



# 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, 1<sup>st</sup> September 2025 at East Preston Infant School, Lashmar Road, East Preston
- PRESENT:** Councillors Christine Bowman, Lisa Duff, Barbara Gale, John Gunston, Helen Hill, Elizabeth Linton, Glyn Mathias, Rick McElroy, David Moore and Steve Toney (Chairman) and Steven Wilkinson (from 18:41)
- ALSO:** Simon Cross, Clerk to the Council
- Jackie Sumner, Voluntary Action Arun and Chichester (until 18:56)
- Lynne Brunton, Malcolm and Pauline McLelland, St Mary the Virgin Church (all until 18:56)
- Celia Buckley (until 18:56) and Jennifer Wallace, East Preston & Kingston Horticultural Society (until 19:25)
- Carol and Terry Longman, East Preston in Bloom (both until 18:56)
- Sue Tubb, 2<sup>nd</sup> East Preston Rainbows (until 18:56)
- Sioned Vos, East Preston & Kingston Preservation Society (until 19:25)
- Mrs Linda Denton (until 19:25), Mr David Jull (until 19:25), Mr John Jull (until 19:25), Mr Graham Merrington (until 19:05) and Mrs Sue Morley (until 19:25)
- ABSENT:** Councillors Kit Bradshaw 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 18:32.

## 669/25 **INTRODUCTIONS**

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

## **670/25 VOLUNTARY ACTION ARUN AND CHICHESTER (VAAC)**

(Cllr Wilkinson joined the meeting during this item.)

The meeting received a presentation from Jackie Sumner, Chief Executive Officer of the organisation (charity no. 1113641).

Ms Sumner thanked the council for having invited her to present to the meeting and said it was “always a pleasure” to visit East Preston as it was “such a vibrant community.” Ms Sumner said she had planned to be accompanied by her colleague Ailsa Burkimsher, the Finance Manager for VAAC, but she had given her apologies and was unable to attend for personal reasons.

VAAC had a big focus on enriching communities, strengthening the sector’s voice and recognition, and inspiring volunteers be they organisations or individuals. Individuals often find other like-minded individuals and form themselves into an organisation. Ms Sumner said her experience was East Preston was absolutely buzzing with organisations working for the benefit of the village, from the Festival to the almost ever-present Yarnbombers projects to the Men in Sheds, an organisation VAAC had helped fundraise during its set-up.

Ms Sumner said one area in which VAAC felt under-represented was with sports clubs. VAAC could help sports clubs with fundraising, recruitment of volunteers, marketing and suchlike.

VAAC organised various networking events, either on a geographic basis or a thematic basis. The next such event would have a sea theme and bring together organisations with a common theme of the sea.

Ms Sumner praised the East Preston boardwalk project which had seen an amazing achievement by local volunteers working together towards a common aim.

VAAC undertook impact analysis to bring more money into the sector, showing the value projects have within communities that might otherwise not be understood.

In response to questions from Cllr Gunston, Ms Sumner referred to an organisation called REACH where people looking to be trustees can be matched to organisations looking for trustees. Regarding his idea of some sort of community bank account where several organisations kept their money in one place but separately, Ms Sumner referred to the Selsey Forum, a group of ten local organisations working together for fundraising and other matters, but she believed they each still had their own accounts. The only community bank accounts as described by Cllr Gunston she had found was in Alaska, but VAAC was considering how it too might be able to set up something similar. Cllr McElroy referred to the CAF Bank, of which Ms Sumner was aware.

Mr M asked whether VAAC was always looking for money for itself. Ms Sumner replied VAAC never put itself ahead of its member organisations, but yes, it always needed money. Mr M mentioned the airport tax applied to flights arriving after 23:00 and the landfill tax. Ms Sumner had previous experience of something similar at Gatwick Airport and of the landfill tax.

Ms Sumner mentioned an application called PLINTH which VAAC used for application-writing. This was a secure site into which an organisation fed lots of relevant information. PLINTH would then format the information in the appropriate way for any funding application the organisation then wanted to make.

With no further questions or comments forthcoming, Cllr Toney thanked Ms Sumner for her presentation, and Ms Sumner again thanked the council for giving her the opportunity to promote VAAC further.

(Ms Sumner and seven members of the public left at the conclusion of this item.)

## **671/25 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

An apology and a reason for absence were received from Cllrs Chapman and Wilkinson.

**2015** The Council **RESOLVED** unanimously to accept the apologies received from Cllrs Bradshaw and Chapman (both away).

Apologies were also received from County Cllr Elkins, District Cllrs P Bower, R Bower and Kelly, Julian Ellis, Kelvan Gale and Ailsa Burkimsher (VAAC).

## **672/25 DECLARATION OF PERSONAL AND/OR PREJUDICIAL/PECUNIARY INTERESTS**

The Clerk declared a Personal Interest in confidential Agenda Item 22, *To agree a recommendation from the Personnel Committee.*

## **673/25 PUBLIC SESSION**

**Agenda Item 10a – Amenities Committee** – Mr M asked whether the bus shelter in North Lane, opposite Hares, was being replaced. The Clerk replied it was; the work had been assigned to the WSCC volunteers team and the council was waiting for a final costing before proceeding. The shelter was to be recycled plastic rather than wood and as there were no off-the-shelf plastic bus shelters, the work would take longer.

**Agenda Item 21 – To consider any matters relating to the purchase of 118-120 Sea Road, East Preston** – Mr M read the following questions:

Ref: the building next door to the Council office in Sea Rd, East Preston.

1. How much are we paying for the building?
2. Are the Parish Council having a full survey on the building?
3. Are the Parish Council having an Asbestos Management Survey on the building?
4. Have the Parish Council got a business plan in place for the purchase of the building, and any refurbishment works they intend to undertake?
5. Have you any budget prices for the works you intend to undertake?
6. The money saved on the Bus Service which is no longer subsidised by the Parish Council to the sum of £25000.00 can now be used to pay off the mortgage.
7. The flat above the Council Office and the one next door you plan on purchasing should be rented to Arun District Council to reduce a small part of the housing list in this area.  
If the ADC don't want to rent it from you, Rustington Hall would as you are supposed to be helping the local community.

The Clerk replied he had already explained the purchase price was commercially sensitive until the purchase had been completed at which point the purchase price would be available to everyone. As also previously explained, the price at which the property had been marketed was publicly known to be £450,000.

The council had had a full survey undertaken.

The council was having an asbestos management survey completed on 2<sup>nd</sup> September (by a company recommended by Mr M).

A full business plan was being developed, but very high-level figures had been included in previously-published articles.

The council had commissioned surveys of damp and cable-tie work, windows work, legal requirements before renting out the flat and asbestos, and awaited costings from those.

The council had not previously considered renting out the existing flat through ADC, but it could consider this for the future. Cllr McElroy referred to a recent judgement by the government's Regulator of Social Housing which was, "Our judgement is

that there are very serious failings in the landlord delivering the outcomes of the consumer standards. The landlord must make fundamental changes so that improved outcomes are delivered.” Cllr Bowman said the flat at 120 Sea Road was some way off being available to rent. The Clerk said the council would discuss this suggestion in due course.

(Mr M left the meeting at this point.)

The Clerk reported he had been asked by Ms Jo Wardley to say she had planned to attend the meeting to explain why she had started the campaign to stop the Conservative Hall from becoming a funeral venue. Subsequently, Ms Wardley had decided not to attend the meeting for personal reasons but had asked the Clerk to mention the campaign. No questions nor comments were forthcoming.

#### **674/25 COUNCIL RESPONSES**

There were no further council responses.

#### **675/25 MINUTES OF THE MONTHLY MEETING HELD ON 7<sup>TH</sup> JULY 2025**

The draft Minutes were circulated to all councillors on 10<sup>th</sup> July asking for suggested amendments by the 17<sup>th</sup> July. None were received.

**2016** The Council **RESOLVED** unanimously the Chairman could sign the Minutes as a true record of the meeting held on 7<sup>th</sup> July. Cllr Toney duly did so.

#### **676/25 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 282/25 – Devolution Matters**
- 3. Minutes 439/25 to 441/25 – Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) for year-ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025**
- 4. Minute 528/25 – Air Ambulance Charity Kent Surrey Sussex**
- 5. Minute 534/25 – West Sussex County Council**
- 6. Minute 535/25 – West Sussex County Council – Clarence Drive**
- 7. Minute 541/25 – Leases Working Party – East Preston & Kingston Bowls Club**

#### **1. Introduction**

This is the report covering items discussed during Full Council meetings up to and including the meeting held on 7<sup>th</sup> July 2025.

#### **2. Minute 282/25 – Devolution Matters**

Cllr Wilkinson has elected to withdraw from the Devolution and Local Government Reorganisation Working Party. Membership of the working party is now: Cllrs Bradshaw, Chapman, Gunston (Chairman), Hill, Linton and Toney.

#### **3. Minutes 439/25 to 441/25 – Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) for year-ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025**

Unusually, earlier than for a long time, on 21<sup>st</sup> August, the council received back its AGAR from the external auditor. The report will be considered at Agenda Item 11a below.

4. **Minute 528/25 – Air Ambulance Charity Kent Surrey Sussex**

In providing the slides from the presentation given, Ruby Hunt wrote, “Thank you so much for making Kevin and I feel so welcome at your council meeting, it was my pleasure to share a bit more about our life-saving charity to the group.”

5. **Minute 534/25 – West Sussex County Council**

The Shaping West Sussex survey did appear towards the end of July and I included it in the e-newsletters dated 24<sup>th</sup> July and 7<sup>th</sup> August. Closing date for completion of the survey was 13<sup>th</sup> August. Disappointingly, the survey did not list town and parish councils as somewhere a resident may turn for help.

6. **Minute 535/25 – West Sussex County Council – Clarence Drive**

The council provided Mrs Brockhurst with a letter of support on 8<sup>th</sup> July. Mrs Brockhurst replied, “Thank you for the letter and the suggested advice and information.”

Mrs Brockhurst submitted a Community Highways Scheme request on 29<sup>th</sup> July. Mrs Brockhurst has provided a very comprehensive case to WSCC so hopefully it will be looked upon favourably. In sending the information to this council and to County Cllr Roger Elkins, for info, Mrs Brockhurst thanked us all for the help we have given in this matter.

7. **Minute 541/25 – Leases Working Party – East Preston & Kingston Bowls Club**

On 8<sup>th</sup> July, I duly instructed our surveyor to begin negotiations with the club surveyor. He replied, “I do though understand the tenant’s surveyor is away until last week of July, then I am on leave first two weeks of August, so we might not logistically be able to meet up until mid/late August.” Upon learning this, I wrote to the club’s solicitor and secretary to keep them informed.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

27<sup>th</sup> August 2025

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

**677/25 FINANCIAL MATTERS**

The Accounts for July and August 2025 had been distributed to Members in advance of the meeting.

- 2017** The council **RESOLVED** unanimously to approve the Outstanding Purchase Orders report for 2025/26, value £2,361.38 (exc. VAT).
- 2018** The council **RESOLVED** unanimously to approve the Regular Monthly Payments reports for July and August 2025 totalling £1,292.61 (inc. VAT).
- 2019** The council **RESOLVED** unanimously to approve the Supplier BACS Invoices Paid reports for July and August totalling £29,227.38 (inc. VAT).
- 2020** The council **RESOLVED** unanimously to approve the List of Sales Receipts & Bank Receipts by Bank report for financial year to date totalling £14,283.08 (inc. VAT) for July and August 2025, (Year to Date, £174,077.33).

The council NOTED the Bank Reconciliations to 14<sup>th</sup> July and 14<sup>th</sup> August 2025.

The council NOTED the Budget Summary for 2025/26 to date including earmarked reserves.

Cllr Toney thanked the council's bookkeeper, Adrian Vyse, for preparing the above reports.

## **678/25 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, Community Engagement, Finance & General Purposes, Major Events, Personnel and Planning & Licensing. By the time of this meeting, the draft Minutes from all these meetings, except Personnel, should have been circulated to all councillors.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

26<sup>th</sup> August 2025

### **Amenities Committee**

Cllr Wilkinson is chairman of this committee.

#### **September 2025**

The committee met on 11<sup>th</sup> August.

**Warren Recreation Ground** – The committee held an additional meeting solely to discuss issues raised by the Warren Recreation Group Safety Group. Issues were relating to, the misuse of the tennis court, the outdoor gym equipment proposal and a summer of serious concerns with the playing of cricket. The group raised safety issues with balls landing outside the ground, posing a significant risk of personal injury or damage to property. Also discussed was the size of the pitch for playing adult cricket, hitting 6's and powerplay. The committee acting as Landlord, wrote to the club requesting the club bans the hitting of 6's for the remainder of this season. A meeting has been arranged with club representatives on the 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2025, to explore options to ensure that cricket can continue as safely as possible in future years. A meeting is then to be arranged with both parties with the aim to reach a solution.

**Warren Recreation Ground tennis court** – following the last meeting, Cllr Linton liaised with The Great Dane which is now successfully holding a key on behalf of the council. Players collect the key from The Great Dane, leaving their name and telephone number as security. This seems to be working well, and the council has only received one report of youths having climbed into the tennis court in the past six or so weeks.

**Warren Recreation Ground Play Panels** – All four play panels were serviced on the 28<sup>th</sup> May 2025. The work was carried out by Proludic, the company who had installed the panels. The committee has agreed future services will be carried out every two years and a new budget line has been created within the WRG Trust Budget to fund this.

**North Lane Bus Shelter** – The committee has agreed to reinstate the bus shelter at North Lane. WSCC Volunteers have agreed to build a new shelter and are currently researching the possibility of using composite materials. One member of the public has questioned Simon on why the committee has chosen to build with composite materials; Simon replied it was for the materials' longevity.



The committee's next meeting will be on 15<sup>th</sup> September 2025.

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

26<sup>th</sup> August 2025

## **Audit & Governance Committee**

Cllr Mathias is the chairman of this committee.

The meeting scheduled for 14<sup>th</sup> July was cancelled. The committee's next meeting is scheduled for 24<sup>th</sup> November.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

27<sup>th</sup> August 2025

## **Community Engagement Committee**

Cllr Linton is the chairman of this committee.

The committee met on 21<sup>st</sup> July.

A few of the topics discussed at the meeting:

**East Preston Festival, 5<sup>th</sup> to 14<sup>th</sup> June 2026** – the committee agreed to pursue a more sporting activity for the Tuesday afternoon Village Green event in 2026. To secure this, the Major Events committee agreed the expenditure. The event will run for three hours instead of the usual two, will be drop-in and should appeal to people of all ages. We will go more public with the details once the Festival theme for 2026 has been announced.

**Meeting of village sports clubs, 28<sup>th</sup> July** – this meeting was attended by reps from Angmering-on-Sea Lawn Tennis Club, East Preston & Kingston Bowls Club and East Preston Cricket Club. East Preston Football Club got confused about the date. Council was represented by Cllrs Toney, Linton and Moore. All felt the meeting had been useful, the clubs getting a better understanding of each other's concerns and triumphs. The club reps felt this meeting twice a year would be worthwhile.

**2026 East Preston calendar** – owing to a supplier problem, the calendar was not available to be sold at the Food & Drink Festival, but its availability is imminent.

**Warm Welcome Space 2026** – the committee agreed to run a further Warm Welcome Space season from the first week of January to the last week of March 2026. Sessions will be at the Royal British Legion and will take place on Wednesdays. That will be twelve sessions.

**Rustington Death Café** – the committee agreed the council should invite representatives from the Rustington Death Café to give a presentation to a future full council meeting. An invite has been accepted for the November meeting.

The committee's next meeting will be on 22<sup>nd</sup> September.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

26<sup>th</sup> August 2025

## **Finance & General Purposes Committee**

Cllr McElroy is the chairman of this committee.

The committee met on 18<sup>th</sup> August.

A few of the topics discussed at the meeting:

**Grant Aid 2025/26** – the committee considered an application from The Stables at Cissbury which provides horse therapy for children and young adults. The committee agreed to make a donation to the venue.

**Risk Register** – the committee agreed to add an entry to the council's Risk Register to cover any inability to make a payment on any public loan secured to purchase 118-120 Sea Road. The mitigation would be the council would budget appropriately and should the council find itself unable to make a repayment, the council would have the option of selling the building.

The committee's next meeting is scheduled for 17<sup>th</sup> November.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

27<sup>th</sup> August 2025

## **Major Events Committee**

Cllr Linton is Chairman of the committee.

The committee met on 18<sup>th</sup> August.

A few of the topics discussed at the meeting:

**East Preston Food & Drink Festival, 23<sup>rd</sup> August** – lead councillor for the event, Cllr Chapman, again reported all was on track for another successful event. Comments received during and following the event would confirm that.

**Autumn Quiz, 12<sup>th</sup> October** – Cllr Linton is the lead councillor for this event which will run from 14:00 until 17:00. Tickets will be on sale from 1<sup>st</sup> September. Councillors have abandoned the idea of sitting in the office in the hope someone would call in to buy tickets.

**East Preston Christmas Celebrations, 22<sup>nd</sup> November** – all is going to plan for this event too. The council has asked its pyrotechnics supplier to link last year's unused fireworks with a new batch this year in the hope of providing a seamless display covering both years' sets.

**Funday Sunday, 19<sup>th</sup> April 2026** – initial work has started for this event.

The committee's next meeting is scheduled for 20<sup>th</sup> October.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

27<sup>th</sup> August 2025

## **Personnel Committee**



The committee met on 21<sup>st</sup> July. I was elected chairman and Cllr Gale, vice-chairman.

Committee agreed in future, the maximum number of councillors on a committee will only be five plus chairman and vice-chairman of the council. The exception to this will be the Personnel Committee which remains three councillors plus chairman and vice-chairman of the council.

The committee considered the way in which the council considers the risk assessments supplied by external organisations for events on council land. It was agreed this work should be split between two councillors in future to reduce the council's exposure in this situation. Any councillor willing to be the second councillor here, alongside Cllr McElroy, should let the Clerk know.

The committee agreed I should remind all councillors not to use phones during meetings, even as discreetly as possible. If it is necessary to take a call or answer a message during a meeting, a councillor should excuse themselves from the meeting temporarily.

The committee's next meeting is scheduled for 13<sup>th</sup> October.

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

27<sup>th</sup> August 2025

## **Planning & Licensing Committee**

The committee met on 14<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> July and 26<sup>th</sup> August.

At the meeting on 14<sup>th</sup> July, the committee considered three Applications and agreed to object only to the proposal to change the roofing material at the Conservative Hall. This objection was overturned by the ADC Planning Committee. The committee also agreed to withdraw its objections to an Application for The Roystons, considering substitute drawings addressed the committee's objections sufficiently.

On the 28<sup>th</sup> July, the committee considered a further two Applications and agreed to object to neither but to ask for a Condition to be applied to an Application for Beechlands Close which would see an extended garage retained "solely for purposes ancillary to the occupation and enjoyment" of the main property.

At the meeting on 26<sup>th</sup> August, the committee considered four Applications, one of which was in Angmering bordering on East Preston. The committee agreed to object to an Application in Tamarisk Way.

Work on the revised East Preston Neighbourhood Plan continues.

The committee's next meeting will be on 8<sup>th</sup> September.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

27<sup>th</sup> August 2025

Additionally:

Amenities – Cllr Linton reported the arrangement of The Great Dane holding a key and register for the tennis court was going well, and the proprietor, Dane Forsythe, was happy with how this was working. He was now familiar with most regulars, all of whom accepted the new system. Mr J said the way in which the court was now being used correctly was absolutely brilliant; the court was used regularly and by people of all ages. Apart from one incident of youths playing football in the court, the court was now only being used correctly. Mr J thanked the council and The Great Dane and asked for the temporary sign to be replaced with something more solid. Mrs D confirmed she too had heard regular players were much happier now knowing they could effectively book a time to play.

Cllr Bowman thanked the committee for the installation of a frog bin in the children's play area as she believed this would encourage children to dispose of litter correctly from an early age.

Community Engagement – Cllr Linton asked Cllr Duff for an update on the production of a 2026 calendar. Cllr Duff replied all the photographs had been chosen and Cllr Chapman had been liaising with the council's designer, Christina Iden. The Clerk added a couple of the photographs had been received watermarked and versions of these photographs without a watermark had needed to be provided. These had now been provided and it was for Cllrs Chapman and Duff to liaise with and finalise with Christina. It was highly likely the calendars would be available for sale at the Autumn Quiz on 12<sup>th</sup> October.

Major Events – Cllr Linton thanked everyone who had helped to make the Food & Drink Festival such a success on 23<sup>rd</sup> August. The council had received lovely feedback from stallholders and attendees alike, and some of this was published in the Clerk's Report at Minute 684/25 below.

Planning & Licensing – Cllr Bowman reported the council was now in the final stretch of revising the East Preston Neighbourhood Plan. The latest draft was with the consultant to knock into final shape before council agreed, hopefully at the October Full Council meeting, to move to the next stage.

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

## **679/25 ANNUAL GOVERNANCE & ACCOUNTABILITY REVIEW**

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

### **Annual Governance and Accountability Return for year-ending 31<sup>st</sup> 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 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025.**

Cllr Mathias to introduce this item.

The External Auditor's report was received on 21<sup>st</sup> August and circulated electronically to all councillors on 22<sup>nd</sup> August.

"On the basis of our review of Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return, in our opinion the information in Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return is in accordance with the Proper Practices and no other matters have come to our attention giving cause for concern that relevant legislation and regulatory requirements have not been met."

That's the most important bit. Of lower importance are the following comments:

Other matters not affecting our opinion which we draw to the attention of the authority:

Incomplete information was provided with the initial supporting data submitted for review with regards to the level of reserves held by the council, which was later provided on request. The parish council should in future ensure that reserves levels are considered thoroughly and explanations provided with the AGAR when submitted to the external auditor.

As part of our intermediate testing, we requested information showing the review of documents including Financial Regulations, Standing Orders and the Code of Conduct. The council were able to evidence that these documents are regularly reviewed. However, as noted within the council's Code of Conduct, it states that the model code is to be reviewed on an annual basis to ensure that it is fit for purpose therefore the council should look to review this document annually to check for updates, and document this review within their minutes during each financial year.

On review of the council's notice of public rights, we have noted that the 2024 template has been used and therefore refers to the accounting year end 31 March 2024 in section 2. We believe this is a human error on completion and that the requirements to publish the notice of public rights was made correctly.

As per usual practice, the report will be considered fully by the Audit & Governance Committee at its next meeting, currently scheduled for 24<sup>th</sup> November.

The *Notice of conclusion of the audit* was published on the council's website and in noticeboards on 22<sup>nd</sup> August.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

22<sup>nd</sup> August 2025

As Chairman of the Audit & Governance Committee, Cllr Mathias said the committee would look at the report, on behalf of the whole council, at its meeting in November. His initial thought were there were some comments but nothing insurmountable or major.

#### **680/25 REPORTS FROM PARISH COUNCIL WORKING PARTIES**

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

### **Working Parties**

The Devolution and Local Government Reorganisation Working Party met on 4<sup>th</sup> August.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

27<sup>th</sup> August 2025

### **20mph Working Party**

Cllr Wilkinson is the chairman of this working party.

No updates from this working party.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

26<sup>th</sup> August 2025

### **Devolution and Local Government Reorganisation Working Party (DevoWP)**

Cllr Gunston led a meeting of the working party on the evening of 4<sup>th</sup> August. He led the meeting through the Shaping West Sussex questionnaire, working towards answers on behalf of the council as a whole. In some ways it was not easy, the questionnaire perhaps not being that easy to understand.

On behalf of the council, Cllr Gunston submitted its response to the questionnaire on Friday, 8<sup>th</sup> August, well before the closing date.

Cllr John Gunston –

27<sup>th</sup> August 2025

**Chairman of the Devolution and Local Government Reorganisation Working Party**

### **Flat and Frontage Working Party (FFWP)**

Cllr Wilkinson is chairman-elect of this working party.

No updates from this working party explicitly.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

27<sup>th</sup> August 2025

## **Leases Working Party (LWP)**

Cllr Wilkinson is the chairman of this working party.

With regards to the expired lease with East Preston & Kingston Bowls Club, on 22<sup>nd</sup> August our surveyor wrote, “I am meeting the EPBC’s surveyor on 10<sup>th</sup> September, the earliest mutual date we could do.”

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

22<sup>nd</sup> August 2025

Additionally:

Devolution and Local Government Reorganisation – Cllr Gunston gave some additional detail about the ADC-led meeting he had attended on 17<sup>th</sup> July, reported in Minute 685/25 below. Subsequently, the working party had met to compile a council response to the Shaping West Sussex survey, although the members had not thought the survey was that user-friendly.

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

### **681/25 ARUN DISTRICT COUNCIL**

District Cllr Kelly had sent his apologies for the meeting.

Cllr Linton had hoped to report an issue with bins to the three district councillors. One bin on the greensward behind Tamarisk Way had effectively been decommissioned by ADC or its contractors by the placing of black sacks over it. This has resulted in numerous dog waste bags being dumped alongside the bin, unhygienic and unattractive. This meant there was no available bin between the bottom of Sea Lane and the bottom of Pigeonhouse Lane and, for an area popular with beach-goers and dogwalkers, Cllr Linton questioned whether that was acceptable. Referring to the frog bin mentioned by Cllr Bowman above, ADC’s contractors refused to empty this bin as it would require their operative to have a Disclosure & Barring Service check. Did ADC’s contractors empty no bins in children’s playgrounds in the district and if they did not, who did?

Cllr Gunston advised the meeting Cllr Philippa Bower had interceded in the matter of the allotments. The ADC officer who had been promising answers since March had promised again, at the beginning of August, to reply within 28 days, which had now passed without an update. Cllr McElroy suggested this council acquired the site from ADC before ADC was dissolved under local government reorganisation. Cllr Gunston replied ADC had not yet considered any mechanism for disposal of land before local government reorganisation.

### **682/25 WEST SUSSEX COUNTY COUNCIL**

County Cllr Elkins had sent his apologies for the meeting.

### **683/25 SUSSEX POLICE**

No report had been received.

### **684/25 CLERK’S REPORT**

## **Clerk's Report**

1. **Introduction**
2. **Police matters**
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### 1. **Introduction**

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

### 2. **Police matters**

Following the Food & Drink Festival, I raised with our neighbourhood policing team the issue of a scooter undertaking deliveries for a business in Willowhayne Crescent, the rider of which repeatedly ignored the road closure and just rode around the barriers and did not adjust his speed whilst riding through pedestrians. I have asked whether the proprietor could be visited as his excuse to the head marshal, “I have pizzas to get out,” does not wash.

The Community Speedwatch speed gun is now again being used on a regular basis.

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

No developments in anti-social behaviour matters in the village previously reported to ADC anti-social behaviour team.

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

No Freedom of Information requests received since the last report.

No Data Protection requests received since the last report.

### 5. **Mulberry Local Authority Services, Finance & Governance Networking Day, 10<sup>th</sup> July**

Cllr Gunston and I attended this event at the Felbridge Hotel, East Grinstead. As far as I could tell, only one other Arun local council was represented, Aldwick Parish Council.

As you would expect, a lot of information comes out of such an event and Cllr Gunston has kindly written a report you can find at Agenda Item 17a below.

### 6. **WSCC Highways bus cage, 17<sup>th</sup> July**

On the afternoon of 17<sup>th</sup> July, Cllr Toney reported WSCC Highways contractors were painting a bus cage in North Lane.

We first proposed to Highways it implemented bus cages on both sides of North Lane, immediately to the east of Lashmar Road, in April 2022. We were told the bus cages would only be implemented once WSCC had a new contractor in place from September 2022. In March 2023, I chased, and added a request for a bus cage to be painted in The Street at the stop on the western side just below the junction with Vicarage Lane.

On 11<sup>th</sup> June, WSCC published a list of bus stop improvement works which included North Lane. Upon requesting more detail, I learnt only the bus stop on the northern side of North Lane was to receive a bus cage. I asked why and received this reply, "The reason for there not being a bus cage on the southern side of North Lane is because where the marking would be required to go is directly on top of the Slow marking with the coloured surfacing. Which if it were to be burned off would still leave a legacy underneath the new marking and potentially look confusing to some and in addition the slow marking is to work in combination with the school safety zone that begins a few metres in front. That is why the decision was made to improve the waiting area for people using the stop but not putting a bus cage on this side."





Concerns have been raised by one household on the northern side of North Lane. In response, Sam Pitwell, WSCC Project Officer, has said, “Bus cage markings can indeed go over a dropped kerb area. [...] a bus is entitled to stop in the bus cage marking area for the 2 minutes that is allocated to them and it would be no different to waiting to join a road with traffic flowing on it and waiting for an appropriate gap to join. Nowadays it is not always possible to situate a bus stop cage marking between dropped kerbs because of how frequent they are but we do try to situate between as much as possible.”

At the time of writing, I am awaiting an update on the request for a bus cage in The Street. Sam Pitwell has said, “I have just asked for the design to be reviewed and updated. The plan will be to firstly check the conditions of the environment are the same and then progress from there. I will see if I did receive any objections from the public but if not then I see no reason why this can’t go ahead with construction.”

#### **7. Littlehampton District Lions Club bookstall, 23<sup>rd</sup> July**

Further to the meeting Alison and I had with representatives of Littlehampton District Lions Club reported to the last Full Council meeting, the club set up its bookstall on the Council Office forecourt on 23<sup>rd</sup> July. Alison and I had approved the group’s Risk Assessment prior to the event.

Two days before the event it looked seriously as if the weather would prevent the event from taking place, but the morning of the event remained dry and warm if a little overcast.

Set up started at about 08:45 and customers were being served from before 09:30. In addition to book, the stall also dealt in jigsaws which all went. The stall stopped serving at about 13:45 and was all dismantled and away by just after 14:00. From the club’s perspective, the event was successful, raising £92.15, and the club booked in for 8<sup>th</sup> August.

The funds raised will be used to support local and international Lions initiatives.

#### **8. Meeting with East Preston Sports Clubs, 28<sup>th</sup> July**

One of the Environmental Initiatives Working Party’s suggestions to the Community Engagement Committee was a meeting of East Preston Sports Clubs to engender closing working both between the clubs themselves and between the clubs and the parish council.

For this initial meeting, the five outdoors clubs were invited to send representation: Angmering-on-Sea Lawn Tennis Club, East Preston & Kingston Bowls Club, East Preston Cricket Club, East Preston Football Club and East Preston Stoolball Club. All accepted the invited but on the night

only the following attended: Jon Clear (chairman, bowls), Pete Dallimore and Colin Smith (chairman and secretary respectively, cricket) and Alastair McCubbin (chairman, tennis). The council was represented by Cllrs Toney, Linton and Moore, with Cllr Linton chairing the meeting following an introduction by Cllr Toney. An objective of the meeting was to start building working relationships between the clubs, an objective which seemed to be easily met.

We discussed age gaps in their clubs’ memberships, how best to attract and keep volunteers and the problems that can arise when clubs have too few volunteers, the potential for social events which could both attract new members and cross-fertilise membership between the clubs. The parish council offered to support any initiatives coming from the club by helping publicise any events, awarding small grants towards appropriate projects and setting up a new East Preston Sports Clubs Facebook page through which the clubs can communicate with a wider audience than just their own membership and followers.

Those present felt the meeting had been positive and agreed to meet again in six months. Future meetings will aim to include more of the village’s sports clubs. Perhaps after that meeting we will let the clubs’ rotate chairmanship of the meeting whilst still sending council representation.

9. **Audit of No. 11 bus-stops, 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> August**

Following a couple of comments from residents and something I had spotted myself, over the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> August, on my way into work and on my way home, I visited every No. 11 bus-stop in the village.

One member of the public had complained no timetable had been placed at the Windlesham Gardens westbound stop since the No. 700 had been replaced by the No. 11. Another resident complained, wrongly, the timetables were showing the No. 11 as a two-hourly service. It took a couple of attempts to make him understand the timetable read down and then across:

Departure times from  
**Arun Court**  
Fairlands

Stagecoach  
4400LH0114  
wsxbsdw

This timetable is valid from 6th April 2025.

11 Littlehampton - Rustington - East Preston - Ferring - Worthing

**MONDAYS TO FRIDAYS (except Public Holidays)**

0555	0802	1002	1202	1402	1602	1802	2054
0625	0832	1032	1232	1432	1632	1832	2154
0655	0902	1102	1302	1502	1702	1902	2254
0732	0932	1132	1332	1532	1732	1954	

**SATURDAYS**

0555	0802	1002	1202	1402	1602	1802	2054
0625	0832	1032	1232	1432	1632	1832	2154
0655	0902	1102	1302	1502	1702	1902	2254
0732	0932	1132	1332	1532	1732	1954	

**SUNDAYS & PUBLIC HOLIDAYS**

0735	0932	1132	1332	1532	1732	1932	
0832	1032	1232	1432	1632	1832	2039	

“At long last the penny has dropped on how to read a bus timetable!!! Most humble apologies, but yes at a glance it does look like a 2-hourly event. Hey ho.”

I had noticed and reported previously a few bus-stops where an old timetable was still on display, most noticeably at the stop in Worthing Road, closest to the railway station, even though four months had passed since the timetable change.

Audit completed and photographs taken of every bus-stop where a timetable can be displayed, I sent to Stagecoach South a list of the four bus-stops where remedial action was needed. Within a fortnight, corrections had been made to the delight of not only those that had flagged it (no pun

intended), but others who have subsequently mentioned this to me. I have passed on our thanks to Stagecoach South.

The last update I had from Stagecoach South, on 19<sup>th</sup> August, was, "There's still plenty to do in term of improving the stops and we will be adding some timetables to some of the stops that currently have nothing."

From the resident of North Lane who needed a bus timetable at Windlesham Gardens, "Thank you, yes we are up and running with the time table across the road! But interesting, my neighbour has visitors and they are using that bus stop and the time table is well used!!"

#### **10. Littlehampton District Lions Club bookstall, 8<sup>th</sup> August**

A return visit netted £114 and a very happy set of Lions. This will likely become a monthly occurrence now and the Lions has booked in for 4<sup>th</sup> September and 2<sup>nd</sup> October, followed by a break before starting again on the first Thursday of the month from March 2026 onwards.

#### **11. East Preston Men in Sheds, 16<sup>th</sup> August**

I attended a quick meeting between two representatives of East Preston Men in Sheds and three residents of Arundel – one a town councillor. This councillor has long been trying to set up a shed in Arundel and now thinks he may have found a location. The meeting was to understand potential pitfalls any Arundel shed might encounter whilst setting up. After the meeting, the council received the following email: "Thank you for facilitating our visit on Saturday. We all thought it was a very helpful to hear about the journey so far and the challenges they have faced. Please thank Tony and Adrian for giving up their Saturday mornings."

#### **12. East Preston and Kingston Village Hall Foundation Annual General Meeting, 16<sup>th</sup> August**

I attended this meeting together with Cllrs Toney, Bowman and Gunston. Cllr McElroy was also present as will be seen shortly.

The committee has recently been augmented by three new members: Kaz Bradshaw, Val Ellis and (Cllr) Rick McElroy.

The meeting reviewed the past year, concentrating on the works which were necessary following the Fire Risk Assessment in the middle of 2024. The committee thanked the council for its donation of £10,000 towards the costs of these works. For hirers, after the meeting, the committee talked representatives through how to open and close the new doors.

Looking forwards, the committee has reluctantly agreed to increase hall hire rates, mainly taking into account utility price increases.

The standard of cleaning at the venue was praised by hirers present.

At the end of the meeting, on behalf of the council I thanked long-standing committee members for their efforts in keeping the Village Hall running smoothly and thanked new members for the work they will be doing to lessen the burden on existing committee members.

#### **13. Community Speedwatch, 18<sup>th</sup> August**

I did an hour-long morning shift with coordinator, Gavin Bernard. We recorded 227 vehicle movements outside the Village Hall, none speeding sufficiently to be reported to Sussex Police.

#### **14. Meeting about youth provision, 19<sup>th</sup> August**

Angmering Parish Council instigated a meeting with ourselves and Rustington Parish Council to discuss individual and shared youth provision. I attended with Cllr Duff; Cllr Chapman was unable to attend. Angmering Parish Council was represented by Cllr Nikki Hamilton-Street, Chairman, and Katie Herr, Clerk; Rustington Parish Council was represented by Cllrs Andy Cooper, Chairman, and Alison Cooper, Carole Ward, Clerk, and Rosie Costan, Deputy Clerk.

Currently, Rustington Parish Council – which has its own youth centre building – provides one two-hour evening a week, aimed at Year 7 to Year 11, attracting a maximum of 15 attendees, but some weeks none. Angmering Parish Council offers one evening in too small a room at the Community Centre and two hours of outreach work around the village. The indoor night also attracts a maximum of about 15, and the council finds the outreach work the most useful offering. Both councils question whether the traditional model of youth club is still relevant in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Nikki had been looking at what other councils provide and put forward Petworth Town Council as a good example. The council has employed a full-time youth worker and the council runs a variety of youth nights throughout the week. For example, some are sports-based, some are musical, some are related to the Duke of Edinburgh award and so on. To be fair, this is only partly funded by the town council, the rest being funded by a charitable trust whose building is used as the youth base in the town.

The meeting agreed none of our three councils really wanted to get into employing a youth worker directly, with all the administration and legal bits that might entail. Instead, we agreed to see what opportunities might arise by working together rather than in isolation.

Two meetings I had attended previously were mentioned. Firstly, the Littlehampton Locality schools multi-agency meeting held on 21<sup>st</sup> June 2023 (Minute 552/23) and secondly, and ADC meeting about youth provision, 12<sup>th</sup> December 2023 (Minute 018/24). Nikki will attempt to get us invited to a future Littlehampton Locality headteachers meeting to find out, particularly from primary headteachers, with a view to running some sort of focus group with Angmering School pupils from the three villages to garner information from secondary school pupils. Alison said she would approach ADC for any follow-up to the December 2023 meeting about youth provision. I contacted ADC about a year ago for any follow-up at which point there was none.

Other questions to be asked in due course, Could Freedom Leisure extend its summer offering to other times of the year? and What can local sports clubs offer to support children from less wealthy households?.

The meeting lasted eighty minutes and finished at 17:20. Cllr Duff may well have additional comments.

### **15. Filming with Whistlestop Arts, 21<sup>st</sup> August**

Whistlestop Arts, in conjunction with Arun District Council and the South-East Community Rail Partnership (SCRIP), is making short podcasts based upon each local railway station and today was the turn of Angmering station. Each podcast showcases what is within easy reach of each station. Local representatives are interviewed to give local flavour. Although interviewed on camera, most of the footage will only be used for its audio.

Whistlestop Arts is a partnership of Annalees and Luna. Annalees works the camera whilst Luna prompts the local representatives talk local. Also interviewed at Angmering station were Cllr Nikki Hamilton-Street, chairman of Angmering Parish Council, and Deirdre Carolin, the brains behind the Friends of Angmering Station. Lynda Spain was interviewed representing the SCRIP.

Each of us was interviewed in front of the station. It was a busy day at the station, so filming had to be paused on occasion. I was the last to be interviewed and I thank the other three for not hanging around to watch. My interview was interrupted by a lady struggling to buy a return ticket for Gloucester; having heard me talking about East Preston, she wanted to say she had only



recently moved to East Preston and thought it was a lovely place she could not praise highly enough. I remembered she had been to Repair Café a few months ago, which pleased her.



The podcast should be ready next March. If tourism drops, you can blame me.

#### 16. **East Preston Food & Drink Festival, 23<sup>rd</sup> August - feedback**

Verbal feedback was good as always. Over time, written feedback decreases, but we have seen these comments:

“Great food yesterday at East Preston.”

“Just a note to say thank you and the rest of the festival committee for organising this year's food festival. I thought it was a great success and i enjoyed the food on offer and the cider well done to all.”

“Huge congratulations and thanks to EPPC for what seemed like a very successful F&D Festival. Have never seen the Green so populated and with queues at pretty much every food outlet I hope all the tradespeople had very profitable days. Well done to all involved in the organisation and execution.”

“An incredibly busy and very successful event yesterday. We had a brilliant time ... thanks to you all xx”

“Thankyouuu it was a great event 😊”

“A fantastic afternoon !! A fabulous selection of food outlets !! All delicious 🍷🍷🍷 Thank you to all the organisers 🍷🍷🍷”

“Thank you we all had a great time xxx”

“Please could you pass our thanks onto everyone who organised and volunteered for the Food Festival. What a wonderful array of food stalls and games for the children to play as well as the Ukulele players with whom our youngest granddaughter was very taken with. It was so lovely to see so many people of all ages enjoying themselves in the sunshine chatting and talking to each other. I know it takes a lot of organisation and paperwork as well as hard work to put these community events so thank you to you all.”

“I just wanted to say thank you very much for organising the food festival. It was really very good. The atmosphere the weather and the food. Everyone looked like they really enjoyed themselves. I was there a couple of hours and it seemed exceptionally well attended and a great success. I thought the straw bales to sit on was a great idea and in light of the numbers

attending and its reputation I have a feeling you may need a few more straw bales next year. A brilliant and great effort and from mine and the people accompanying me to the festival it was a great success which we really appreciated.”

Thanks were received from a resident of Sea Road for the inclusion on cones at the junction of Sea Road and Normandy Drive. This eased the day’s traffic congestion in that area.

Also from a resident of Sea Road, “It was joyous. I couldn’t eat anything as I have a delicate stomach, but the smells were stupendous. Still lots of bad driver behaviour around the end of Manor Road.”

“The food festival was excellent!”

“Finally, we would just like to say how much we enjoyed the Food & Drink Festival last Saturday. We only attended for a few hours but it was wonderful to see so many people mixing together and all the children having such good fun with the "circus" activities. It is great to live in a village which so actively tries to organise community events - and ones which are so successful! Please express our thanks to all involved. I really don't know how Christine Bowman manages to handle so many activities but she deserves especial thanks for her efforts.”

A few comments from stallholders:

“What a great day another sell out 🥑🥛 Thank you to everyone who ate with us  
Our queue went on all day 🍷 Thank you East Preston Food & Drink Festival for having us”

“Thank you so much for today. I was honoured to be asked to come and take part. I’m so shocked and overwhelmed by the success. I’m both happy and annoyed with myself but I could only bake so much 😊 I would really like a pitch at the Christmas fair (and I will bring more bread 😊).”

A new stallholder in the marketplace said it was a well-organised event and he had sold out.

Another new stallholder, also in the marketplace, upon arrival had been concerned he would be out on a limb in the marketplace, but did very good business throughout the day.

Finally, when I met Karina and Morag from entertainers The Ukulele Apothecary, both commented on what a lovely village we have, much nicer than many places they are invited to perform.” At the end of the afternoon, when we were saying goodbye, they thanked the village for having been so welcoming and happy to get involved. They said they had had a brilliant afternoon and were looking forward to enjoying some cider on the train home. On Monday, the council received the following email, “I just wanted to send a quick message to thank you so much for booking us on Saturday. The Food and Drink festival was really great and we met so many wonderful people. Thank you for making us feel so welcome and for looking after us so well. We had an absolute blast.” Any rumour I was photographed holding a ukulele and wearing one of their berets may just be a rumour.

## 17. **Social Media**

These are the recent Facebook post which reached more than 500 people.

- A post of an email detailing roadworks on the A27 in Worthing – 2,587 people
- A poster for the East Preston Cricket Club charity match – 1,345
- The poster for the East Preston & Kingston Village Hall Foundation Annual General Meeting – 873



- A post showing the Littlehampton District Lions bookstall set up and ready for customers on its first visit - 511

(posts up to and including 25<sup>th</sup> August)

The number of Followers is currently 1,933, an increase of 1 on the last report.

#### 18. **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 – 3<sup>rd</sup> July – sent to 960 subscribers, opened by 716 (74.7%)

Parish Council news – 9<sup>th</sup> July – sent to 958 subscribers, opened by 709 (74%)

Parish Council news – 24<sup>th</sup> July – sent to 958 subscribers, opened by 699 (73.2%)

Parish Council news – 31<sup>st</sup> July – sent to 958 subscribers, opened by 699 (72.8%)

Parish Council news – 7<sup>th</sup> August – sent to 958 subscribers, opened by 708 (74.1%)

Parish Council news – 14<sup>th</sup> August – sent to 960 subscribers, opened by 722 (75.4%)

Parish Council news – 20<sup>th</sup> August – sent to 963 subscribers, opened by 705 (73.4%)

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

"I'm 82 and after seven years of not having to have a TV licence, I have received a letter saying I need one. Why is that?" (I checked the TV Licensing website which says you are eligible for a free TV Licence if you are over 75 and you or your partner at the same address is eligible for Pension Credit)

"I'm getting in touch regarding a van on Clarence Drive which appears to be abandoned due to the notice on it, so I assume the council is in the process of dealing with it. I noticed there's a soft toy inside the van that seems likely to be discarded. I was wondering if it might be possible to retrieve the plush before the van is removed or scrapped, as I'd feel bad for it to be thrown away and I am a collector." (I checked with ADC nothing could be done to help here as the item remains the property of the van owner even if that owner does not appear to care.)

"Is there a policy on seaweed?" (No reply from ADC.)

"Do we have a hosepipe ban here?" (Not at the time of writing, check at <https://www.southernwater.co.uk/help-and-support/temporary-use-ban-advice/> for the latest information.)

"When is the age for a bus pass being lowered to 60?" (At the time of writing, eligible age remains state pension age. The county council also offers a free disabled person's bus pass, for anyone meeting the criteria.)

"Any idea why the Roundstone Level Crossing gates were down for so long yesterday afternoon [5<sup>th</sup> August]?" (I asked Network Rail for a comment, "I have discussed this with the Local Operations Manager (LOM). There wasn't any major fault or large-scale incident here, but there was an unfortunate combination of late-running trains which resulted in the highway impact that your residents have observed.")

"What is the truth behind the new parking restrictions in Littlehampton, fines for parking on verges?" (This news was published on Facebook but not through any official channel. I contacted my counterpart at Littlehampton Town Council and the Parking Services Manager at ADC, Lisa Emmens. The former replied first saying she knew nothing about this, which pretty much told me all I needed to know. Lisa replied a day later, "Well, that's a new one on me. All on street enforcement is cover by WSCC Traffic Regulation orders. County have the powers to enact enforcement for Pavement Parking however, currently they have no plans to start this process. If and when they do, I suspect it will be a County wide project rather than a specific area.")

"Do you know anyone in the village who can speak Danish?" (No, but a quick line in an e-newsletter revealed a Danish lady.)

## 20. Recent bouquets and complaints

(In addition to anything reported above)

Email received on 10<sup>th</sup> July, "On behalf of the Festival Committee, we would like to thank you for donating a raffle prize for the 2025 East Preston Festival. At the raffle your prize had a label acknowledging you and your business. We are delighted to be able to tell you that the raffles at our ticketed events this year raised a total of £1,347 for Festival funds. The money we raise goes partly towards financing next year's festival and the rest is ploughed back into the community to help East Preston social groups, local charities and other good causes."

In email conversation with a member of East Preston in Bloom, the council received the following, "I am so grateful to be living in our beautiful friendly village, for me it has been a big part of an enjoyable retirement after a long time working in the NHS. You and the PCC 'team' are amazing keep up the good work."

In letting her know we had included a short thank you to her late father in the Summer 2025 Newsletter, Ken Glover's daughter replied, "Thanks for the heads up. That is a lovely thought and much appreciated."

A local resident recently approached another West Sussex parish council to ask whether it offered an e-newsletter such as this council does. The parish council replied it did not because of General Data Protection Regulations, GDPR. I was able to reassure the resident our chosen e-newsletter service, MailChimp has been GDPR-compliant since May 2018 when the new regulations came into force. Ahead of that, we gave subscribers the chance to confirm they wished to continue receiving the e-newsletter; we only removed anyone who explicitly asked to be removed at that time, which I think was probably nobody.

Following the repairs to the footpath on the northern boundary of the Warren Rec, a resident of Sea Road emailed, "Pleased to see the ditch through the path north of the cricket hut filled in. Done very well. It tended to jar the back of old fogies who stepped into the depression."

Following publication of an article on Home Library Direct in the 31<sup>st</sup> July e-newsletter, the council received the following email from Sarah Brand, Cluster Manager, "That looks fantastic – thank you! I'm hopeful we will get a really good response from it."

A neighbour to the Warren Recreation Ground wrote in following tree works in the north-eastern corner, "Much obliged for the prompt pruning of the trees on the north side of the cricket field. I see they are being pruned back bodily. My request was for the overhanging branches and those endangering the telephone wires to be cut back. A much more substantial job has been done, but with hard lopping avoided. I expect the neighbours will appreciate it."

Regarding the cuddly toy in the van in Clarence Drive, "Thank you for following up with Arun District Council and for letting me know the outcome. I completely understand the situation and the legal limitations around items inside the van, even if they appear abandoned. I really appreciate you taking the time to look into it and explain everything clearly, it means a lot to me. Thanks again for your help and kindness."

From a resident of The Homestead, "I've just read the newsletter. Very good. Full marks."

From a resident of Sea Road who asked about road closures on the day of the Food & Drink Festival, "Best wishes and thank you as always to all of the team, who make these village events possible."

This message was attached to an Unsubscribe from the council's e-mailing list: "After 19 years living happily in [Windlesham Gardens,] East Preston we have moved to be near our family in Devon. Thank you and please accept our very best wishes for the future."

From a resident of Fincham Close, "I've lived here a long time and love it, and know how lucky I am, so thank you for everything the Parish Council does to ensure such a safe, happy environment."

From the lady who was looking for a Danish-speaker, "Mange tak for putting me in touch with [the lady]. We have had a good chat, and I am seeing her tomorrow for a cup of tea and to show her my diary! So stupid questions do have good outcomes sometimes!"

Twice during the month we were able to identify the correct owners of lost property. Not only were we thanked by the owners of the lost property but also by the finders for keeping them informed.

## **21. Conservative Hall – shocking news – council response**

On 26<sup>th</sup> August, I received an email from one household in the village and a telephone call from another, both expressing dismay the Conservative Hall was being converted into a funeral venue. The telephone callers felt the council should have done more to let the public know about this so the public could have considered what action it wanted to take if it did not agree it wanted a funeral venue in the village.

Within 90 minutes of the call ending, a member of the public let me know a poster had been attached to the Village Green noticeboard. The poster was headed, in block capitals, "Shocking News: East Preston Village Funeral Parlour, Opening October 2025". The member of the public had read the poster and commented, "I knew about it and I don't go around with my ear to the ground."

In the e-newsletter of the 27<sup>th</sup> August, I included a brief statement explaining why the council had not publicised that the venue was becoming a funeral venue. Firstly, a lot of the village already knew, contrary to comments made by the telephone callers, and secondly, this was the council's news to impart.

That e-newsletter was published 2½ hours ago, since which time the council has received the following comments:

"Well said re the C Hall poster. How have they only realised now?"

"I am particularly disappointed with the wording of the one at the location that says Not in our Village."

"Just a quick note to say well done for standing up for the Parish Council regarding the funeral parlour issue. It's great to see residents being challenged when they only seem to notice changes once the timber appears outside! As you say most people in the village knew long ago."

"The flyer about the Conservative Hall is sad for lots of reasons. They have no right to publicly criticise EPPC, I am not a resident, but I read it ages ago on the Planning App on site. Death affects us all, it's not something that has a stigma attached to it."

"Just seen the newsletter, I think it was very well worded."

"We're just so lucky living in the village, let's just take it for what it is and enjoy it. I could be moaning, it's going right past my front door, but I have more important things to worry about."

"How sad about the posters. They must be as thick as two short planks not to have known months ago about the future of the old Hall."

"The poster re the Conservative Hall is very overdramatic. When he came to speak to the council meeting I got the impression the Conservative Hall is to be used as an overflow venue mainly for social gatherings, wakes etc, so there shouldn't be loads of black cars around. Also,

if they were interested in finding out about the Hall, folk were free to come and hear the presentation...which I enjoyed very much.”

On the other side of the debate, just this one:

“I have noted the article re the Conservative Hall and I am of the opinion that the excuse given by the Council for their inaction is pathetic.”

## 22. **Leave**

I am on leave 11<sup>th</sup>, 12<sup>th</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> September. Caspar is on leave 1<sup>st</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup> September and Dawn will be on leave on 25<sup>th</sup> September to 2<sup>nd</sup> October.

## 23. **September Meetings and Events**

This list may be incomplete and is subject to change.

- 1<sup>st</sup> Full Council (18:30, East Preston Infant School)
- 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Governance and Accountability Return training session (12:30, online) (AV, JG and SC only)
- 8<sup>th</sup> Planning & Licensing Committee (18:00, East Preston Infant School)  
Warren Recreation Ground Annual General Meeting (19:00, East Preston Infant School)
- 13<sup>th</sup> East Preston Repair Café (10:00, Vicarage Lane)
- 15<sup>th</sup> Amenities Committee (18:00, East Preston Infant School)
- 22<sup>nd</sup> Planning & Licensing Committee (18:00, East Preston Infant School)  
Community Engagement Committee (19:00, East Preston Infant School)
- 27<sup>th</sup> Dr Beccy Cooper MP Water Quality Meet the MP (11:00, Goring-by-Sea) (JG and SC)
- 28<sup>th</sup> East Preston Beach Clean No. 24 (11:00, bottom of Sea Road)

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

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

27<sup>th</sup> August 2025

Cllr Linton noted the Clerk’s Report had run to 12 pages for this meeting and she praised him for his diligent recording of his involvement with so many different aspects of village life. This resulted in a round of applause.

**Item 6 – WSCC Highways bus cage, 17<sup>th</sup> July** – Cllr Gunston asked whether there was any update to the proposed bus cage in The Street. The Clerk replied there was not. Cllr Toney reported WSCC Highways had now installed concrete bases at both the bus stops at the junction of Windlesham Gardens and North Lane.

## 685/25 **EXTERNAL MEETINGS AND EVENTS**

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

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

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

### **Mulberry Local Authority Services, Finance & Governance Networking Day, 10<sup>th</sup> July**

## **Felbridge Hotel, East Grinstead**

I attended this event with Simon. A session on finance updates included useful suggestions on preparing for devolution by:-

- Increasing reserves.
- Writing a business plan.
- Considering staffing costs.
- Looking at the impact on insurance.
- Questioning if the transfer of assets will be fully funded and considering both initial and ongoing costs.
- Devolution should also be considered as a potential opportunity for income generation.

The session on developments in human resources contained information on key employment law changes that will be examined by the Personnel Committee.

The first afternoon workshop was on future proofing finance through sensible budgeting. Analysing the Trumpton Town finances helped us to identify some of the potential risks. One exercise for all committees when considering budget was to identify:-

- One area where we are vulnerable.
- Reserve we should build or better define.
- One spending area we need better community buy in.
- One thing we should anticipate coming our way.

The second workshop was on embedding engagement in everyday governance and included a number of useful tools including checklists for engagement and a list of engagement tools.

Although we did not attend the third session on the Clerk as an employee and human resources advisor we were provided with the slides.

Overall we felt East Preston Parish Council already conforms with many of the suggested actions - but there is always something new to learn. We have therefore produced a list of actions and suggestions that will be discussed with the relevant committees.

Cllr John Gunston –

25<sup>th</sup> July 2025

**Vice-Chairman of the Finance & General Purposes Committee**

## **ADC Devolution Meeting, 17<sup>th</sup> July**

### **Civic Centre, Littlehampton**

30 Clerks and Councillors attended this meeting with Dawn Hudd (Chief Executive Arun District Council) and Mike Dearing (Programme Director for Local Government Reorganisation for all West Sussex Councils).

Mike ran through the key criteria being considered, the timeline for devolution and the three options being considered for West Sussex Unitary Authorities - one single county unitary, two unitaries with a broadly East/West Split or a broadly North/South Split. Public consultation from 17th July to 13th August will be followed by the design phase on how services will be delivered. He stated that services will not change.

Mike's team are not assuming any specific changes to Parish and Town Councils, their only concern is amalgamating District and County Councils. The White Paper mentioned by Beccy

Cooper, including details of how unitaries will work with Parish Councils, is not expected soon. Arun are not currently disaggregating any assets.

During questions concern was expressed about the lack of information on how these changes may affect Parish Councils.

Dawn suggested four actions for Parish Councils:

- Help spread the message on public consultation
- Push back to government to express our frustration
- Look at Arun community asset transfer policy - (requests will be considered until after September.)
- Send Mike any ideas on how democratic deficit can be managed.

Cllr John Gunston –

22<sup>nd</sup> July 2025

**Chairman of the Devolution and Local Government Reorganisation Working Party**

## **East Preston & Kingston Village Hall Foundation committee meeting, 23<sup>rd</sup> July**

### **East Preston & Kingston Village Hall**

The Committee has two new committee members which brought the numbers up to 6 which complies with the Charity foundation requirements for number of Trustees.

Both these new members will alleviate some of the chairman's workload.

Points Raised:

1. Hirers rates are increasing by £1 per hour from the 1<sup>st</sup> September
2. Three new laptops are required and these are being sourced through reconditioned laptops thus resulting in a cost of around £1,000.
3. New door codes have been introduced to improve security and one security outside security camera is being replaced.
4. A company called PAC will be building two ramps (as per Fire requirements) one for the Miller Barn and one for the Warren Room. Thanks was given to the parish council for the allocation of £10,000 towards ensuring that all the Fire Risk requirements have been completed.
5. Rick McElroy attended and advised the committee on security matters.
6. Concerns were raised regarding EP residents and potential hirers that this is a charity and run by a small group of volunteers. I suggested they would benefit from writing a small article in our EP Newsletter reinforcing this and a general update, and suggested that Toni McElroy, Chairman, contacts Simon for inclusion into the Autumn Newsletter.

AGM was arranged for Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> August to be held in the Miller Barn at 11.00.

Cllr Christine Bowman –

1<sup>st</sup> July 2025

**representative to East Preston & Kingston Village Hall Foundation**

Nothing was added.

### **686/25 RESPONSE TO EXTERNAL MEETINGS AND EVENTS**

Nothing was added.



**687/25 NEW ITEMS FOR THE NEXT MEETING (6<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER)**

The meeting will start at 18:30 with a presentation from 4SIGHT Sussex.

**688/25 EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC AND THE PRESS**

The six remaining members of the public left the meeting at this point, with no need for a council resolution to exclude them.

**689/25 118-120 SEA ROAD, EAST PRESTON**

The Clerk had provided the following electronic update to councillors on 29<sup>th</sup> August:

Councillors,

Not a lot to update really.

Steve T. has met with a damp and cable tie specialist.

John has met with a windows specialist.

Christine has met with a letting specialist.

Each will be able to report on these meetings at Monday's Full Council meeting. Liz has a meeting with an asbestos expert on Tuesday morning.

At the time of writing, we have still heard nothing further about our loan application. I chased it again at the beginning of last week with Trevor Leggo and his response was to arrange to come and meet me this lunchtime. I will update you further after that meeting. Rustington PC also has a loan application being considered at the moment and it too has not yet been resolved one way or the other. It has had replies from the government officers though, but it is asking for a lot more money.

+ + + + +

Trevor was here for an hour chatting about this and that. The outcome was he would forward our application back to Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government as a chaser, explaining the critical time factors of our application. That said, at the time of writing, we have not been chased by the agents at all.

Simon

The Clerk AGREED to contact Dr Beccy Cooper MP's office for assistance in progressing the loan.

**690/25 PERSONNEL COMMITTEE – STAFF PAY RISE**

The Clerk declared a Personal Interest in this matter.

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

**Personnel Committee – staff pay rise**

**Council is asked to agree a pay increase for all six members of staff.**

Cllr Duff to lead on this item.

At its meeting on 21<sup>st</sup> July, the Personnel Committee agreed it wanted to recognise the continuous hard work of all six members of staff, four office-based plus Caspar and Weekend Stephen. It was

agreed to make this initially as a recommendation to the Finance & General Purposes Committee, something which happened at its meeting on 18<sup>th</sup> August.

The recommendation agreed unanimously by the Finance & General Purposes Committee was to move all members of staff up a single point on the national pay scale, approximately equivalent to 2% on top of this year's annual "cost-of-living" increase. That would cost the council approximately £2,000 in total plus oncosts.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

26<sup>th</sup> August 2025

Cllr Duff explained why the Personnel Committee felt the council's officers all merited a pay rise as the council's workload has not only increased but also diversified over recent years. Cllr Duff explained the pay rise would be in addition to the annual pay rise already awarded and its financial impact upon the council.

**2021** The Council **RESOLVED** unanimously to increase the pay of each of the council's six officers by one scale point.

This would be effective from the September pay.

The meeting ended at 20:03.

Chairman: **Cllr Steve Toney** Date: **6<sup>th</sup> October 2025**

END