookcase shoehorned into a corner of the training kitchen! There is plenty of empty shelving waiting to be filled and books are sourced specifically for inclusion and diversity and graphics for the non-readers.”	“Thank you for supporting our work once again. It is very much appreciated.”
Home-Start Arun, Worthing and Adur 1132416	“To continue our vital services for families in East Preston who are facing difficult time, we need to update all our outdated computers to ensure we work efficiently and store data securely”	“What a lovely message to get first thing this morning. Thank you so much, Your donation will be used to help families in East Preston who are struggling through their children’s early years.”
Sea Road Beach Access Limited n/a	“For East Preston Community Boardwalk for: planting of environmental area and insurance”	“Thanks for the £712 grant which has been credited to our bank account.”
Waves Music Therapy 1194782	“A 12-week music therapy project offering meaningful, creative engagement for local young adults with profound disabilities”	“Wow, Simon, this is so wonderful, thank you! We will keep in touch about the work and are super grateful as always.”

The above grants left £3,000 in the budget line for the current financial year. The committee also agreed grants to East Preston Festival Committee and East Preston Football Club, these coming from other budget lines. The chairman of the Festival Committee, Janine Nicholson, emailed, “On behalf of the Festival Committee, I would like to thank the Parish Council’s Finance Committee for the grant of £2,100. This will be used to pay the Festival’s annual public liability insurance, due for renewal in July, with the residue going towards the cost of the children’s entertainment at this

year's Community Fete. We would also like to take this opportunity to thank you and the Parish Councillors for your continuing help and support in all we do, and acknowledge your kind words of appreciation." The chairman of the Football Club, Tim Teasel, emailed, "As always, thank you for the support and providing this grant to us."

The committee also agreed to close the Conservative Hall ear marked reserve and to set up an ear marked reserve for works that may be necessary when the Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Bill becomes law.

The committee's next meeting is scheduled for 18th August.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

27th May 2025

Major Events Committee

Cllr Linton is Chairman of the committee.

The committee did not meet in May. The committee's next meeting is on 23rd June.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

27th May 2025

Personnel Committee

The committee did not meet in May.

Councillor and officer Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks are being completed in a timely fashion, but a few remain outstanding. If you would prefer to work with someone in the Council Office on completing this, please book a time with Alison. You will need your passport and National Insurance number as a minimum.

The committee's next meeting is scheduled for 21st July.

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

24th May 2025

Planning & Licensing Committee

The committee met on 13th and 19th May. Cllrs Bowman and Bradshaw were, respectively, re-elected Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the committee.

On 13th May, the committee considered two Applications, agreeing to object to proposals for a front boundary wall at a property in Michel Grove.

The committee considered a further three Applications on 19th May, agreeing not to object to any of them.

The Regulation 14 consultation on the revised East Preston Neighbourhood Plan began at midday on Thursday, 24th April and runs until the end of Sunday, 8th June. Some of the organisations

consulted have now started to send in comments. In the e-newsletter published on 22nd May, Cllr Bowman encouraged members of the public to comment too and that has seen an increase in the number of public comments.

The meeting scheduled for 9th June is not required and has been cancelled. The committee's next meeting will be on 23rd June.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

27th May 2025

Additionally:

Amenities – Cllr Wilkinson reported the day after the committee's last meeting, at which there had been a discussion about the perceived misuse of the tennis court, a court case based upon a similar situation, had been reported in the press. Cllr Wilkinson had read the full 18-pages of judgement in the case and found the judgement to be enlightening although he cautioned another similar case could be determined soon with a very different outcome.

With reference to the bollards at the beach end of Sea Road, he hoped to be able to meet with the owners of the caravan park early in July.

Community Engagement – Cllr Linton noted the council had received some initial drawings back from the traffic consultant looking at the Roundstone Level Crossing and surrounding area. Cllr Linton asked for volunteers to have a discussion about these before the council provided an initial response to the consultant. Cllr Toney would be involved as chairman of the council and Cllr Linton would like Cllr Chapman to be involved as a resident of Angmering. Cllr Bradshaw volunteered as his work often took him out of the village over the Roundstone Level Crossing. Cllr Linton said she would arrange a meeting soon.

Personnel – Cllr Duff simply reminded councillors and officers to renew their DBS checks soon if they had not already done so.

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

444/25 AUDIT & GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE – INTERNAL AUDIT FOR YEAR ENDING 31ST MARCH 2025

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

Audit & Governance Committee – internal audit for the year ending 31st March 2025

Council is asked to note the Internal Audit report for the year ending 31st March 2025.

The council's internal audit for the past municipal year was completed by Andy Beams of Mulberry Local Authority Services on Monday, 19th May. Andy's report was provided to the council late on 20th May and circulated electronically to all councillors on the morning of 21st May.

Andy's report included the following three paragraphs as part of his Executive Summary:

"Our sample testing did not uncover any errors or misstatements that require reporting to the external auditor at this time, nor did we identify any significant weaknesses in the internal controls such that public money would be put at risk.

"It is clear the council takes governance, policies and procedures seriously and I am pleased to report that overall, the systems and procedures you have in place are fit for purpose and whilst my report may contain recommendations to change these are not indicative of any significant failings, but rather are pointers to improving upon an already well-ordered system.

"It is therefore our opinion that the systems and internal procedures at East Preston Parish Council are well established and followed."

Several councillors have kindly taken the time to thank the council's officers for their efforts in keeping the council on track and the officers thank the councillors for that.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

23rd May 2025

Cllr Mathias said the Audit & Governance Committee would consider this report further at its meeting scheduled for July although he doubted there was much for consideration.

445/25 REPORTS FROM PARISH COUNCIL WORKING PARTIES

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

Working Parties

Only the Leases Working Parties met in May, and that not standalone.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

23rd May 2025

20mph Working Party

Cllr Wilkinson is the chairman of this working party.

The working party did not meet in May.

Following the meeting I had on 1st May with residents of Clarence Drive and St Mary's Drive, the council agreed to fund a traffic survey of Clarence Drive. This will take place during June and the location of the strips across the road have been agreed with the lead resident. This will cost the council £265 excl. VAT.

As for the plan to make three roads 20mph in the village, County Cllr Elkins is waiting for the new Highways officer to settle in before arranging a meeting.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

27th May 2025

Devolution and Local Government Reorganisation Working Party (DevoWP)

Cllr Gunston is the chairman of this committee.

The working party did not meet in May.

With reference to the working party's document about local government reorganisation, on 20th May, the Clerk received the following email from Caroline Baxter in Dr Beccy Cooper's office: "Many thanks for sharing this document. Beccy has asked me to pass on her thanks and to let you know that she took it with her to a recent roundtable meeting with Alex Norris, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State at the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government. She raised several of the points outlined. We'll be in touch as matters progress and look forward to setting future meeting dates as new timetables are confirmed. And huge thanks for putting it together so quickly!"

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 council has now received a quotation for various electrical works needed at the Council Office. Receipt of that quotation would be a good starting point for a working party meeting.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

27th May 2025

Leases Working Party (LWP)

Cllr Wilkinson is the chairman of this working party.

Members of the Leases Working Party met as part of the Finance & General Purposes Committee meeting on 13th May. The committee considered a response from East Preston & Kingston Bowls Club preferring to leave negotiations to legal experts rather than having a face-to-face meeting, Secretary to Clerk, with the council. The committee agreed I should try once more to have such a face-to-face meeting and a letter has been sent to the club's secretary to that effect. The secretary has replied other committee members are currently out of the country but he will aim to respond fully in early June.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

27th May 2025

Additionally:

Devolution and Local Government Reorganisation – Cllr Gunston recommended there was no further action the working party could undertake until the situation became clearer.

Flat and Frontage – Cllr Wilkinson reported the Clerk had called a meeting for 9th June, mainly to discuss electrical works required at the Council Office.

Leases – Cllr Wilkinson asked whether the council had any idea how many members lived in the village. In November, the club had informed the council there were 144 paying members but not how many lived in the village.

There was some discussion about how the council should pursue this matter should the club not be forthcoming early in the month. Cllr Wilkinson will call a working party meeting as necessary.

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

446/25 COUNCIL PLAN 2025

The following report had been circulated ahead of the meeting:

Council Plan 2025

Council is asked to agree to the publication of the latest Council Plan.

Cllr Wilkinson has worked with officers and committee chairmen to bring the Council Plan up-to-date and he would now like council to approve its suitability for publication. As per the introduction, the Council Plan “sets out the Council’s achievements, its vision for the parish, its purpose, values, objectives, and key priorities for the next four years.” The Plan would be published on the council’s website with paper copies available upon request.

A copy of the latest draft of the Plan (v9) was circulated electronically with the papers for this meeting. If you require a paper copy, please contact the office. Cllr Wilkinson has asked committee chairmen to provide any updated information for inclusion in the document.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

27th May 2025

Cllr Wilkinson explained the opening paragraph of the report was a little ahead of itself and he had merely wanted to bring the Council Plan to the meeting as a way of encouraging better engagement with it from the chairmen of the council’s committees.

He had now produced v10.1 and, following their agreement, would circulate it to committee chairmen, explaining which parts of the document he specifically wanted them to concentrate on.

447/25 ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

The following report had been circulated ahead of the meeting:

Annual Parish Meeting, 12th May 2025

Council is asked to note the draft Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 12th May.

The Annual Parish Meeting took place on 12th May and included a presentation from the Cyber Crime part of Surrey and Sussex Police. The meeting was followed by drinks and nibbles with some of the members of the public who had attended. These were circulated electronically to all councillors on 13th May.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

13th May 2025

Council NOTED the draft Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting without proposing any changes.

448/25 ARUN DISTRICT COUNCIL

All three district councillors had offered their apologies for this meeting. Cllr Philippa Bower had expanded, “All is quiet at Arun, there is nothing to report.”

449/25 SUSSEX POLICE

No report had been received.

450/25 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. **Internal Audit for the year ending 31st March 2025, 19th May**
6. **Community Speedwatch, 22nd May**
7. **West Sussex County Council, Traffic Regulation Order for North Lane**
8. **Social media**
9. **MailChimp stats**
10. **A selection of things we have been asked since the last meeting**
11. **Recent bouquets and complaints**
12. **Leave**
13. **June meetings and events**

1. **Introduction**

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

2. **Police matters**

No local police matters to discuss.

The Community Speedwatch team is back out monitoring vehicle speeds in the village. In the past month, five vehicles have been reported to Sussex Police.

A resident asked me if cars literally racing up Sea Road from a standing start by Two Acres had been reported to the council. I replied they had not and he promised to let me know if he saw it again.

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

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

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

On 21st May, the council received a direct Freedom of Information for the first time since 2014. The council has until 19th June, by my calculation, to respond. I did not believe the information requested was complex enough to justify calling the panel together.

No Data Protection requests received since the last report.

5. **Internal Audit for the year ending 31st March 2025, 19th May**

The council's internal auditor, Andy Beams representing Mulberry Local Authority Services Ltd., visited the council to complete his internal audit work started at the interim internal audit back in

October. His work on that occasion mainly covered the governance side of the council, this visit was mainly on the financial side and, in particular, preparation of the council's Annual Governance and Accountability Return for the year ending 31st May 2025. Andy spoke in depth with Adrian and left happy. A report for councillors to note has been covered at Agenda Item 13a.

6. Community Speedwatch, 22nd May

I completed this watch with the new CSW coordinator, Gavin Bernard. We set up outside the Village Hall for an hour from 10:00, monitoring traffic in both directions. We recorded 242 vehicle movements and one driver travelling northbound at 38mph. He will be entered into the CSW reporting tool and will be contacted by Sussex Police.

7. West Sussex County Council, Traffic Regulation Order for North Lane

On 7th May, the council received notification of a Traffic Regulation Order consultation to "introduce double yellow lines on both sides of North Lane in East Preston, from a point 25m east of its junction with Lashmar Road, to its junction with The Street." Comments needed to be received by WSCC by 29th May, so I circulated the plans electronically and asked councillors to let me know their thoughts. The councillors who replied were all positive and that response has been provided to WSCC.

8. Social media

None of the council's Facebook posts in May reached more than 250 people let alone 500. The highest reach in May was 225 people for a MailChimp repost for the 22nd May e-newsletter.

(posts up to and including 26th May)

The number of Followers is currently 1,923, an increase of 3 on the last report.

9. MailChimp stats

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

Parish Council news – 8th May – sent to 954 subscribers, opened by 694 (72.8%)

Parish Council news – 15th May – sent to 957 subscribers, opened by 699 (73.1%)

Parish Council news – 22nd May – sent to 960 subscribers, opened by 683 (71.4%)

10. Things we have been asked since the last meeting

"Where can I recycle my toothpaste tubes?" (The A-Z of Recycling on the WSCC website says this, "Empty plastic squeeze toothpaste tubes can be recycled in your home recycling bin alongside other plastic items such as pots, tubs and trays. Ensure they are as empty as possible and that lids are replaced before placing them in the recycling bin. Lids must remain on the tubes - if they are placed separately, they might get lost during the sorting process.")

"As it's the 80th anniversary of VE Day tomorrow, could the council organise a Spitfire flypast from Goodwood?" (The question was actually asked in the week after the 80th anniversary of VE Day, by which time it was a bit late to ask and probably a bit too expensive for the council.)

"May I report to you a broken paving slab outside [such and such] business?" (You may, but upon closer inspection the broken paving slab transpired to be on the forecourt of a business not on the public highway.)

"Where can I find more information on the King Charles II England Coastal Path?" (Useful information on the route can be found here - https://www.nationaltrail.co.uk/en_GB/trails/england-coast-path-south-

[east/trail-information/](#) - including a zoomable map, and I also provided two email addresses for general enquiries related to the path.)

“I have ninety bread rolls to give to the foodbank, do you know where I can take them?” (Non-perishable food can be dropped into Cooper-Adams in the village, or the Littlehampton Foodbank office at Littlehampton Baptist Church. However, as this food was perishable we suggested some social venues within the village which might be prepared to take some.)

A resident called in to ask if we had had any reports of other drivers returning to their cars to find a potentially offensive printed notice left on the windscreen, in this case questioning the driver’s parking ability. (No, the council had not.)

11. **Recent bouquets and complaints**

(In addition to anything reported above)

On 8th May, a gentleman called to report a problem with Cubicle 1 at Sea Road toilets. In response to Dawn thanking him, he replied, “No thanks needed. I love you guys. I love these toilets, and yes, I love you guys.”

As part of the Big Fix month, WSCC Senior Project Officer, Recycling and Waste Management, Nicola Hussey asked all Repair Cafes in the county to provide her with information on any work completed during sessions held in May. Following the Repair Café session on 10th May, I sent over East Preston’s information. Nicola replied, “Thank you so much for sending this over, sounds like a successful café 😊”

Thanks from the chairman of the Disability Action Group, Marion Mitchell, for passing on a public donation to the group and for passing on to the member of the public a letter of thanks from the group.

From the gentleman seeking information on the coastal path, “That’s brilliant.”

The council informed ADC when a local resident found the online complaint form kept failing for him. The following day we received the following email from the Monitoring Officer’s office, “Just a quick update on this service matter. After reading your email, I completed a ‘test’ form and it all seemed to work okay. So, I then raised a call with our support team who have advised that the failure was due to the length of the text included, rather than anything being ‘invalid’. As a consequence, they have now changed the field to allow a maximum 1000 words, and to display a word count so that the customer can see how much ‘space’ they have left. Thank you for making us aware of this issue, and giving us the opportunity to improve the customer experience.”

On the second Bank Holiday Monday, I was stopped in Aldi by two residents of Sea Road. The wife thanked the council for tree-works carried out on the eastern boundary which had restored light to their property’s garden they had forgotten had ever been there. The husband added he had noticed the village was much busier, in a good way, than it used to be and suggested that was because of me – I denied that.

12. **Leave**

Currently, I am off on the 5th, Dawn is off between the 3rd and the 11th, Alison on the 9th and 16th and Adrian for the week beginning 9th.

On 2nd June, I will be off for most of the day but around in time for the meeting in the evening.

13. **June Meetings and Events**

This list may be incomplete and is subject to change.

- 2nd Full Council (18:30, East Preston Infant School)
- 6th East Preston Festival starts (various)
- 7th Come and Meet Your Local Councillors (councillors 09:30, public 10:00-12:00, Council Office)
- 9th Flat & Frontage Working Party (18:30, East Preston Infant School)
Community Engagement Committee (19:00, East Preston Infant School)
- 10th Ems Friendly Farm (17:00, Village Green)
- 20th Sussex Community Rail Partnership blue plaque unveiling (11:00, Angmering Station) (tbc)
- 21st East Preston Repair Café (10:00, Vicarage Lane)
- 23rd Planning & Licensing Committee (18:00, East Preston Infant School)
Major Events Committee (19:00, East Preston Infant School)
- 26th Smartphone Free Childhood: *Parenting in the Smartphone Era: the hidden impact on our children* (18:30, East Preston Junior School) (AC, LD and SC only - tbc)
- 28th Littlehampton Town Council Armed Forces Day (10:30, East Beach, Littlehampton) (ST)

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**

27th May 2025

Item 10 – Things we have been asked since the last meeting – Cllr Linton said she found the ever-changing information on the A-Z of Recycling very useful.

451/25 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.

VAAC Chichester City Council Community Forum, 21st May

City Council Chamber, Chichester

This was a drop in session with Voluntary Action Arun and Chichester (VAAC) offering information on finance, volunteers, training and running community groups. They have a wealth of expertise and contacts that may be useful to voluntary groups in East Preston. VAAC's training courses cover a wide range of subjects including, volunteer recruitment and management, social media, health and safety, risk assessment and financial management. They will also help recruit volunteers. I got some useful information for the Repair Cafe and discussed the idea of setting up a community bank account with one of their finance team.

Cllr John Gunston

22nd May 2025

Cllr Gunston said the VAAC event had been very interesting. He knew VAAC had been helpful whilst East Preston Men in Sheds found its feet and felt there would be other village organisations who might benefit from talking to VAAC. Cllr Gunston proposed council invited VAAC to give a talk at a future monthly meeting to which local organisations could be invited. The council AGREED this was a good idea.

Cllr McElroy said he had run another Banksman Awareness session in the village on 1st June. This had been attended by members of the East Preston Festival Committee and East Preston & Kingston Horticultural Society. Cllr

McElroy clarified the session was not a certified course in any way, but was an introduction to banksmanship which he hoped would encourage attendees to look further into possible courses.

Cllr Gunston advised the meeting the representatives from the three parish councils involved in the REACH project – Angmering, Rustington and East Preston – had agreed to withdraw from the project which had hoped to make solar installations more affordable for residents in the three villages. A letter was being drafted to be sent to all residents who had expressed an interest in the project. That would explain the project had been morphed, mainly by external forces, into something too far removed from the original idea for the three councils to want to continue supporting it. Cllr Linton thanked Cllr Gunston for all his work on this project.

452/25 RESPONSE TO EXTERNAL MEETINGS AND EVENTS

Nothing was added.

453/25 NEW ITEMS FOR THE NEXT MEETING (7TH JULY)

The Clerk reminded councillors the next meeting would start at 18:30 with a presentation from Air Ambulance Charity, Kent Surrey and Sussex, the Chairman's Charity for 2025.

The meeting ended at 19:44.

Chairman: **Cllr Steve Toney**

Date: **7th July 2025**

END