



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, 6th October 2025 at East Preston Infant School, Lashmar Road, East Preston

PRESENT: Councillors Christine Bowman, Kit Bradshaw, Andrea Chapman, Lisa Duff, Barbara Gale and Helen Hill (all until 20:37); John Gunston, Elizabeth Linton, Glyn Mathias, Rick McElroy, David Moore and Steve Toney (Chairman) and Steven Wilkinson

ALSO: Simon Cross, Clerk to the Council

Cllr Roger Elkins, West Sussex County Council (until 18:40)

Cllr Philippa Bower, Arun District Council (until 19:40)

Kirstie Thomas, 4SIGHT Vision Support (until 19:08)

Four members of the Warren Recreation Ground Safety Group (all until 19:45)

Seven members of the public

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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 18:31.

754/25 **INTRODUCTIONS**

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

755/25 REVEREND ANDREW PERRY

Cllr Toney invited all present to join him in a minute's silence in memory of Reverend Andrew Perry, incumbent vicar at St Mary the Virgin, East Preston from 2017 until his recent passing.

Those present were advised they could stand or sit during the silence, as was their preference.

756/25 WEST SUSSEX COUNTY COUNCIL

With the Chairman's agreement, County Cllr Elkins addressed the meeting at this point as he had another meeting to attend.

Cllr Elkins thanked the meeting for permitting him to speak so early in the meeting. He provided an update on local government reorganisation. The preference which has been submitted to central government is for a single unitary authority to cover the whole of West Sussex. The final decision will be central government's but the county council believed a single unitary authority would result in greater cost savings than two unitary authorities for the county and those savings would be realised sooner too. Any new unitary authority will be expected to maintain and improve upon its relations with local councils. The county council currently provides 80% of services across the county, so there is a risk of disaggregation in the reorganisation. The government's decision is expected in Spring 2026, closely followed by a mayoral election for the Sussex Strategic Authority in May 2026. A shadow unitary authority council would be elected in May 2027 with the new structure taking over in May 2028. Cllr Elkins reiterated all the above was subject to change.

Cllr Elkins also reported WSCC's Adult Social Care provision had been inspected by the Care Quality Commission in August and had now been rated Good, a noteworthy step up from its previous rating of Requires Improvement.

In response to a question, Cllr Elkins advised the role of the Sussex Police & Crime Commissioner will report to the new Mayor of Sussex and Brighton. The Fire & Rescue Service will become county-wide too.

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

757/25 4SIGHT VISION SUPPORT

(Cllr Wilkinson joined the meeting during this item.)

The meeting received a presentation from Kirstie Thomas, Chief Executive Officer of the organisation (charity no. 1075447).

Ms Thomas explained 4SIGHT Vision Support was established over 100 years ago and ran with a very small team with very limited funds handled between sixty and seventy new referrals each month along the 3,500 people currently supported within West Sussex. 36,000 residents in the county were living with some form of sight loss, the highest national average per county.

Ms Thomas stressed the importance of eye tests. Fearing what an eye test might tell them, people tend not to get their eyes tested as often as they should or at all. Ms Thomas asked everyone present to think of how their lives might change if they woke up tomorrow with an immediate sight loss. Ms Thomas said the organization knew people who stopped eating and drinking hot things for fear of burning themselves, stopped eating fresh food because of the fear of cutting themselves whilst preparing it.

Ms Thomas talked about some of the services 4SIGHT can offer including the Low Vision Assessment which will report on adjustments which can be made to make the life of someone with new sight loss easier. This would cover such things as lighting options and the best use of magnification tools.

4SIGHT is on hand in three of the county's major hospitals, available to provide counselling at the point of diagnosis. In recent years, the organization has seen a 200% increase in requests for advice with accessible technology and a similar increase in requests for advice on benefits.

The organization was supporting local residents who were still deeply affected by the pandemic, the isolation experienced at that time and additional complexities of initiatives such as social distancing which were sometimes more complicated to navigate as someone with impaired vision.

Ms Thomas advised people should always ask a vision impaired person whether they need any assistance. There will only ever be two answers, yes or no. The organization supports not only the vision impaired person but also the person's family, friends, employer, whoever needs help to adjust to the person's particular circumstances.

Ms Thomas ended by saying sight loss is not something which is going to go away.

Mrs McLelland thanked Ms Thomas for her talk as it had given her husband a better understanding of how her life was adjusting following the onset of her own sight loss. Mrs McLelland said how lucky she was to live in such a wonderful community where people had taken on board her situation and worked with her as best they could.

Cllr Gunston said his own experience of 4SIGHT had been its involvement with two residents the council supported during the pandemic. Cllr Gunston said the support 4SIGHT gave to those residents was brilliant and could not be faulted.

In response to a question from Cllr Moore, Ms Thomas said she was aware of GBR Blind Sailing but not in any great depth.

With no further questions forthcoming, Ms Thomas thanked the council for inviting her to address the meeting and thanked the members of the public for their feedback.

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

758/25 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

All parish councillors were present.

Apologies were received from District Cllrs R Bower and Kelly, Julian Ellis, Kelvan Gale and Dave Jull.

759/25 DECLARATION OF PERSONAL AND/OR PREJUDICIAL/PECUNIARY INTERESTS

None were declared.

760/25 PUBLIC SESSION

Agenda Item 13a – Amenities Committee – Warren Recreation Ground – Mediation Exercise – Mrs F said she and her neighbours were here as members of the Warren Recreation Ground Safety Group (WRGSG). They had read the Clerk's supporting paper for this item and they favoured Mediator 2 as they believed the Joint Clarification Meeting was vital to the success of any mediation exercise.

Agenda Item 17a – Warren Recreation Ground Annual General Meeting – Mrs F asked whether this meeting was something anyone could attend. The Clerk replied the meeting was open to all and was advertised in council noticeboards and its e-newsletter. He added a member of the WRGSG not present this evening had said he would attend the Annual General Meeting although ultimately on this occasion he had not.

761/25 COUNCIL RESPONSES

There were no further council responses.

762/25 ARUN DISTRICT COUNCIL

District Cllrs Ricky Bower and Paul Kelly had sent apologies for the meeting.

District Cllr Philippa Bower provided an update on ADC's response to this council's suggestion a local group took on the management of the East Preston allotments site. Cllr Bower read from the written response she had received from the district council's housing department.

"The site has been looked at by the Housing Development and Enabling Officer as part of a review of all allotment sites within the district and was brought forward with the interest raised by EPPC to take over the management.

“The site is considered as one that, together with the garaging adjacent to the allotment site, is very much underused and a review of how this could be addressed to improve an income from this site is underway.

“Discussions were based around the use of an SLA [Service Level Agreement] provided by EPPC but following a review by our in-house Legal Department, the advice is a leasing arrangement is preferable.

“Further discussions are needed to progress the details of the lease with the Parish Council particularly in relation to the responsibility for maintaining the site boundaries and the holding of a Public Liability Insurance Policy.

“These discussions are proposed to be arranged in the coming month however, with a Senior staff member away on Permanent Sick Leave staff resources are being stretched and progress with some elements of Housing Departments workload are inevitably suffering delays. Unfortunately, this matter has been one of them.”

Cllr Bower said she was bringing up this matter at every opportunity as an example of how ADC was letting down its town and parish councils.

The Clerk informed Cllr Bower the reason the site was “very much underused” was because ADC, several years ago, had taken the decision not to issue new tenancy agreements when a tenancy was surrendered.

Cllr Gunston expressed his deep frustration there were individuals and organizations within the village crying out to be allowed to cultivate an abandoned allotment but ADC had been actively preventing that for several years now and its promises of attention now were not being honoured quickly enough.

Cllr Bradshaw said another year’s growing season had now passed, and Cllr Mathias suggested the council should write to the Chief Executive at ADC to say her colleagues were not helping enough with this matter.

Cllr Bower reported the ADC Environment Committee was investigating how it would use fewer chemicals on weeds. This could take up to a year to investigate.

As chairman of the Planning & Licensing Committee, Cllr Bowman expressed the council’s frustration at the ADC decision to grant Planning Permission for Application, EP/69/25/HH which would result in a property in Tamarisk Way being remodelled into something much larger but, more importantly, more blocky than the existing property, something which had been objected to by the parish council, the residents association, East Preston & Kingston Preservation Society and some neighbours, all with valid reasons upon which ADC could have refused Planning Permission. Cllr Bowman continued, stating the passion of the small team of councillors and residents who had worked tirelessly on updating an already robust Neighbourhood Plan with a view to protecting the village from just this sort of inappropriate development.

The Clerk added the applicant’s agent had submitted a letter responding to the comments made in all objections, but none of the objectors had been given the chance to respond to those comments. Throughout the application, the property was described as Art Deco when most observers said it was Arts & Crafts, a very different style to Art Deco, but that had gone unchallenged.

Objectors had written to the village’s three district councillors twice, but had received no responses.

Cllr Bower said she would discuss this case with her husband, Cllr Ricky Bower as he was better versed in Planning matters than she.

Cllr Linton raised her concerns about the lack of dog and litter bins on the greensward south of Tamarisk Way and how some of those provided had recently been removed. The provision of bins was lamentable compared to the stretch of greensward heading west through Rustington. Cllr Linton also questioned the information ADC’s bin operatives were unable to enter children’s playgrounds because they did not have the correct DBS certification. Cllr McElroy added there should be no reason for a bin operative to need any DBS certification as the bin operatives were not being left supervising children within any playground. All parish councillors and officers here had up-to-date DBS certificates, it was not difficult.

Cllr Bower said she would investigate.

The Clerk advised Cllr Bower the council would later be discussing the future of ADC’s Mill Pond Way play area in light of ADC’s decision to close it and to replace it with landscaping. Cllr Bower said she would investigate.

(Cllr Bower and Mrs Morley left the meeting at the conclusion of this item.)

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

Amenities Committee – Warren Recreation Ground – mediation exercise

Council is asked to agree to the council sponsoring a mediation exercise related to the playing of cricket on the Warren Recreation Ground.

Cllr Wilkinson to introduce this item.

The Warren Recreation Ground Safety Group has been restarted this year, representing at least five properties which neighbour the Warren Recreation Ground. The group has concerns about the risks of personal injury and property damage owing to the playing of cricket at the ground.

The council has proposed a three-way mediation exercise to the Warren Recreation Ground Safety Group and East Preston Cricket Club, and both parties have agreed to investigate this further.

When the council initiated a similar exercise in 2019, it contracted the West Sussex Mediation Service, but that organisation no longer exists. I contacted the Chief Executive Officer for Arun & Chichester Citizens Advice and he directed me towards the Civil Mediation Council and the Dispute Resolution Agency. During this month, I have been in touch with both the latter organisation and some locally-based individual mediators from the Civic Mediation Council website.

Mediator 1	Based in Emsworth	Proposed mediation exercise £1,440 for pre-meets, site visit and 4 hours of three-way mediation; would involve a co-mediator. Would include a follow-up call with each party
Mediator 2	Based in Chichester	£110 excl VAT per hour of support; initial Joint Clarity Session, £330 excl VAT for a three hour session
Mediator 3	Based in Horsham	Has not provided any financial details, but works for Mediator 4 too
Mediator 4	Based in Brighton	£450 for a three-way meeting of up to 2 hours, online or in person Would start with individual online meetings with each set of participants, £100 per meeting Travel and any venue costs additional

Two others did not reply.

I would be happy with any of the mediators above, but have a preference for Mediator 2 because of the offer of a Joint Clarity Session ahead of the mediation itself.

Further information is available in Appendix A below.

Difficult to estimate, but I would suggest the council sets aside £2,000 for this exercise at this time.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

29th September 2025

Cllr Wilkinson spoke in support of this report. He explained the Amenities Committee had met with the WRGSG at a committee meeting in August, and representatives of the council had met with the cricket club at a meeting instigated by the club early in September. Both parties had agreed to participate in a mediation exercise sponsored by the council.

Cllr Mathias suggested the council only commit to an initial mediation meeting at this point as he would not support any proposal which would have an adverse effect on the playing of cricket on the Warren Recreation Ground.

Mrs Finnigan said the WRGSG was not seeking a ban on cricket but it wanted to ensure the safety of users of the Warren Recreation Ground and those living adjacent was paramount.

In response to a question from Cllr McElroy, the Clerk said the cricket club had not explicitly stated a preference for a mediation provider but it had access to the same information as the WRGSG.

2022 The Council **RESOLVED** to allocated up to £2,000 towards the cost of a mediation exercise, on the understanding this cost may go up once mediation has started.

Cllr Mathias voted against this.

2023 The Council **RESOLVED** to use Mediator 2 for this exercise.

Cllr Hill abstained from both of the above votes stating she was not familiar enough with the situation to make an informed decision.

(All remaining members of the public left the meeting at the conclusion of this item.)

764/25 MINUTES OF THE MONTHLY MEETING HELD ON 1ST SEPTEMBER 2025

The draft Minutes were circulated to all councillors on 2nd September asking for suggested amendments by the 9th September. None were received.

2024 The Council **RESOLVED** unanimously the Chairman could sign the Minutes as a true record of the meeting held on 1st September. Cllr Toney duly did so.

765/25 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 541/25 – Leases Working Party – East Preston & Kingston Bowls Club**
- 3. Minute 670/25 – Voluntary Action Arun and Chichester (VAAC)**

1. Introduction

This is the report covering items discussed during Full Council meetings up to and including the meeting held on 1st September 2025.

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

The council's surveyor began negotiations with the club's surveyor in a meeting on 10th September.

Please could members of the Leases Working Party stay behind at the end of this meeting.

3. **Minute 670/25 – Voluntary Action Arun and Chichester (VAAC)**

Following the meeting, Ms Sumner emailed the council, “As always it was a pleasure being in East Preston and meeting everyone. Look forward to having more East Preston VAAC members, and will continue to investigate how we can progress ‘banking’ options for the smaller groups.”

Members of the public who attended also thanked the council for having arranged this presentation.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

29th September 2025

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

766/25 FINANCIAL MATTERS

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

- 2025** The council **RESOLVED** unanimously to approve the Outstanding Purchase Orders report for 2025/26, value £2,361.38 (exc. VAT).
- 2026** The council **RESOLVED** unanimously to approve the Regular Monthly Payments reports for September 2025 totalling £400.84 (inc. VAT).
- 2027** The council **RESOLVED** unanimously to approve the Supplier BACS Invoices Paid reports for September totalling £40,295.51 (inc. VAT).
- 2028** The council **RESOLVED** unanimously to approve the List of Sales Receipts & Bank Receipts by Bank report for financial year to date totalling £145,550.05 (inc. VAT) for September 2025, (Year to Date, £319,627.38).

The council NOTED the Bank Reconciliations to 12th September 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.

767/25 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 and Planning & Licensing. By the time of this meeting, the draft Minutes from all these meetings should have been circulated to all councillors.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

26th September 2025

Amenities Committee

Cllr Wilkinson is chairman of this committee.

September 2025

The committee met on 15th September.

Warren Recreation Ground – Children’s Playground – The 2025 ROSPA inspection took place at the children’s playground in July and the report highlighted all items of equipment required some remedial work. The multi-play unit required several of its wooden floor panels needed replacing. The committee agreed to replace all the unit’s worn floor panels, this along with the cost of the other remedial work would mean an overspend on the playground budget of approximately £1,800.00.

The committee is approaching Full Council to request £2,000.00 to cover the cost of this work, see Agenda Item 12b below.

Warren Recreation Ground – as per Agenda Item 12a below, the committee is seeking council’s support for a mediation exercise with the Warren Recreation Ground Safety Group and East Preston Cricket Club.

Simon has been talking to mediation companies and individuals in order to make a proposal to this meeting.

Sea Road public toilets – the block has been deep cleaned and non-concussive taps have been installed in the two unisex toilets.

Village Green – south-western corner – on behalf of the council, Michał Zarzecki led consultation sessions on 22nd and 24th September. Some members of the public additionally commented by email and these have been forwarded to Michał.

Warren Recreation Ground pickleball proposal – the committee considered a public proposal to make the tennis court suitable for pickleball as well as tennis. This discussion will continue at the next meeting.

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

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

24th September 2025

Audit & Governance Committee

Cllr Mathias is the chairman of this committee.

The committee’s next meeting is scheduled for 24th November.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

29th September 2025

Community Engagement Committee

Cllr Linton is the chairman of this committee.

The committee met on 22nd September.

A few of the topics discussed at the meeting:

Meeting of village sports clubs, 28th July – the committee agreed to schedule a second such meeting for 12th January. Jackie Sumner from VAAC will be invited to attend if available.

Remembrance Sunday, 9th November – the committee agreed to fund the provision of barriers for this event as the Legion branch has been told it cannot spend money on such any more. There probably needs to be a formal conversation between the Legion and the council about future arrangements for Remembrance Sunday events.

Beach Cleans 2026 – the committee agreed to schedule beach cleans for 29th March and 27th September 2026.

East Preston Festival, 5th to 14th June 2026 – in addition to the family-friendly event on the Village Green on 9th June, the committee agreed to host a *Come and Meet Your Local Councillors* event on Saturday, 6th June.

2026 East Preston calendar – availability is imminent.

Warm Welcome Space 2026 – following the committee's agreement to run a further Warm Welcome Space season for twelve sessions on Wednesdays from January to March 2026, the committee agreed it will do its best to keep officer involvement to a minimum.

The committee's next meeting will be on 17th November.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

29th September 2025

Finance & General Purposes Committee

Cllr McElroy is the chairman of this committee.

The committee did not meet in September.

The committee's next meeting is scheduled for 17th November.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

26th September 2025

Major Events Committee

Cllr Linton is Chairman of the committee.

The committee did not meet in September.

The following was discussed at the Community Engagement meeting on 22nd September:

Autumn Quiz, 12th October – Cllr Linton is the lead councillor for this event which will run from 14:00 until 17:00. At the time of the meeting, ticket sales were not going well and the committee agreed to decide on 6th October whether or not to proceed with the event. In the meantime, local organisations would be approached about entering a team.

The committee's next meeting is scheduled for 20th October.

Personnel Committee

The committee did not meet in September.

We have been told we need to give six months' notice to cease using WSCC as our payroll provider. Noting this as an excessive notice period, Simon has asked WSCC to justify this.

The committee's next meeting is scheduled for 13th October.

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

26th September 2025

Planning & Licensing Committee

The committee met on 22nd September only.

Three Applications were considered and no objections were raised to any of them. An Application for tree works had previously been considered electronically and the committee's agreement to refer it to the ADC arboriculturist was recorded.

Work on the revised East Preston Neighbourhood Plan continues.

The committee's next meeting will be on 13th October.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

26th September 2025

Additionally:

Community Engagement – Cllr Linton expressed concern at the lack of councillors attending the beach clean on 28th September. Although the Clerk had overseen a successful event, it perhaps had not looked good to members of the public no councillors attended. Cllr Linton said the committee would be considering the need for council beach cleans as the amount of litter to be found each session was significantly less than it had been in the past, as evidenced by the number of keen volunteers who no longer attended. Depending upon the outcome of that discussion, Cllr Linton said she might be looking to get more councillors involved in future beach cleans.

Cllr Bradshaw reported he had undertaken his own litter pick along Manor Road on the afternoon of the beach clean, amongst his findings: two pairs of men's underwear.

Cllr Linton confirmed the 2026 calendar was currently with the designer and should be available imminently.

Major Events – Cllr Linton confirmed the decision had been taken to cancel the Afternoon Quiz scheduled for 12th October. This was due to poor ticket sales.

The Clerk confirmed he had emailed all those who had booked and refunds had been issued. All had expressed their disappointment and understanding. He had also contacted both the quizmaster and the Junior School. The quizmaster had advised he had incurred no expenses and the Junior School said it just needed a box of chocolates as a cancellation fee.

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

768/25 AMENITIES COMMITTEE – WARREN RECREATION GROUND CHILDREN'S PLAY AREA

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

Amenities Committee – Warren Recreation Ground – children’s playground

Council is asked to agree to expenditure of £2,000 to replace the floor panels of the multi-play unit in the children’s play area.

Cllr Wilkinson to introduce this item.

As mentioned in Dawn’s report above, this year’s RoSPA inspection of the play area identified several of the wooden floor panels on the multi-play needed replacement. The committee agreed to replace all of the panels together, but does not have enough money to do so.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

29th September 2025

Cllr Wilkinson spoke in support of this item. No questions were asked.

2029 The Council **RESOLVED** unanimously to additional expenditure of £2,000 to replace the floor panels of the multiplay unit.

769/25 PLANNING & LICENSING COMMITTEE – EAST PRESTON NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

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

Planning & Licensing Committee – East Preston Neighbourhood Plan – Regulation 15

Council is asked to agree to the draft revised East Preston Neighbourhood Plan progressing to Regulation 15.

Cllr Bowman to introduce this item.

Earlier this year, the revised plan was out for consultation under Regulation 14 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012. Comments made by corporate stakeholders and local residents have all been considered and, where appropriate, have been incorporated into the latest version of the plan.

This afternoon, in response to a question, ADC has confirmed:

As you say, you have been through the Regulation 14 consultation process and have made appropriate changes following the comments received.

The next stage would be for the Parish to submit the draft plan to Arun District Council – Regulation 15 (as per The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012). This should include:

- a map or statement, which identifies the area to which the plan relates (preferably a map);
- a consultation statement;
- the proposed neighbourhood development plan;
- a statement on how the plan fulfils the basic conditions;
- (i) an environmental report prepared in accordance with paragraphs (2) and (3) of regulation 12 of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004; or
- (ii) where it has been determined under regulation 9(1) of those Regulations that the plan proposal is unlikely to have significant environmental effects (and, accordingly, does not

require an environmental assessment), a statement of reasons for the determination – this may apply if the East Preston NDP is not allocating any sites;

- in relation to a modification proposal, a statement setting out the whether or not the qualifying body (EPPC) consider that the modifications contained in the modification proposal are so significant or substantial as to change the nature of the NDP which the modification proposal would modify, giving reasons for why the qualifying body is of this opinion.

Once we receive this and following sign off of our internal checking of the submission and processes relating to appointment of an examiner, the Regulation 16 process, which is undertaken by Arun, commences i.e. publicising the plan proposals (or a modification proposal). This consists of the LPA (ADC LPA) having to publicise the plan for at least 6 weeks in line with The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012.

I trust that this provides you with the necessary clarification for the purposes of next week's Parish Council meeting. Please let us know the outcome of that meeting and any decisions around your timeline, as we need to do our own background work and line up the required processes on our side.

With thanks and best wishes

Victoria Hobday
Senior Planning Officer (Policy & Conservation)

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

30th September 2025

As Chairman of both the Planning & Licensing Committee and the Neighbourhood Plan Review Steering Group, Cllr Bowman explained it had not been practical to circulate the latest draft of the Neighbourhood Plan because of its size, but it could be made available to councillors. Following the consultation exercise Regulation 14, the Steering Group believed the draft plan was ready to be submitted to ADC for it to refer to an independent examiner. The Steering Group had worked hard on getting the plan to this state.

2030 The Council **RESOLVED** unanimously to submit the draft revised East Preston Neighbourhood Plan to Arun District Council as Regulation 15 of The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012.

Councillors, including Cllrs Toney, Linton and Duff, thanked Cllr Bowman and her team for their work to date on this project.

770/25 REPORTS FROM PARISH COUNCIL WORKING PARTIES

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

Additionally:

Devolution and Local Government Reorganisation – Cllr Gunston queried whether the council needed to keep its Devolution and Local Government Reorganisation Working Party whilst all information being produced suggests there will be no changes for town and parish councils. He reported that although the preference submitted to central government from the higher authorities in West Sussex had been for a single unitary authority, the *Shaping West Sussex* engagement exercise had recorded 62% of the population had been in favour of a two unitary authority model. Cllr Gunston confirmed the Clerk's comment there had been no financial details within the engagement exercise and yet the financials were being used as a basis for the decision for one unitary authority over two.

After some discussion, it was **AGREED** the working party should lay dormant for the time being.

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

771/25 ARUN DISTRICT COUNCIL – MILL POND WAY PLAY AREA

The following report was circulated ahead of the meeting:

Arun District Council – Mill Pond Way play area

Council is asked to consider any influence it may have over the future of the Mill Pond Way play area.

On 9th September, council received a copy of a letter from the Parks & Greenspace Service at ADC announcing the removal of existing play equipment from the Mill Pond Way play area.

Dear Sir/Madam

The Mill Pond Way Play Area

You may be aware that as part of the play strategy Lashmar Rec Play Area, which has just had an upgrade, has been prioritised over the Mill Pond Way, as it is within a short walk.

The play area strategy was approved by Arun District Council and can be viewed online at www.arun.gov.uk/play-area-strategy-2018-2028/

Whilst we cannot keep this play area open, we would like to work with residents to get their views on how they would like the area to be landscaped once the play area is removed. We have liaised with Hide Housing, but they are unable to assist us in this matter.

There is a small budget for landscaping so we would welcome your views and ideas for the future landscaping of the play area site. Please submit them via email, typing Mill Pond Way in the Subject line, to anthony.baker@arun.gov.uk or by writing to me at the above address.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours Sincerely



Anthony Baker
Community Parks Officer
Neighbourhood Services
Arun District Council

I forwarded this letter to all East Preston councillors for info. Two came back asking for this council to have a discussion about this.

The letter had not given a closing date for comments and when I asked, I was advised it would be 17th October. I also asked if the decision could be reversed if, for example, this council offered some money or bid to take responsibility for the site and I asked for any relevant documents he could share me for this meeting. Nothing back to date.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

29th September 2025

The Clerk explained two councillors had asked him for the council to consider this matter following the circulation of the letter ADC had circulated to households in the Mill Pond Way area asking for ideas for landscaping once the existing play equipment has been removed.

Cllr Wilkinson said he felt it unacceptable young children should walk from their homes in the Mill Pond Way area to the nearest play area, Lashmar Road. This would involve crossing Worthing Road, a road in which there were no pedestrian refuges.

Cllr McElroy said he had researched this on Google Maps, and the two play areas were either a four-minute drive apart or an eleven-minute walk apart, Google suggesting a walking route which was perhaps not the simplest. Cllr McElroy questioned whether we had any knowledge of how well-used the Mill Pond Way play area was, was it still needed? The Clerk replied he had asked ADC whether any consultation and similar documents could be made available but had received no reply to date.

After some further discussion,

2031 The Council **RESOLVED** to discuss the future of the Mill Pond Way play area further with ADC to see what options could be available to the council.

Cllr Bradshaw abstained from this vote.

772/25 ARUN DISTRICT COUNCIL – COUNCIL TAX

The following report was circulated ahead of the meeting:

Arun District Council – Council Tax

Council is asked to consider correspondence received on the subject of Council Tax Reduction Scheme 2026/27.

Council received the following email on 15th September.

Dear Simon

Council Tax Reduction Scheme 2025/26

Arun District Council is looking to revise its Council Tax Reduction scheme within the Council's area from 2026/27. The reason for the change is to correct issues with the current scheme and to provide more support to those on the lowest incomes.

Experience has shown that leaving the scheme the same will have an adverse effect on both taxpayers claiming Council Tax Reduction and overall collection levels.

Key Proposed Changes:

- **100% support** for households with the lowest income (up from 90%)
- **Full disregard** of all Armed Forces pensions and compensation payments to help our veterans.
- **Support for UC claimants:** disregard the Limited Capability for Work element
- Support for carers: disregard Carers Allowance and the Carers element of Universal Credit.
- **Lower minimum payment** threshold from £5.00 to £1.00.

Details of the changes are designed to:

- support the most vulnerable including those unable to work or who have caring responsibilities.
- assist in the overall administration of claims; and
- assist in the collection of Council Tax.

It should be noted that the Council's Council Tax Base continues to increase and this has been further enhanced by the introduction of empty homes premiums which can now be charged up to 300% and also the introduction of second home premium from 1st April 2025 which will be charged at 100% on all dwellings that are not a person's main residence but are furnished

A public consultation is now open with and we are inviting people to complete the online survey
<https://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/ARUNCTRFINAL/>

I would welcome Eat Preston Parish Council's comments by 12/10/2025.

Yours sincerely
Keira Stevenson
Revenues & Benefits Manager

I believe the dates in the heading are incorrect.

I publicised the consultation in the e-newsletter published on 18th September.

I did ask Keira whether she could give me some idea of what impact these proposals will have upon this council's council tax base for the coming financial year, but Keira replied, "I'm sorry but I can't answer a question about the council tax base for next year as I don't know what it will be until the preceptors decide the increases for 2026." I don't believe that is correct, but maybe I am wrong.

Does anyone have any thoughts on this we can refer back to ADC?

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

29th September 2025

The meeting felt it was unclear what sort of response ADC was looking for, although councillors generally saw the proposal would help more people in need. However,

2032 The Council **RESOLVED** unanimously to respond to ADC's consultation saying it did not feel it could respond as no information had been made available on the impact the proposals might have on the council's Council Tax base.

773/25 ARUN DISTRICT COUNCIL – STATION ROAD SPUR ROAD

The Clerk reported the council had received the following email on 30th September:

Hi Simon,

You will be pleased to know that we now have a start date for the improvements at Station Rd.

The works include increased kerb heights, raising both footpath levels, road surfaces renewed along with pedestrian barriers both sides and revamp the bench.

WSCC have been involved with the pedestrian barriers. The new barriers will cause issues with cars that used to park on the paths. This is our road and we need to do something to preserve the future of the road, paths and cause less aggravation to our neighbours.

Work planned to start 21/11/25 but this may be flexible.

Any problems please let me know.

Many Thanks,
Lloyd Willson
Senior Surveyor, Property & Estates

The Clerk shared this just for information as the council had, in the past, needed to contact ADC fairly frequently about the aesthetic of the spur road, so this should be good news.

774/25 WARREN RECREATION GROUND – ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING, 8TH SEPTEMBER

Council NOTED the draft Minutes from the Annual General Meeting of the Warren Recreation Ground as held on 8th September. These had been circulated in advance of the meeting.

775/25 SUSSEX POLICE

No report had been received.

776/25 CLERK'S REPORT

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

Clerk's Report

1. **Introduction**
2. **Police matters**
3. **Anti-social behaviour matters**
4. **Freedom of Information / Data Protection requests**
5. **Visit from Trevor Leggo, CEO West Sussex Association of Local Councils, 29th August**
6. **Meeting with East Preston Cricket Club, 3rd September**
7. **Mulberry Local Authority Services Ltd. Governance Assertion 10 Digital and Data Compliance training, 5th September**
8. **East Preston Floral Club Festival of Flowers preview evening, 24th September**
9. **Community Speedwatch, 25th September**
10. **Visit to Ayton House, Angmering, 25th September**
11. **East Preston Beach Clean No. 24, 28th September**
12. **Social media**
13. **MailChimp stats**
14. **A selection of things we have been asked since the last meeting**
15. **Recent bouquets and complaints**
16. **Leave**
17. **October meetings and events**

1. **Introduction**

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

2. **Police matters**

No updates at the time of writing.

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 (FoI) / Data Protection requests**

We received a Freedom of Information request related to the Conservative Hall. I had an informal conversation with the requester and I was able to provide him with information without the need to complete the formal FoI request; "Nothing further required at this time from us."

5. **Visit from Trevor Leggo, CEO West Sussex Association of Local Councils, 29th August**

Council agreed at its meeting on 30th June to submit a loan application to the government. After a slight problem of only being able to download an incorrect application form from the right website,

I submitted the application to Trevor on 3rd July. Trevor added his comments and forwarded the application to the correct government department. Perhaps cheekily, where the form asked for a date by which we would like the money, I put 1st August. Trevor did not think that was a problem and went on leave.

By 29th July, Trevor was back from leave and I asked him if he had heard anything about the loan application as the council had not even had an acknowledgement of its request.

I contacted Trevor again on 4th August and again on the 12th August. It must have been a further week on when Trevor called. Hearing we had still not had an acknowledgement even, Trevor said he would come and see me and booked to see me on 29th August.

On the negative side, the only action Trevor was able to take whilst in East Preston was to have me forward him the application paperwork again.

I chased again on 5th September.

On the positive side, Trevor complimented the “vibrant place” East Preston is. Trevor asked about devolution and I said council was waiting to learn more but has taken part in the appropriate meetings and consultations so far as well as providing useful background information to our MP. In his view, members of the public currently have little interest in the whole devolution and local government reorganisation except in places worried about becoming part of something much bigger than their current hierarchy.

6. Meeting with East Preston Cricket Club, 3rd September

This meeting was called by and chaired by East Preston Cricket Club and sought to look forwards rather than into the recent past.

The council proposed a mediation exercise and the club said it was again willing to enter into such an exercise having also done so in 2019.

7. Mulberry Local Authority Services Ltd. Governance Assertion 10 Digital and Data Compliance training, 5th September

Cllr Gunston, Adrian and I all attended this half-hour online training session, on the new Assertion 10 which will be part of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return from the end of this financial year.

As part of Assertion 10, all councils must be able to evidence their website meets legal requirements, such as having a .gov.uk domain, have an accessibility statement and meet accessibility legislation. The website must include documentation as stated in the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and a Freedom of Information Publication Scheme. The council must follow the General Data Protection Regulations and the Data Protection Act 2018. I am pretty confident the council is ok in these respects.

All councils must have a generic email account hosted on an authority-owned domain. The council has clerk@, asstclerk@, admin@ and finance@eastpreston-pc.gov.uk. To comply with the General Data Protection Regulations, councillors and officers must be issued with emails linked to that domain and, equally as important, must only use those email addresses when on council business. I have checked with our internal auditor and he has confirmed Caspar and Stephen do not need an East Preston Parish Council email address.

The council should have an IT Policy, which I don't think we have. NALC has produced a template policy, but I cannot find it on the NALC website. I have added this to the Agenda for the Audit & Governance Committee meeting in November – the policy should not need much tailoring.

The training explained how internal auditors will seek evidence the council is complying with these requirements.

8. **East Preston Floral Club Festival of Flowers preview evening, 24th September**

I am not 100% sure why, but I was invited to this event and attended straight from a day's leave.

The Festival was entitled, "The Arts, A Floral Celebration" and was held at St Mary the Virgin church. Displays were arranged by topics such as Fashion, Literature, Music, Jewellery, Sculpture and Opera.

Cllr Mathias was also present. Mostly, the event was for members of the Floral Club to have a preview of the displays before the general public. There were probably about 50 people at the preview including a few members of the congregation of St Mary's.

Photographs really cannot do the creations full justice, but here is the chancel display by Val Adams and Sarita Nunn, just to give some flavour of the event:



*Swan Lake depicted at The Arts, A
Floral Celebration*

9. **Community Speedwatch, 25th September**

I did this shift with coordinator, Gavin Bernard. Between 10:00 and 11:00, we recorded 48 vehicle movements, none of which was going fast enough to be recorded. A few residents spoke to us, the usual jokey complaint about vehicles slowing down when they see our hi-vis waistcoats and comments about cars driving at 80mph in the night.

10. **Visit to Ayton House, Angmering, 25th September**

Caroline Thomas, Customer Services Manager of Ayton House, Dappers Lane, Angmering, contacted the council in August saying she would like Ayton House to be more involved in the local community and inviting East Preston Parish Council to come and visit one afternoon. Having ensured Angmering Parish Council had also been invited, I agreed a date with Caroline and opened the invite to councillors.

On the day, only Cllrs Bradshaw and Moore could attend with me, and Cllr Bradshaw's report can be found below.

Ayton House is run by Care UK and it was interesting to hear Care UK, in addition to over 100 similar homes in the country, runs the drop-in GP surgery just outside Brighton station and the 111 service in some parts of the country, on behalf of the NHS.

Ayton House opened in November 2024 and can host up to 72 residents. At the time of the visit, 36 residents were living in the property with a new suite about to open which would see an increase to over 40 residents. Some residents chose to live here because living as part of a

community is a better option for them than living alone at home. Others are here because their families have had to make that choice for them. The residents we saw and spoke to all seemed to be very happy.

Caroline organises events which anyone can attend, for example the (men's) Pie and a Pint lunch (third Thursday) and the Friday Fish and Chips lunch (final Friday), both monthly. During the week, there is a minibus available to take residents to different events. The home is proud to be an officially accredited Veteran Friendly Framework care home and Caroline and David had quite a chat about his service.



(left to right) Kit, Simon, David and Caroline
(photograph courtesy of Uyema, Activities Coordinator)

Caroline has worked for Care UK for seven years and appears to be very happy doing so. The company operates a Duty of Candour which could be the basis for an interesting conversation at the Personnel Committee.

For anyone who was unable to attend this visit, I recommend spending a few minutes on the home's website, in particular looking at the photo and video gallery. Watching just a few of the videos will really give you a good idea of the home. <https://www.careuk.com/care-homes/ayton-house-angmering>

11. **East Preston Beach Clean No. 24, 28th September**

Weather was good enough for twenty volunteers to come along, aged between very young and quite old. General feeling was the beach was pretty clean although there were also reports of numerous small pieces of plastic at the western end of the beach and the most fishing wire seen for a long time.

I was the sole representative of the council at this event. My thanks to Jenn Hardy and Carol Longman who both offered to help with the administration of the event. Luckily, somehow the twenty volunteers spread their arrival times, so I was able to administer alone. I also thank Cllr Moore for having attached bags to hoops ahead of the event, which also meant I could administer alone.

One surprising thing happened. I was talking to a local resident who had been walking his dog on the beach, off-lead. Two separate people came over to tell him his dog fouled on the beach whilst he was not looking.

The next beach clean is scheduled for Sunday, 29th March, the first Sunday in April 2026 being Easter.

12. **Social Media**

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

- A post supporting the Below the Belt PSA test initiative – 5,151 people
- A post publicising the East Preston Floral Club's show at St Mary the Virgin church – 1,212
- A post advising of a found bank card – 651
- A post warning of Palm Oil on East Preston beach - 511

(posts up to and including 28th September)

The number of Followers is currently 1,939, an increase of 6 on the last report.

13. **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 – 27th August – sent to 964 subscribers, opened by 714 (74.5%)

Parish Council news – 3rd September – sent to 962 subscribers, opened by 734 (76.9%)

Parish Council news – 10th September – sent to 957 subscribers, opened by 730 (76.5%)

Parish Council news – 18th September – sent to 957 subscribers, opened by 696 (73%)

Parish Council news – 25th September – sent to 955 subscribers, opened by 689 (72.2%)

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

"We are having trouble with a tradesperson – who should we talk to?" (Try WSCC Trading Standards - <https://www.westsussex.gov.uk/business-and-consumers/trading-standards-information-for-consumers/>)

"Would it be possible to have the white line outside our property refurbished?" (White Access Protection Lines are provided only to protect a private access and, as such, are not covered by Highways Maintenance. Once a line needs to be refurbished, it must be applied for again and paid for again, just like a new line.)

15. **Recent bouquets and complaints**

(In addition to anything reported above)

We arranged for a representative from Stagecoach South to visit the monthly Field House coffee morning. Afterwards, the house manager emailed, "It went well and was very interesting, hopefully gave him and us some info we didn't have. Really nice guy!" The Stagecoach South rep said, "It was fine. To start with they were predictably, but understandably, upset that their service frequency had been cut from every 12 mins to every half hour. However, after providing them with a reality-check I think they understood the situation better. I can't say they were happy but they appreciated the explanation. A nice bunch of folks to be fair."

From residents of Russells Close seeking help with a situation in that road, "Thank you so much for your 2 emails and your prompt and useful responses."

From a resident of Fairlands who had raised a concern about how low a tree there was hanging, "Thank you. It's much better. Let's hope they [WSCC Highways] does not leave it so long next time."

From a resident of Sea Lane Close who asked for further information on “some negative rumblings about the old conservative hall”: “Thank you for a prompt reply. Interesting. I wouldn’t want to live next to or opposite a funeral home. (Though I’d be okay with a graveyard.) However, I’d struggle to raise a legitimate objection. The usage was I thought well publicised so why didn’t the opponents to the usage object to the planning application or did they?”

From a village resident we helped promote the film show of her play, “Thank you for your help and encouragement re the upcoming film show of my play Flowery Shirts and Strange Relations. It’s great to see the posters on the notice boards. I loved that you described me as ‘village playwright’ in a recent newsletter. Very flattered. I am very touched by how supportive East Preston residents are of such things - not least by our Parish Council Clerk.”

A couple from Redhill booked to have a chat whilst they were house-hunting in the village. They came armed with a number of questions, which we pretty much answered for them. “You have made it so easy for us to learn about the village. What a great facility.”

16. **Leave**

I am on leave on 2nd October for Fr Andrew’s funeral. Adrian is on leave for the week beginning 6th October. Alison is on leave on 8th October and again for the week beginning 27th, and Dawn is on leave between 20th and 22nd October.

17. **October Meetings and Events**

This list may be incomplete and is subject to change.

- 6th Full Council (18:30, East Preston Infant School)
- 8th South East Community Rail Partnership meeting (14:00, Shoreham-by-Sea) (SC only) (tbc)
- 11th East Preston Repair Café (10:00, Vicarage Lane)
- 12th *Autumn Quiz* (14:00, East Preston Junior School) (tbc)
- 13th Planning & Licensing Committee (18:00, East Preston Infant School)
Personnel Committee (19:00, East Preston Infant School)
- 15th East Preston Festival Committee donations evening (19:00, Village Hall)
- 20th Major Events Committee (19:00, East Preston Infant School)
- 22nd Interim internal audit (09:30)
- 27th Planning & Licensing Committee (18:00, East Preston Infant School)
- 29th Informal hearing impairment meeting (14:30, Council Office) (from EL, HH and SC)

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**

30th September 2025

Item 11 – East Preston Beach Clean No. 24, 28th September – Cllr Linton asked whether the local resident had returned to pick up after his dog and the Clerk confirmed he had.

Item 12 – Social Media – the Clerk advised Cllr Linton the found bank card had not been claimed and had subsequently been destroyed.

777/25 **EXTERNAL MEETINGS AND EVENTS**

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

Mulberry Local Authority Services, Governance Assertion 10 training, 5th September

online

I attended this short session with Simon and Adrian. Our Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) will now require a statement of compliance to cover the Parish Council website, email management and data processing. We also need an IT Policy. This needs to be in place 31st March 2026. We already comply with many of the requirements but some work needs to be done. The issues will be discussed at the next Personnel Committee meeting to ensure all councillors and officers are aware of their responsibilities.

Cllr John Gunston –
Vice-Chairman of the Finance & General Purposes Committee

16th September 2025

ADC and Western Sussex Rivers Trust (WSRT) water environment meeting, 10th September

Civic Centre, Littlehampton

Along with eight other councils I attended this instructive event at the Civic Centre in Littlehampton. WSRT concentrated on some practical actions for Parish Councils to help with the problems of water pollution including:

- Promote good riparian ownership
- Manage more land for nature
- Remove and report non-native invasive species
- Natural flood management - Reduce surface run-off & store rainwater
- Ponds & wetlands
- Water Quality testing – River Guardians
- Report pollution – to the Environment Agency & Southern Water + inform WSRT
- Information campaigns: reduce water usage - slow the flow - store the water.

I will pass on this information to the Environment Group and write an article on the issue for the next parish council newsletter.

Cllr John Gunston –
Chairman of the Devolution and Local Government Reorganisation Working Party

16th September 2025

Voluntary Action Arun and Chichester (VAAC) annual general meeting, 23rd September

St Laurence Church, Sea Place, Worthing

I attended the AGM in Littlehampton.

VAAC is now in a more secure financial position and re-emphasised its ability to support local groups through training and fundraising support. Among the short presentations were uplifting

stories including the High Sheriff of West Sussex who is implementing a number of initiatives to combat men's mental health issues.

Cllr John Gunston –

29th September 2025

Chairman of the Devolution and Local Government Reorganisation Working Party

Greenacres and Ayton House visits, 24th / 25th September

Greenleas, The Leas, Rustington / Ayton House, Dappers Lane, Angmering

It was delightful to be invited to visit an assisted living home and a care home in the same week in a Parish Councillor capacity.

On Wednesday 24th Sep Councillor Moore and I visited Greenleas for their Macmillan Cancer Care fundraiser and coffee morning. We spent a while chatting to some of the residents about bits and bobs on East Preston Parish and enjoyed some delicious homemade cakes and tea along with some nice vegetable pasties. There was also a music duo singing '60 hits for our enjoyment too.



Florence the manager made us feel very very welcome and we recognised some East Preston residents there for the coffee morning too! At the last count, over £200 had been raised.

On Thurs 25th it was time to visit Angmering's newest Care Home - Ayton House which provides short-term and permanent residential care as well as dementia care.

The fabulous Caroline met me, Councillor Moore and our marvellous Mr. Clerk at the door and sat us down in the dining room. We were very thrilled to be greeted with a full cream tea to devour whilst we chatted to Caroline!

A tour of Ayton House took place after and we were most impressed with the modern, airy and comfortable facilities on offer. A particular highlight being the pub called 'The Sailor's Arms' they have on the top floor! This also has a very comfy cinema area.

It is a very impressive place and also very well run and structured too.

Cllr Kit Bradshaw

29th September 2025

Dr Beccy Cooper MP public meeting, 27th September

St Laurence Church, Sea Place, Worthing

The meeting took place in Goring and was attended by about 20 people.

Short presentations from the Southern Water's Bathing Partnership Manager and Sustainable Drainage System Lead outlined what the company have been doing in Worthing to lessen sewage overflows.

Councillor Vicki Wells from Worthing Borough Council then talked about volunteers who are helping the Environment Agency by regularly testing in bathing areas.

I have contacted Hilary Murgatroyd the Southern Water stakeholder Manager responsible for liaising with local government who also attended the meeting. I suggested she visit East Preston and meet some local residents to discuss issues.

Cllr John Gunston –

29th September 2025

Chairman of the Devolution and Local Government Reorganisation Working Party

Cllr Bradshaw said he and Cllr Moore had both enjoyed their trips to Greenleas and Ayton House. The Greenleas Macmillan coffee morning had ultimately raised £335. Both venues had invited council representatives to visit as the venues like to know how their residents can get involved in the local community and that does not just mean the village in which the venues are located.

Cllr Gunston said only about twenty people attended Dr Beccy Cooper MP's water event, and only one other was from East Preston. Subsequently, he had invited a Southern Water representative to visit East Preston as she may not be familiar with it. The Southern Water website was very transparent about the company's failings and showed it was the 16th performing water board out of 17 in the country.

Nothing was added.

778/25 RESPONSE TO EXTERNAL MEETINGS AND EVENTS

Nothing was added.

779/25 NEW ITEMS FOR THE NEXT MEETING (3RD NOVEMBER)

The meeting will start at 18:30 with a presentation from Rustington Death Café.

Cllr Duff volunteered to organise a Christmas meal for the council.

780/25 118-120 SEA ROAD, EAST PRESTON – RESOLUTION TO APPLY FOR A LOAN

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

118-120 Sea Road, East Preston

Council is asked to consider any matters relating to the purchase of 118-120 Sea Road, East Preston. At the time of writing, this is likely to be only updates on decisions already taken, but the situation is understandably dynamic and could change several times between now and the meeting.

The loan application continues to be considered by the relevant government department. My thanks to Cllr Gunston and to Adrian for their assistance with their help in answering the financial questions we have been asked.

Although I provided the Minutes of the meeting held on 30th June which I believed covered all the criteria the assessor is asking to have been covered in the appropriate Minute, the assessor has asked for a reworded resolution. Therefore, **council is asked to seek the approval of the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government to apply for borrowing approval for a loan of £250,000 over the borrowing term of 10 years for the purchase of 118-120 Sea Road, East Preston, BN16 1NN. The annual loan repayments will come to around £32,000.**

Council is also asked to increase the council tax precept for the purpose of the loan repayments by 6% which is the equivalent of an addition £5.72 a year (for a Band D property). This will be subject to a precept increase consultation.

The Finance & General Purposes Committee will look to keep any increase to a minimum.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

30th September 2025

The information supporting the proposal had not changed since the resolution taken at the meeting held on 30th June.

2033 The Council **RESOLVED** unanimously to seek the approval of the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government to apply for borrowing approval for a loan of £250,000 over the borrowing term of 10 years for the purchase of 118-120 Sea Road, East Preston, BN16 1NN. The annual loan repayments will come to around £32,000. Council also **RESOLVED** unanimously to increase the council tax precept for the purpose of the loan repayments by 6% which is the equivalent of an addition £5.72 a year (for a Band D property). This will be subject to a precept increase consultation.

The council, via its Finance & General Purposes Committee, will look to keep any increase to a minimum.

781/25 118-120 SEA ROAD, EAST PRESTON – RESOLUTION FOR SIGNATORIES

The Clerk explained the council's solicitor had asked for formal agreement by council as to which councillors could act as signatories in this matter. As Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Council, Cllrs Toney and Linton had agreed to be signatories.

2034 The Council **RESOLVED** unanimously Cllrs Toney and Linton could act as its signatories in the matter of the purchase of 118-120 Sea Road, East Preston.

(Cllrs Bowman, Bradshaw, Chapman, Duff, Gale and Hill all left the meeting at this point.)

782/25 LEASES WORKING PARTY

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

Leases Working Party – East Preston & Kingston Bowls Club

Council is asked to consider the following correspondence from the surveyor acting for the council in the lease renegotiation.

Hello Simon,

I met with Julian Wilkins yesterday and it was a "without prejudice" meeting. We discussed various matters. He is seeking his clients' instructions and will revert shortly. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

I welcome the Parish Council's thoughts and I await the response from Julian Wilkins from his client.

This e-mail should be treated as private & confidential to the Parish Council at this stage and not publicised to the Bowls club as it could prejudice the negotiations.

I await your thoughts.

Thank you

Kind Regards

Mark

I have answered Mark's questions where I can, and advised him the tennis club's lease is £3,500 from this year.

I need to know the working party's thoughts on the proposal made. Mark has updated me today he has not heard from Julian Wilkins again yet.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

29th September 2025

Following some discussion,

2035 On behalf of the council, the Leases Working Party **RESOLVED** unanimously to ask Mr Deacon to continue negotiations along the terms suggested, [REDACTED]

The meeting ended at 20:50.

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

END