



EAST PRESTON PARISH COUNCIL

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COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT COMMITTEE

- MINUTES:** of the Committee Meeting held on Monday, 9th June 2025 at East Preston Infant School, Lashmar Road, East Preston at 19:00
- PRESENT:** Councillors Andrea Chapman, Lisa Duff, Helen Hill, Elizabeth Linton (Chairman) and Steve Toney
- ALSO:** Clerk to the Council, Simon Cross
- ABSENT:** Councillor David Moore

The following abbreviations may appear in these Minutes:

ADC – Arun District Council;
EIWP – Environmental Initiatives Working Party;
KEPT – Keep East Preston Tidy
NHS – National Health Service;

NR – Network Rail;
VHF – East Preston & Kingston Village Hall Foundation;
WSCC – West Sussex County Council.

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The meeting opened at 18:59.

Following the Annual Meeting of the Council on 12th May, the membership of the committee was Cllrs Chapman, Duff, Hill and Moore with one vacancy. As Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Council respectively, Cllrs Toney and Linton were entitled to attend and vote at meetings of this committee.

In advance of the meeting the Clerk had written to all committee members, letting them know Cllr Linton had put herself forward for the role of Chairman. Cllr Duff put herself forward for the role of Vice-Chairman. No other councillors put themselves forward for either role. The meeting AGREED Cllr Chapman could act as a second teller alongside the Clerk.

454/25 APPOINTMENT OF A COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN FOR THE YEAR 2025/26

Cllr Linton was appointed unopposed.

Cllr Chapman confirmed all five councillors present had voted.

455/25 APPOINTMENT OF A COMMITTEE VICE-CHAIRMAN FOR THE YEAR 2025/26

Cllr Duff was appointed unopposed.

Cllr Chapman confirmed all five councillors present had voted.

456/25 APOLOGIES AND REASONS FOR ABSENCE

An apology and a reason for absence had been received from Cllr Moore (Sea Cadets Littlehampton meeting).

457/25 PERSONAL AND/OR PECUNIARY/PREJUDICIAL INTERESTS

No declarations were made.

458/25 PUBLIC SESSION

No members of the public were present.

459/25 ANNUAL PARISH MEETING, 12TH MAY 2025

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

Annual Parish Meeting

Committee is asked to review the Annual Parish Meeting which took place on Monday, 12th May.

For the past few years, we have been holding the Annual Parish Meeting on the same evening as we have held the Annual Meeting of the Council, the latter with a partially-reduced agenda. This kind of works ok, but can result in a long evening.

This year's meeting was due to receive two presentations: one from the Surrey & Sussex Police Cyber Crime Officer, booked last August, and one from a representative of this year's Chairman's Charity, Air Ambulance Charity – Kent, Surrey & Sussex. The latter representative was, at short notice, unable to attend and will be attending July's Full Council meeting instead.

Cllrs Bowman, Chapman and Duff kindly oversaw the epicurean offerings for after the event. Some members of the public stayed on for the chance to have a relaxed, informal chat with councillors.

It was clear the village's three Arun District Councillors were unprepared for the Annual Parish Meeting despite the covering letter sent with the Agenda advising it was the Annual Parish Meeting and there would be time to speak. Conversely, West Sussex County Councillor Roger Elkins had clearly given some thought to talking about the county council's achievements over the past year.

As he has been keen in the past to improve attendance at the Annual Parish Meeting, Cllr Gunston has provided these thoughts:

Thanks for making the Annual Parish Meeting more interesting by adding a speaker. A few ideas for the future: -

- Southern Water - contact - yourwatermatters@southernwater.co.uk - we could invite Surfers Against Sewage to encourage more attendees.
- WSCC highways to talk about TROs/potholes etc.
- A talk from the Preservation Society on East Preston.
- Come and meet your councillors session - perhaps combined with representatives from Arun and WSCC to explain what we all do.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

30th May 2025

Cllr Linton said she felt this year's Annual Parish Meeting had been good and it had attracted some members of the public. She said she felt having guest speakers was good, up to a maximum of two. Of those on the list provided by Cllr Gunston, Cllr Linton was unconvinced someone from West Sussex Highways would actually turn up if invited.

Following a mild telling-off by the school, council will remember not to have nuts at its events in the future nor to dispose of wine bottles on site.

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

East Preston Festival, 6th to 15th June 2025

Committee to receive any updates on the council's Festival events this year: *Come and Meet Your Local Councillors* event, 7th June and the visit of Ems Friendly Farm on 10th June.

By the time of the meeting, the first of the two events will have taken place.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

3rd June 2025

Cllr Linton thanked her fellow committee members for their wholehearted support and attendance at this event, when councillors outnumbered members of the public throughout the event, which had been affected by a poor weather forecast. Cllr Chapman received praise and thanks for her lemon and passion fruit cake.

The weather forecast was looking good enough for the visit of Ems Friendly Farm. At the above event, there had been some discussion about petting zoos spreading cryptosporidium, following which the Clerk had asked the proprietor of the farm what their precautions were. Cllrs Linton and Toney had both seen the proprietor's response and were confident in it.

461/25 PLAYSCHEMES

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

2025 Playschemes

Committee is asked to continue consideration of any 2025 playschemes.

At the January meeting, Cllrs Chapman and Duff had contacted Accelerate to see if it would be willing to run a playscheme on our behalf but had received no reply.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

30th May 2025

Cllr Duff reported ACCelerate had still not replied. Cllr Chapman suggested an event at the library and AGREED to contact the library about this. The committee AGREED it would like to run a playscheme in October.

462/25 TENNIS COACHING, JUNE 2025

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

Free tennis coaching, June

Committee is asked to receive an update on this near-annual initiative.

This year's dates coincide with East Preston Festival – 6th, 9th and 13th June. The correct information appears in this year's Festival brochure and we have put out some posters. As of today, two people have booked for the session on the 6th and one for the 9th.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

30th May 2025

Cllr Linton believed two people had attended the first session and three the second session. Mr Cook had noted there was a notice on the door to the tennis court advising members of the public the sessions were taking place and when. Committee AGREED this allowed Mr Cook to ask people to leave the court if they happened to be there during sessions.

463/25 SMARTPHONE FREE CHILDHOOD, 26TH JUNE 2025

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

Smartphone Free Childhood

Committee is asked to consider sending representatives to this group's meeting on 26th June.

A group of local parents has set up an organisation, Smartphone Free Childhood, concerned about the impact smartphones are having in schools. A meeting has been organised for the evening of Thursday, 26th June, at East Preston Junior School. Unofficially I have been asked whether the council would like to observe the meeting, just for information. An invite to parents and carers started, "You will know that we have long talked about the challenges of managing online devices and social media for children, and have drawn up our own home-school agreement on this. This year, a group of parents have worked together to build on this work, and would like to invite you to share in their event being held at EPJS at the end of June. The event provides an opportunity for parents and carers to come together and learn from experts about the hidden impact of smartphones and what we can do to protect our children."

As the event is expected to be well-attended, I have booked (free) tickets for Cllrs Chapman and Duff and myself to attend. If the committee feels the council should not be at the meeting, officially or unofficially, I can cancel those tickets. Cllrs Chapman and Duff have both confirmed they are keen and available to attend the meeting.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

30th May 2025

The committee AGREED it was happy for the three representatives to attend the meeting. Cllr Duff offered to provide a report to the July Full Council meeting.

464/25 EAST PRESTON SPORTS CLUBS MEETING, 28TH JULY 2025

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

Sports Clubs meeting, 28th July

Committee is asked to consider the creation of an annual meeting with the village's sports clubs.

At the last meeting, the committee agreed to host a meeting of the village's main sports clubs on Monday, 28th July. At present, the invited are the football, tennis, bowls, cricket and stoolball clubs. The date may be inconvenient for the stoolball club, but I am awaiting confirmation on that. Does anyone think the council should extend the invite to any of the village's other sports clubs?

At the last meeting it was also agreed the meeting should be led by Cllrs Toney and Linton with Cllr Moore also attending if available.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

30th May 2025

The committee AGREED the current invitation list was sufficient for the first meeting. Council could suggest at the meeting expanding future meetings to include other sports clubs in the village.

Cllr Linton said other councillors should feel free to attend this meeting if they wished.

465/25 BEACH CLEAN, 28TH SEPTEMBER

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

Beach Cleans

Committee is asked to consider any matters relating to the Beach Clean scheduled for Sunday, 28th September.

The Beach Clean on 6th April was successful, nicely-attended with a reasonable amount of litter collected, but not enough to be a cause for concern.

Which councillors will be in attendance on 28th September?

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

11th March 2025

Councillors noted the date. Cllr Hill said she was not available on that date.

466/25 EAST PRESTON YARBOMBERS

Prior to the meeting, the Clerk had confidentially circulated details of the Yarnbombers' proposal for Remembrance Sunday which involved an installation on the Village Green. The committee AGREED to the installation being on the Village Green and suggested it should be more towards the western boundary than in the middle. The Clerk would discuss this further with the Yarnbombers' representative.

467/25 TERMS OF REFERENCE

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

Terms of Reference

Committee is asked to carry out the annual review of its Terms of Reference.

The committee's Terms of Reference were last reviewed and adopted on 10th June 2024.

Proposed changes are in red. I propose to change the minimum number of paper newsletters to three from four in §5.8; this would enable the council to produce just three newsletters a year if there was too little news for an issue.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

3rd June 2025

The current Terms of Reference were distributed as a Supporting Paper for this meeting.

The committee AGREED unanimously to agree to the one proposed change to the Terms of Reference for the committee. These will form v7 of the committee's Terms of Reference.

468/25 EDITORIAL TEAM

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

Editorial team

Committee is asked to review the membership of its editorial team.

The council's editorial team is responsible for proofreading each paper newsletter produced and, where necessary, providing (or at least suggesting) articles for inclusion. Membership is currently Cllrs Toney and Linton, Duff and Gunston. Is anyone else interested in joining the editorial team?

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

3rd June 2025

Cllr Chapman volunteered to be a member of the team too.

469/25 CHRISTMAS LIGHTING

The following report was circulated in advance of the meeting:

Christmas Lighting

Committee is asked to receive any updates on the village's Christmas lighting.

Cllr Linton to lead on this item.

At the time of writing there are no updates.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

3rd June 2025

Cllr Linton thought Enerveo had now quoted for installing lighting points in Two Acres but the Clerk did not know of this. He would liaise with Dawn when she was back from leave. He had again chased Dominic from Event Power Engineering for further information on what his company could provide for Two Acres.

470/25 NEWSLETTER – SUMMER 2025

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

Newsletter – Summer 2025

Committee is asked to consider content for Newsletter No. 75, Summer 2025.

No. 75, the Summer 2025 newsletter, should go to print in the middle of July for delivery ahead of the Food & Drink Festival in August, so please start thinking of and writing potential articles now.

The Summer edition usually includes publicity for the Food & Drink Festival, any review of the East Preston Festival, any feedback from Come and Meet Your Local Councillors, publicity for the September Beach Clean and the October quiz afternoon. Glyn has agreed to help with an article marking his 30 years a councillor.

What else might we include?

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

3rd June 2025

The Clerk confirmed copy should be provided by the end of June. He would be able to write a shorter article on Come and Meet Your Local Councillors than in other years owing to the low attendance because of the forecast weather.

471/25 BUS SERVICE

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

Village bus service

Committee is asked to consider new information related to the provision of a village bus service.

The council is waiting for further information from Mike Clayden of Arun Community Transport.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

3rd June 2025

Councillors remained surprised the No. 12 service was still running through the village despite no funding from either East Preston or Rustington Parish Councils.

472/25 2026 EAST PRESTON CALENDAR

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

East Preston 2026 Calendar

Committee is asked to consider any matters related to the production of a 2026 East Preston calendar.

Cllrs Chapman and Duff are leads on this initiative.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

3rd June 2025

Cllrs Chapman and Duff reported they only needed to source another two photographs and then they would be ready to bring everything together. They would contact Christina the designer in the meantime, just to alert her they would be ready soon. The committee AGREED going to print in August was achievable with a view to having calendars for sale at the Food & Drink Festival on 23rd August.

The following report was circulated in advance of the meeting and covers the next two Minutes:

Community Speed Watch

Committee is asked to receive any update from the 20MPH Working Party.

County Cllr Elkins confirmed at the Full Council meeting on 2nd June he is still working on arranging a meeting between WSCC Highways and the parish council to discuss a 20mph zone to cover just The Street, Fairlands, Sea Road and a smidge of North Lane.

Committee is asked to receive an update on the decision to purchase Speed Indication Devices.

No change, i.e. following the correspondence mentioned above, it is possible some of the money being set aside for Speed Indication Devices may still need to be diverted to help persuade WSCC to implement the 20mph limit in Sea Road.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

4th June 2025

473/25 COMMUNITY SPEED WATCH – 20MPH WORKING PARTY

The Clerk reported the council had received an email that afternoon from one Gary Jannaway, “the new Assistant Area Highways Manager for the Arun district,” who was offering to meet with councils to discuss any Community Highways Schemes they were considering. The committee AGREED to invite Gary to meet with representatives of the council.

474/25 COMMUNITY SPEED WATCH – SPEED INDICATION DEVICES

There was nothing to add, as any further progress on this continued to depend upon the outcome of the above Minute.

475/25 DEFIBRILLATORS

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

Defibrillator

Committee is asked to continue consideration of the provision of another defibrillator in the village.

At its April meeting, council “resolved unanimously to spend up to £2,500 on provided and installing a defibrillator and cabinet at East Preston Fire Station.” Theoretically that is no problem but we have nothing in writing from the West Sussex Fire & Rescue Service and we need that before we can progress and we also need an agreement about maintenance, checking etc..

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

4th June 2025

Cllr Toney confirmed he would approach West Sussex Fire & Rescue Service for suitable written confirmation and agreement.

476/25 COMMUNICATIONS AUDIT

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

Communications Audit

Committee is asked to review the 2025 communications audit undertaken by Mandy Jameson.

Mandy visited the council on 25th April and met with Cllrs Linton and Duff and me. Overall, Mandy was generally very positive about the council’s engagement with the general public and her report was circulated electronically with these Supporting Papers. I believe Cllrs Linton and Duff found the meeting and report useful too.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

4th June 2025

Cllrs Duff and Linton agreed they had found the experience worthwhile. Cllr Duff said most of Ms Jameson’s report had been positive and, during the meeting, she had made comments comparing this council’s community engagement favourably to other councils she had audited. Ms Jameson’s report included small changes the council could introduce over time. The Clerk reported he had already started to “spice up” the Facebook post generated by each MailChimp e-newsletter. He felt he still had some work to do on this.

477/25 INVITE TO VILLAGE ORGANISATIONS

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

Environmental Initiatives Working Party – community groups

Committee is asked to consider an idea to invite community groups to future meetings to talk about working alongside the council.

In disbanding, the council's Environmental Initiatives Working Party made a suggestion the council investigated ways in which it could work more closely with community groups. The above meeting with the village's sports club can be seen as part of this. Additionally, at the council meeting on 2nd June, council agreed to invite Voluntary Action Arun and Chichester to give a short presentation at the September council meeting and to invite village community groups to attend that. What other ideas do we have?

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

4th June 2025

The Clerk confirmed VAAC had agreed to attend the September Full Council meeting and nearer the time the council would invited village organisations to attend too. VAAC was excited to have been invited.

Additionally, council had published Cllr Chapman's article on how to work with the council in the Spring 2025 Newsletter.

478/25 BRITISH SIGN LANGUAGE (BSL) TUITION

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

British Sign Language courses

Committee is asked to consider a public suggestion to facilitate some British Sign Language (BSL) courses in the village.

At the final 2025 Warm Welcome Space session, I was approached by Marion Bennett, a resident of Arun Court. Sadly, Marion has been losing her hearing for some time now and once her current hearing aids stop working for her, there will be no further options. Marion has started to learn BSL on a course especially for people learning it later in life, and wondered whether the council would help instigate something similar in East Preston.

I looked first at the Royal National Institute for the Deaf website. The organisation runs RNID Near You sessions in Rustington and Angmering and these are designed for those with hearing loss to drop into for advice, help with new batteries, that sort of thing. I contacted the local contact about the possibility of trialling a Near You session in the meeting room in the office and also for any suggestions for sign language classes.

There was a fairly positive response about hosting a Near You session in the office. However, the charity does not offer BSL classes, but had, "just launched a new product which allows you to learn basic BSL, please see the link: [RNID Connect - RNID](#)".

Any thoughts?

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

4th June 2025

Cllr Hill said she had signed up for a six-week BSL course in Angmering, starting at the end of June. Cllr Duff AGREED to trial the RNID Connect course on behalf of the council.

479/25 ST GEORGE'S DAY

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

Flags

Committee is asked to consider the purchase of an England flag and the creation of an annual diary of which flags the council wishes to fly on which dates.

At the Annual Meeting of the Council, Mrs Lee expressed concern no flag had been flown outside the library to mark St George's Day. Alison does not believe the council has owned an England flag in the ten years she has been working here, and I don't remember whether or not the council used to raise an England flag on St George's Day when I joined 18 years ago, but I don't think it did.

The conversation was expanded at the June council meeting when Mrs Denton said she supported Mrs Lee's comments and felt the council should talk to Mrs Lee about how best the village could mark St George's Day.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

4th June 2025

Cllrs Chapman and Duff said they felt little was done in schools to mark St. George's Day these days beyond an assembly. The committee AGREED the council should purchase a St. George's flag and should raise this on 23rd April each year. Beyond that, the committee AGREED it should wait and see what the taste was for anything more in the village to mark St. George's Day.

The Clerk would draw up a list of days during the year when the council flew certain flags on the war memorial flagpole outside East Preston library.

480/25 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 24TH MARCH

The draft Minutes of the meeting held on 24th March had been circulated to all members on 28th March asking for suggested amendments by 4th April. No changes had been suggested.

The committee AGREED unanimously the Minutes could be signed as a true record of the meeting which had taken place on 24th March and Cllr Linton duly completed this task.

481/25 UPDATE ON MATTERS FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS

The following report was circulated in advance of the meeting:

Matters Arising from previous meetings

Minute 239/25 – Newsletter – Spring 2025 – following the meeting, I directed Cllr Linton to page 7 of the Summer 2024 Newsletter upon which was printed the council's third article on the possible transfer of ownership of the Conservative Hall. That article pretty much covered the ground Cllr Linton had wanted to cover in her article and so she politely withdrew her offer to write such an article.

Minute 245/25 – Warm Welcome Space 2025 – Cllr Linton duly purchased a spring plant for all attendees and volunteers present at the last of this year's Warm Welcome Space sessions. These were well-received.

Minute 248/25 – Parish in Bloom competition – I am not aware of any progress in this matter.

Minute 256/25 – Roundstone Level Crossing – council agreed the additional expenditure and Bright Plan has started working on this matter. An initial sounding-out meeting has been held with WSCC Highways and a group of councillors is meeting this afternoon to consider its response to initial drawings.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

4th June 2025

Minute 248/25 – Parish in Bloom Competition – Cllr Linton had no update on this matter but felt the council might need to nudge East Preston in Bloom nearer the time.

The following paper was circulated in advance of the meeting:

Parked projects

Committee is asked to note the committee's currently parked projects such as any wellbeing projects, Warm Welcome Space 2026, St John Ambulance First Aid training, Blue Billboard, a Classic Car Show and the WSCC Library Service centenary.

Apparently, I am to be featured as Library Champion on West Sussex Libraries social media this week!

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

4th June 2025

The committee thanked the Clerk for getting himself and the council recognised as West Sussex Libraries' Champions. The following had been published on West Sussex Libraries' social media on 4th June:



The council had been nominated by people within the Library Service for this recognition.

Cllr Toney asked when the council would decide whether to offer Warm Welcome Space sessions in 2026. Cllr Linton reported the Royal British Legion had offered to run sessions on Wednesdays instead of Mondays if that would allow St Mary the Virgin Church to run a separate session on a Monday.

There remained concern the sessions are not reaching the people they are designed for but equally, there was agreement the sessions did provide an additional weekly social outlet which was genuinely appreciated by attendees.

Noting average attendance was down year-on-year, Cllr Chapman suggested the committee should initially be asking whether it wanted to run the sessions again for a further year.

After some discussion, including whether to invite Our Lady, Star of the Sea into the arrangements too, it was AGREED the Clerk should approach St Mary the Virgin Church initially and informally.

484/25 NEW ITEMS FOR THE NEXT MEETING (21ST JULY 2025)

Nothing was suggested.

The Meeting closed at 20:17.

Chairman: **Cllr Elizabeth Linton** Date: **21st July 2025**

(END)