



EAST PRESTON PARISH COUNCIL

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MINUTES: of the Proceedings of the Monthly Meeting of East Preston Parish Council held at 18:30 on Monday, 3rd November 2025 at East Preston Infant School, Lashmar Road, East Preston

PRESENT: Councillors Christine Bowman, Kit Bradshaw, Andrea Chapman, Lisa Duff, Helen Hill, 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 19:40)

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

Annie Hall, Rustington Death Café (until 18:48)

Four members of the public (until 19:40)

ABSENT: Councillor Barbara Gale

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The following abbreviations may appear in these Minutes:

ADC – Arun District Council;
AoSERA – Angmering-on-Sea Estate Residents' Association
NHS – National Health Service;
NR – Network Rail;
PCSO – Police Community Support Officer;
SLCC – Society of Local Council Clerks;

TRO – Traffic Regulation Order;
VHF – East Preston & Kingston Village Hall Foundation;
WRA – Willowhayne Residents' Association;
WSCC – West Sussex County Council;
WSALC – West Sussex Association of Local Councils

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The meeting opened at 18:34.

831/25 INTRODUCTIONS

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

832/25 RUSTINGTON DEATH CAFÉ

The meeting received a presentation from Annie Hall, leader of the Rustington Death Café.

Ms Hall thanked the council for inviting her to talk about Rustington Death Café and apologised her colleague Mel Gosling was unable to attend. Ms Hall said she was delighted some members of the public were also present.

Ms Hall explained Death Café was a trademark, a not-for-profit organisation started in Hackney in 2010 when the founders recognised there was a need for people to be more happy to talk about death. There were now 22,197 Death Cafés worldwide, of which 3,966 were in the UK. Each café needs a facilitator. When Ms Hall moved into the area from Lincolnshire 18 months ago, she found there was no local Death Café – the nearest were in Brighton and Chichester – and her family persuaded her to start the Rustington Death Café.

Ms Hall asked the meeting to split into groups of two or three as we would know sample the Death Café experience, in essence. Ms Hall asked the groups to discuss what each member would like their final meal to be.

Bringing the group back together after five minutes, Ms Hall said we had now sampled the Death Café experience in miniature and said attendees would discuss such topics as what clothes they wanted to buried in, who they would want at their funeral and their wake, whether they wanted to be buried or cremated. She hoped tonight's attendees would go home and discuss some of these topics with those closest to them as knowing the answers to these questions can be invaluable when a loved one dies.

Sessions take place at Establo on the Last Thursday of each month, running from 10:30 for about an hour. The space is secular to avoid the discomfort some might feel from attending a session in a dedicated religious space. The sessions rarely have a guest speaker but encourage free discussion upon any element of death. No commitment is expected, one can attend a single session, consecutive sessions or sessions months apart.

Ms Hall again thanked the council for this opportunity to speak in East Preston and said she hoped some present would attend future Death Café sessions.

(Ms Hall left at the conclusion of this item.)

833/25 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

2036 The Council **RESOLVED** unanimously to accept the apologies received from Cllr Gale (holiday).

Apologies were received from District Cllr R Bower, Julian Ellis and Andrew Moores.

834/25 DECLARATION OF PERSONAL AND/OR PREJUDICIAL/PECUNIARY INTERESTS

None were declared.

835/25 PUBLIC SESSION

No Agenda Item 13a – Mrs M said she simply wanted to thank the council for everything it does for the village. Cllr Toney thanked Mrs M for her continued support of the council.

836/25 COUNCIL RESPONSES

There were no further council responses.

837/25 MINUTES OF THE MONTHLY MEETING HELD ON 6TH OCTOBER 2025

The draft Minutes were circulated to all councillors on 8th October asking for suggested amendments by the 15th October. None were received.

2037 The Council **RESOLVED** unanimously the Chairman could sign the Minutes as a true record of the meeting held on 6th October. Cllr Toney duly did so.

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

Monthly Update Report

- 1. Introduction**
- 2. Minutes 541/25 and 782/25 – Leases Working Party – East Preston & Kingston Bowls Club**
- 3. Minute 543/25 – Clerk’s Report – Item 10, Southeast Communities Rail Partnership meeting, 20th June**
- 4. Minute 757/25 – 4SIGHT Vision Support**
- 5. Minute 763/25 – Amenities Committee – Warren Recreation Ground – mediation exercise**
- 6. Minute 768/25 – Amenities Committee – Warren Recreation Ground children’s playground**
- 7. Minute 769/25 – Planning & Licensing Committee – East Preston Neighbourhood Plan**
- 8. Minute 771/25 – Arun District Council – Mill Pond Way Play Area**

1. Introduction

This is the report covering items discussed during Full Council meetings up to and including the meeting held on 6th October 2025.

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

Following the council’s meeting on 6th November, I provided our surveyor with the information he sought. The last update received was dated 18th October, at which point our surveyor had passed on relevant information to the club’s surveyor and awaited a reply.

3. Minute 543/25 – Clerk’s Report – Item 10, Southeast Communities Rail Partnership meeting, 20th June

Members will remember the above meeting took place at Angmering Station in order to unveil a temporary blue plaque to Horace Hayward, Stationmaster in the early 20th century. The temporary plaque was part of the partnership’s contribution to the national Railway 200 celebrations taking place this year.

At the meeting, my Angmering counterpart, Katie Herr, mentioned there were no blue plaques in Angmering and wondered whether it would be possible to install a permanent blue plaque in honour of Horace Hayward. We talked about this council’s programme of blue plaque installations a few years ago.

By the middle of October, Angmering Parish Council in conjunction with the Southeast Communities Rail Partnership had arranged with the owner of the station buildings, Network Rail to install a permanent blue plaque for Horace Hayward. This can be seen on the right-hand side of the main entrance to the ticket office.

4. Minute 757/25 – 4SIGHT Vision Support

Following the meeting, Ms Thomas emailed the council, “Many thanks for your email and for the positive feedback. I am pleased that the councillors and the public found it helpful. Thank you very much for inviting me to talk and for your continued support. We will keep you updated on upcoming events and activities. Many thanks again.”

Members of the public who attended also thanked the council for having arranged this presentation. One emailed, “Just to thank you and the Team for such an informative meeting. I think it was most helpful for people to understand macular and for anyone living with someone with the condition!”

5. Minute 763/25 – Amenities Committee – Warren Recreation Ground – mediation exercise

The council chose Disputes Resolution Agency which, in turn, allocated Simon Croft to lead this mediation exercise.

The Joint Clarity Session is currently booked for the evening of Tuesday, 4th November. More on this later in the meeting.

6. Minute 768/25 – Amenities Committee – Warren Recreation Ground children’s playground

The replacement floor panels for the multiplay are on order.

7. Minute 769/25 – Planning & Licensing Committee – East Preston Neighbourhood Plan – Regulation 15

I submitted the documents to ADC on 10th October. The documents have been acknowledged by ADC but there have been a few rough spot Cllr Bowman and I are working on smoothing.

8. Minute 771/25 – Arun District Council – Mill Pond Way Play Area

Following the council’s last meeting, I contacted Oliver Handson, ADC Environmental Services & Strategy Manager, advising him of this council’s request for more information on the proposed change of use of the Mill Pond Way Play Area.

I subsequently had a telephone meeting with Oli on 21st October. During that meeting, Oli said he would provide us with a short note of where ADC is with this at the moment, what consultation it has undertaken with local residents and what responses were received to that consultation. Hopefully, I will have something for council to discuss at our meeting. Oli said no further kit would be removed in the very immediate future.

Oli and I both said there was one particular reason from that area from whom we would have expected to hear but, perhaps surprisingly, neither of us had.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

27th October 2025

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

839/25 FINANCIAL MATTERS

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

2038 The council **RESOLVED** unanimously to approve the Outstanding Purchase Orders report for 2025/26, value £10,366.00 (exc. VAT).

- 2039** The council **RESOLVED** unanimously to approve the Regular Monthly Payments reports for October 2025 totalling £424.91 (inc. VAT).
- 2040** The council **RESOLVED** unanimously to approve the Supplier BACS Invoices Paid reports for October 2025 totalling £34,916.74 (inc. VAT).
- 2041** The council **RESOLVED** unanimously to approve the List of Sales Receipts & Bank Receipts by Bank report for financial year to date totalling £6,496.72 (inc. VAT) for October 2025, (Year to Date, £327,076.38).

The council NOTED the Bank Reconciliations to 14th October 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.

840/25 CORRESPONDENCE – CAR CLUBS

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

Correspondence – car clubs

Council is asked to consider any involvement it would like as result of the correspondence below.

Andrew Moores, an East Preston resident, has asked the council to consider the following:

I would like the Council to investigate installing one or more car-sharing spaces and car-sharing cars in the village for residents who do not have a car so that these residents can go to shopping centres, take things to recycling centres, attend appointments further away - and probably more occasions - where public transport is not convenient or not available and taxis are not viable. A potential operator could be the Enterprise Car Club, which is already present in Worthing.

Potential locations for the car(s) to be made available could be:

- The first parade of shops along Sea Road after North Lane - possibly making use of one of the electric vehicle charging points
- The car park of East Preston and Kingston Village Hall
- Willowhayne Crescent Car Park or nearby
- In the lay-by near where the old surgery used to be along the Worthing Road, roughly opposite the top of The Street

The car park at the parade of shops by Angmering Station is probably not viable due to the long queues when the railway crossing gates are down.

The demand for car sharing in East Preston could be assessed through a survey, with questions such as the following:

- How often would you use a car-sharing car?
 - More than once a week
 - Once a week
 - Every two weeks
 - Once a month
 - A few times a year
- For how long would you need a car-sharing car each time?
 - Up to 2 hours
 - Up to 4 hours
 - Up to 8 hours
 - Up to 12 hours

- Up to 24 hours
- For how many occupants should the car be suitable?
 - Two people
 - Four to five people
 - Seven to eight people
 - I need to transport bulky items such as garden waste or household waste to a recycling centre or from shopping
 -
- Where should a car-sharing parking space be located (locations as above or additional/other ones)?

Kind regards,

Andrew Moores

I made an initial contact with West Sussex County Council, which, as the Local Highways Authority would be the organisation which could instigate this for Andrew. Chichester Car Club has spaces on the public highway, which proves Andrew's idea could be implemented.

Ultimately, any such proposal would go to WSCC. At this stage, it is a question of council deciding whether it would like to support Andrew's suggestion by means of issuing a version of the above survey or contacting Enterprise or Chichester Car Club for further information.

Andrew will attend the meeting if he can.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

27th October 2025

The Clerk gave the meeting Mr Moores's apologies for not being able to attend in support of his correspondence.

Cllr McElroy said he had done a little research and questioned whether current car club schemes were not expensive compared to ad-hoc car hire. Although hourly rates appeared favourable, membership and then penalty excesses seemed a lot less favourable.

Cllr Gunston asked whether any existing car club's interest had been assessed. The Clerk replied the council could assess village interest before approaching any existing car club.

Cllr Wilkinson was concerned Mr Moores's letter gave little detail about how such a scheme would work in the village and was concerned the administration of such a scheme would fall upon the council's officers. The Clerk said he did not believe Mr Moores was suggesting the council should set up a scheme, merely investigate the likely success of a scheme in the village.

Cllr Duff felt it would be useful for the council to meet Mr Moores and to be able to question him directly, and proposed he be invited to attend a future meeting at which his ideas could be discussed further.

2042 The Council **RESOLVED** unanimously to invite Mr Moores to attend a future meeting at his convenience.

841/25 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: Major Events, Personnel and Planning & Licensing. By the time of this meeting, with the exception of the Personnel Committee, the draft Minutes from all these meetings should have been circulated to all

councillors. By its very nature, the Minutes of the Personnel Committee are confidential and only circulated to committee members.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

27th October 2025

Amenities Committee

Cllr Wilkinson is chairman of this committee.

September 2025

The committee met on 15th September.

Warren Recreation Ground – Outdoor Gym Equipment – Full Council will recall the committee agreed to place the new outdoor gym project on hold until issues at this area have been resolved. Unfortunately, due to a failing mechanism and safety issues the committee took the decision to urgently remove the double air walker unit. This now leaves just the cycle and the cross-country double remaining. The council's handy man is to carry out remedial work to both of the items. The committee had not foreseen this additional expenditure.

The committee will be approaching Full Council to request £1,000.00 to cover costs relating to the removal of equipment and remedial work of the remaining items.

Sea Road Bollards – The four plastic removable bollards at the end of Sea Road are badly corroded and unfortunately are no longer fit for purpose. The committee has agreed to replace the removable plastic bollards with four cast iron fixed bollards. The new bollards will have reflective banding and the council's logo. An application for a Lawful Development Certificate is to be completed to establish if planning permission is necessary.

The committee will be approaching Full Council to request £3,000.00 to cover costs relating to the removal of the plastic bollards and installation of the new cast iron bollards.

Warren Recreation Ground – Children's Playground – After several months of communication with ADC Cleansing and ADC Cleansing then with Biffa, the novelty frog litter bin has finally been installed in the playground. Biffa has said it will not empty the bin as it is located within a children's playground and its staff do not have the appropriate DBS check level. The council's Village Orderly has agreed to empty the playground bin.

Sea Road Toilets - As part of the ongoing management plan to monitor the asbestos in the toilet's storage cupboard's fuse box, Alpha Surveys Ltd, carried out the annual asbestos survey. The report summary deemed it as very low risk and the management plan is to monitor conditions and reinspect annual. There was one recommendation which was to label with an asbestos warning sticker. I have actioned this recommendation.

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

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

27th October 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**

27th October 2025

Community Engagement Committee

Cllr Linton is the chairman of this committee.

The committee did not meet in October.

The main update from the committee is the **2026 East Preston calendar** should be available from the Council Office by the time you read this report.

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

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

27th October 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**

27th October 2025

Major Events Committee

Cllr Linton is Chairman of the committee.

The committee met on 20th October.

Some of the matters discussed were:

Autumn Quiz, 12th October – councillors will be aware this event was cancelled due to low ticket sales. The committee considered possible reasons for this including insufficient publicity and quiz overload in the village. An off-the-cuff comment from Cllr Duff has led the committee to consider some sort of bingo event in the autumn of 2026.

East Preston Christmas Celebrations, 22nd November – all is on track for another successful event. Cllr Bowman reported good support from local shopfront businesses.

Councillors, there are still chances for you to get involved on the day or in the run up or both, if you would like. Please speak to Cllr Linton or me.

Funday Sunday, 19th April 2026 – Cllr Hill is unable to lead this event which will now be co-lead by Cllrs Chapman and Duff.

East Preston Food & Drink Festival – the committee agreed for the council to run a Food & Drink Festival in 2026. Owing to the later August Bank Holiday, the event will be scheduled for Saturday, 29th August.

The committee's next meeting is scheduled for 15th December.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

24th October 2025

Personnel Committee

The committee met on 13th October.

Some of the matters discussed were:

Staffing – the committee had an initial discussion about the project management of any works related to the commissioning of 118-120 Sea Road once it is in council ownership. At the time of writing, the committee is in favour of contracting an architect who would project manage the works rather than the council employing someone direct.

The committee recognised the council's officers were working to full capacity.

Unfounded criticism of the council – the committee considered how the council should respond to unfounded criticism on the odd occasions it arose. Cllr Gunston said the council worked hard to maintain a good reputation within the village, something which could easily be undermined by a few careful or careless words by a member of the public for whom there was no accountability. Cllr Linton said responding publicly could inflame a situation. The committee agreed each situation should be handled on a case-by-case basis.

IT policy – see Agenda Item 14a below.

Behaviour at recent council meetings – committee was pleased with the number of members of the public who had been attending meetings recently, admittedly mainly to listen to guest speakers but some were then staying on to listen to some of the council business.

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

27th October 2025

Planning & Licensing Committee

The committee met on 13th October.

Four Applications were considered on 13th October and no objections were raised to any of them. For two of the Applications, the committee asked ADC to apply a Condition the proposed annex would only ever be used as ancillary accommodation to the main dwelling. We wait and see.

An Application for tree works had previously been considered electronically and the committee's agreement to refer it to the ADC arboriculturist was recorded.

The committee also agreed the council should send a letter of concern to the Chief Executive of ADC, Dawn Hudd, regarding the handling of Planning Application EP/69/25/HH for the redevelopment of a property in Tamarisk Way. An initial holding response has been received from Karl Roberts on behalf of Ms Hudd.

The meeting scheduled for 27th October was cancelled as there were no applications to consider.

The draft revised Neighbourhood Plan was submitted to ADC on the afternoon of 10th October, in line with the council's resolution to do so (Minute 769/25, Resolution 2030).

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

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

16th October 2025

Additionally:

Community Engagement – Cllr Linton said the council's 2026 calendar was now available at just £5 a copy. Cllr Chapman added she had some with her and showed the meeting how the calendars looked.

Major Events – Cllr Linton said the committee had talked about the failure of the recent Afternoon Quiz to sell and had felt this was because there were already a lot of quizzes available in the village, albeit those mostly in the evening. The committee was now pursuing the idea of a bingo event; Cllr Bradshaw said he now incorporated bingo into some of his events and it was always hugely popular. The Clerk said he would discuss the idea of musical bingo at the committee's next meeting.

Cllr Linton reminded the meeting East Preston Christmas Celebrations was only a few weeks away. She was building a timetable of which councillors and officers needed to be where and when, and asked any councillors who did not believe they were yet committed to let her know their availability.

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

842/25 AMENITIES COMMITTEE – SEA ROAD BOLLARDS

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

Amenities Committee – Sea Road bollards

Council is asked to agree to spend up to £3,000 on the replacement and installation of bollards at the bottom of Sea Road.

Cllr Wilkinson to introduce this item.

As reported above, the four plastic removable bollards at the end of Sea Road are badly corroded and unfortunately are no longer fit for purpose. The committee has agreed to replace the removable plastic bollards with four cast iron fixed bollards. The new bollards will have reflective banding and the council's logo. An application for a Lawful Development Certificate is to be completed to establish if planning permission is necessary.

The £3,000 requested should cover purchase and installation of the bollards.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

27th October 2025

Cllr Wilkinson spoke in support of this item. In response to a question from Cllr Bowman, Cllr Wilkinson confirmed the bollards would bear reflective strips and the council's logo.

2043 The Council **RESOLVED** unanimously to additional expenditure of £3,000 to replace the bollards at the bottom of Sea Road, adjacent to the caravan park.

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

Amenities Committee – Warren Recreation Ground – outdoor gym equipment

Council is asked to agree to spend up to £1,000 on the removal of obsolete outdoor gym equipment and the making good of the area.

Cllr Wilkinson to introduce this item.

As reported above, Full Council will recall the committee agreed to place the new outdoor gym project on hold until issues at this area have been resolved. Unfortunately, due to a failing mechanism and safety issues the committee took the decision to urgently remove the double air walker unit. This now leaves just the cycle and the cross-country double remaining. The council's handy man is to carry out remedial work to both of the items. The committee had not foreseen this additional expenditure.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

27th October 2025

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

2044 The Council **RESOLVED** unanimously to additional expenditure of £1,000 on the removal of obsolete outdoor gym equipment and making good the area.

844/25 AUDIT & GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE – ANNUAL GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTING RETURN FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31ST MARCH 2026 – INTERIM INTERNAL AUDIT

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

Audit & Governance Committee – internal audit

Council is asked to note the interim internal audit report for the year ending 31st March 2026.

Cllr Mathias to introduce this item.

Andy Beams of Mulberry Local Authority Services visited the Council Office on the morning of 22nd October to undertake an interim internal audit of the council.

Andy spent time with Adrian and with me, and Cllr Mathias came to visit in his role of 2024-25 Chairman of the Audit & Governance Committee.

Andy was very happy overall and his report was circulated electronically to all councillors on 23rd October. One point Andy has asked to be actioned is recorded in the report as, **“I was able to confirm that the bank reconciliations have been signed but there is no evidence that the bank statements have been signed, and I will need to see evidence of this activity being completed at the final internal audit to achieve a positive sign-off for this internal control objective.”** We shall correct this going forwards.

A more in-depth review of Andy's report will take place at the Audit & Governance Committee meeting in the middle of November. Andy will return in May to complete the year-end internal audit.

As Chairman of the Audit & Governance Committee, Cllr Mathias said the report highlighted little for the council to be concerned about. The report would be considered more fully at the committee's meeting later in the month.

845/25 PERSONNEL COMMITTEE – INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY POLICY

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

Personnel Committee – IT policy

Council is asked to adopt an Information Technology policy for the council.

Cllrs Duff and Gunston to introduce this item.

As reported to last month's meeting, the council is required to have an IT policy in place before the end of the financial year as this will be part of an internal auditor's checks nationwide at that time.

All councillors will also be expected to sign the policy once it has been adopted.

A draft IT policy was circulated with the Supporting Papers for the meeting. This had been supplied by WSALC and the only edit made had been to include this council's name.

Cllr Duff spoke in support of this item. Cllr Duff also explained all councillors and officers would need to sign the policy once it had been adopted.

In response to a question, Cllr Duff said the council had trusted IT training partners.

2045 The Council **RESOLVED** unanimously to adopt an IT policy for the council.

846/25 REPORTS FROM PARISH COUNCIL WORKING PARTIES

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

Working Parties

Apart from the Leases Working Party meeting at part of the last Full Council meeting, none of the working parties met in October.

20mph Working Party

Cllr Wilkinson is the chairman of this working party.

No updates from this working party; on the back burner at the moment.

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**

27th October 2025

Leases Working Party (LWP)

Cllr Wilkinson is the chairman of this working party.

As stated above, any information agreed by the working party at the end of last month's Full Council meeting has been forwarded to our surveyor and he has forwarded as appropriate to the club's surveyor.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

24th October 2025

Additionally:

Leases – the Clerk reported he had heard from the council's surveyor immediately after he had completed the paperwork for this meeting. The surveyor had asked for confirmation on the council's stance on a few matters to which the Clerk had duly responded.

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

847/25 WARREN RECREATION GROUND MEDIATION EXERCISE

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

Warren Recreation Ground mediation exercise

Council is asked to agree the council's representation in this exercise and that they make decisions on behalf of the council.

Last month, the council agreed to the council sponsoring a mediation exercise also involving East Preston Cricket Club and Warren Recreation Ground Safety Group. At the request of one of the organisations, each organisation will be represented by three members.

The council's reps, if you agree, should be Cllr Toney as Chairman of the Council, Cllr Wilkinson as Chairman of the Amenities Committee which is responsible for the Warren Recreation Ground, and me as the council's proper officer.

Each individual participating in the exercise has been asked to complete an Agreement to Mediate. Within that agreement, participants are expected to have the backing of their organisations to make decisions on behalf of the organisation. I understand this may make some councillors nervous, but the council's representatives would not be agreeing on behalf of the council any solution which is not acceptable to all three parties; therefore, whilst I accept a councillor's right to

remain nervous, I think in this situation consent can be given at little risk. If you still have concerns, please talk to me ahead of this meeting.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

27th October 2025

- 2046** The Council **RESOLVED** Cllrs Toney and Wilkinson and the Clerk should represent it in the mediation exercise and that they may make decisions, as part of the exercise, on behalf of the council.

Cllr Mathias abstained from this vote.

848/25 WEST SUSSEX COUNTY COUNCIL

Cllr Elkins started by saying the county council was working with local councils, preparing for winter.

The county council was working on its budget for 2026/27. As part of this, it was awaiting confirmation of the money central government would award to the county for the coming financial year.

A Local Nature Recovery Strategy consultation exercise had started. Cllr Elkins said every area had their special bits of nature and this was a chance for communities to highlight those. The consultation was open until 26th November.

The county council was very concerned about the prevalence of shoplifting across the county and had written to the Sussex Police & Crime Commissioner and the Chief Constable asking for them to keep tackling shoplifting as a priority. 12% of recordable crime is now shoplifting.

Demand for independent support for children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) was currently costing £23m a year. The council had opened its new Psychological Hub in Horsham to address the complex needs of some SEND pupils. The hub was designed to help families stay together and support children through complex emotional and mental health challenges. A lively conversation on the subject of SEND provision and funding followed. Cllr Elkins agreed to investigate what actions were taken against schools who were found to be pooling SEND budget rather than against the pupil to whom the money was allocated. Cllr Elkins said the county council believed it was owed £140m from central government as a Dedicated School Grant but the government was not handing this over yet.

The Clerk said although councillors may be aware of the frequency of shoplifting at the Co-op in Station Parade, the problem was increasing in One-Stop too.

The Clerk also congratulated Cllr Elkins on Henrietta Hulahoop and said it was good to see a county councillor taking part in an event such as the Ferring Scarecrow Festival. Cllr Elkins said it had been fun to do and the interactive element of Henrietta had brought a smile to children and adults alike.

849/25 ARUN DISTRICT COUNCIL

District Cllr Ricky Bower had sent apologies for the meeting.

District Cllr Philippa Bower said she had attended an ADC Audit & Governance Committee meeting but that had provided nothing noteworthy for this meeting.

Cllr Bower had spoken separately to Richard Tomkinson, ADC's Group Head of Housing, Wellbeing & Communities, about the East Preston allotments. Cllr Bower remained concerned at the length of time this matter was taking ADC to resolve especially when ADC has little time left. Cllr Bower had provided details of how this council could ask a question to the next ADC Full Council meeting, scheduled for 12th November, and Cllr Gunston had submitted a suitable question.

Cllr Linton asked Cllr Bower whether there was an update on the matter raised last month of bins being removed from the greensward and bin operatives not being willing to empty an ADC-provided bin in the children's car-park because they had not been DBS-checked. Cllr Bower said she was not aware of any updates. The Clerk stated he had only very recently realised the bins in ADC parks were emptied by Tivoli, ADC's grounds maintenance contractor, rather than Biffa its rubbish collection contractor. Cllr Bradshaw added he understood why operatives may not want to enter a children's playground without a DBS check behind them, as the DBS check was designed to protect the operative as much as any vulnerable people the operative may encounter.

850/25 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 further any influence it may have over the future of the Mill Pond Way play area.

Hopefully, by the time of the meeting, I will have received further information from ADC's Oliver Handson on the outcomes of the consultations carried out in this matter. That will help the council to consider this further.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

27th October 2025

The Clerk reported he had received an email on 29th October from Oli Handson. The email confirmed “no representation was received in response to his recent consultation letters sent out to residents of both Mill Pond, Farm Acre and Flint Close concerning Mill Pond Play Area and landscaping proposals. In April this year we also contacted Sarah Owen at Hyde [Housing Association] with a view to engaging them in plans for the play area and seeking support but this went nowhere.”

Council felt the lack of responses underlined a lack of interest in the play area. After some further discussion,

2047 The Council **RESOLVED** not to involve itself any further in the future of the Mill Pond Way play area at this time.

851/25 SUSSEX POLICE

No report had been received. The meeting **AGREED** the Clerk should chase this with Sussex Police.

852/25 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. Reverend Andrew Perry's funeral, 2nd October**
- 6. Southeast Communities Rail Partnership quarterly meeting, 8th September**
- 7. Sussex Police & Crime Commissioner town and parish feedback session, 10th October**
- 8. East Preston Festival Committee donations evening, 15th October**
- 9. Annual Governance and Accountability Return for year ending 31st March 2026, interim internal audit, 22nd October**
- 10. Community Speedwatch, 23rd October**
- 11. Social media**

12. **MailChimp stats**
13. **A selection of things we have been asked since the last meeting**
14. **Recent bouquets and complaints**
15. **Leave**
16. **November meetings and events**

1. **Introduction**

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

2. **Police matters**

On 6th October, some residents called in to flag bad driver behaviour on the stretch of the A29 between Windmill Bridge and the Shell petrol station. Stuck in roadworks tailbacks, a number of eastbound drivers had been witnessed driving over the central reservation to head west again. I reported this to PCSO Raj and Sgt Danny West and Raj replied Sussex Police was already aware. I have heard police attended, caught some drivers and issued fines.

On 7th October, PCSO Raj advised he would be holding a drop-in and bike-marking session in the car-park of the Warren Recreation Ground for an hour on 8th October. He was hoping we would be able to publicise this for him, which we did.

On 10th October, Raj provided the following feedback, “Only couple of people came to talk to me and I will notify you next session in advance.” I asked if anything surprising had been mentioned but have not yet had a reply. I also suggested the library and the Council Office forecourt might be better locations.

Sgt Danny West has retired and we await details of our new sergeant.

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 financial arrangements between the council and East Preston Cricket Club. I responded on 24th October but this has given rise to further questions.

5. **Reverend Andrew Perry’s funeral, 2nd October**

I attended Father Andrew’s funeral alongside Cllrs Toney, Bradshaw, Chapman, Gunston, Hill and Mathias. Others watched online. Philip Sherwin was the only former councillor present.

The service was conducted by a friend of Andrew, Reverent John Challis from Bognor Regis. The church was full and the overspill marquee was brought into service. As you would expect from a service planned by Andrew himself, the service was a healthy mix of humour and thoughtfulness and a range of music.

The service ended at the lychgate with Andrew being driven to his next destination. Guests retired to the marquee for sandwiches, all made by members of the congregation, and drinks. This was a chance for everyone to share happier memories of Andrew.

The day after the funeral, the council arranged for a bouquet of flowers to be delivered to the family. Alison Rickard, Andrew's wife, thanked the council for this thoughtful gesture.

6. Southeast Communities Rail Partnership quarterly meeting, 8th September

I had hoped and planned to attend this meeting at Marlipins Museum in Shoreham-by-Sea but on the day it simply wasn't possible to take the time to attend.

7. Sussex Police & Crime Commissioner (PCC) town and parish feedback session, 10th October

Cllr Bowman and I attended this, the first such meeting since November 2013, "to talk to [the PCC's office] about crime, policing and community safety issues in your area." Previously, these meetings were led by Mandy Jameson and Trevor Leggo, but Mandy no longer works for the PCC's office. Trevor did not attend this session. The meeting was held on Teams and led by Mervin Dadd, Chief Communications and Insight Officer. Rustington PC and Littlehampton TC were the other two eastern parishes councils represented.

Christine and I had technical issues and could neither be seen nor heard, but we were able to see and hear and comments we typed into the chat were seen and responded to.

E-bikes and e-scooters have, apparently, been banned in several European cities after they have been trialled there and Katie Bourne has been tasked with investigating the future use of these in this country.

As councillors may well have seen by now, Sussex is one of the first counties where a trial is underway involving the electronic tagging of persistent shoplifters. Since this meeting, this has been publicised in the media.

In the past, the county's 101 call-handling operation has been much maligned but now it is one of the best in the country.

More locally, a major multiagency operation in Bognor Regis had significant success with disrupting County Lines operations with £6,700 of Class A drugs being seized, eleven county lines being closed down, sixteen people charged with offences and eight of those remanded awaiting trial.

Katie Bourne will be visiting population hubs in the coming months and taking the opportunity to record social media clips promoting the results of Sussex Police work.

Finally, in response to a question about the state of Littlehampton Police Station, half of which is boarded-up and does not look very welcoming, we were advised the boarded-up half is the half of the building which was previously occupied by WSCC. Sussex Police has no responsibility for that part of the building.

8. East Preston Festival Committee donations evening, 15th October

I attended this annual event together with Cllrs Toney, Hill and McElroy.

About twenty organisations attended in person to collect a donation from the proceeds of the year's events. All gave short speeches about the work of their organisation and how they expect to use the donation. Most of these organisations would be able to give a useful presentation to a monthly council meeting if we wanted.

9. **Annual Governance and Accountability Return for year ending 31st March 2026, interim internal audit, 22nd October**

Andy Beams of Mulberry Local Authority Services visited the Council Office on the morning of 22nd October to undertake an interim internal audit of the council. He was joined by Jenny Nagy, an experienced clerk who is currently looking to become an auditor too.

Andy and Jenny spent time with Adrian and with me, and Cllr Mathias came to visit in his role of 2024-25 Chairman of the Audit & Governance Committee.

Andy was very happy overall and more detail can be found at Agenda Item 13a above.

10. **Community Speedwatch, 23rd October**

I had been scheduled for a Community Speedwatch (CSW) session on the morning of 23rd October, but this was cancelled because of the rubbish weather forecast.

In the evening, I attended a CSW team meeting at which various matters of CSW business were discussed. The group is running out of volunteers. Any councillor with a couple of hours per month to spare is asked to consider becoming a volunteer; likewise if you know of any local resident who regularly complains about traffic speeds in the village, please ask them to consider becoming a volunteer. Anyone interested can give me their details and I will pass these on to Gavin Bernard, the team coordinator.

11. **Social Media**

Not many posts of Facebook this past month, and this is the only recent Facebook post to reach more than 500 people.

- A post advertising a Sussex Police PCSO session on 8th October – 1,483 people

(posts up to and including 26th October)

The number of Followers is currently 1,943, an increase of 4 on the last report.

12. **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 – 1st October – sent to 959 subscribers, opened by 703 (73.5%)

Parish Council news – 9th October – sent to 959, opened by 719 (75.2%)

Parish Council news – 23rd October – sent to 961, opened by 686 (71.5%)

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

“We are interested in doing a transport survey outside of Station Parade Local Shop, East Preston. Could you confirm whether you consent to this survey being undertaken?” (I replied WSCC was the Local Highways Authority and would be the organisation to give approval.)

“We are looking for a bus stop to get us to Worthing.”

14. **Recent bouquets and complaints**

(In addition to anything reported above)

From a resident of Hillview Crescent, “Thank you to whoever put the link on the PC newsletter for Father Andrew's funeral service. So many people would have wanted to be at the service and this was a way of doing it without taking up 2 precious seats in the Church.”

From a resident of Russells Close, “What a wonderful send off. I was pleased I could watch the service on the Thursday evening via the link in the PC newsletter, he was clearly a very gifted and special man. I believe you did your bit to lift the occasion with your colourful jacket and tie.”

From a resident of Milliers Court who wanted to donate some books to the Littlehampton District Lions bookstall, “This email is just to say a very big thank-you for giving me [the email] address. He has taken all my books, two journeys, and came again today and took the bookcases. It's nice to know there are still people who do what they say they will! I am very happy now!”

On 16th October, on a day when it felt the council was being attacked on all sides, it was nice to receive this card from a resident of Chestnut Court, “Just a note to thank you for painting the bus shelters; they look very smart and it's a pleasure to see the colours when waiting (instead of drab brown). Thanks.”

15. **Leave**

Nobody has any leave booked for November at the time of writing.

16. **November Meetings and Events**

This list may be incomplete and is subject to change.

- 3rd Full Council (18:30, East Preston Infant School)
- 8th East Preston Repair Café (10:00, Vicarage Lane)
- 10th Planning & Licensing Committee (18:00, East Preston Infant School)
Amenities Committee (19:00, East Preston Infant School)
- 17th Finance & General Purposes Committee (18:00, East Preston Infant School)
Community Engagement Committee (19:00, East Preston Infant School)
- 22nd East Preston Christmas Celebrations (12:00 to 17:00)
- 24th Planning & Licensing Committee (18:00, East Preston Infant School)
Audit & Governance Committee (19:00, East Preston Infant School)

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

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

27th October 2025

Item 10 – Community Speedwatch, 23rd October – Cllr Linton asked how many volunteers were currently active in the village's Community Speedwatch group. The Clerk replied about seven who usually did one or two sessions a month each.

Item 4 – Freedom of Information (FoI) / Data Protection requests – in response to a question from Cllr Gunston, the Clerk replied the extra questions arising from the response he had provided on 24th October related to whether or not the council had financially supported the cricket club's renovation of the cricket pavilion bar area – it had not – and what was the financial arrangement between the cricket club and East Preston Village Preschool, something which had been in place for over twenty years and the detail of which the council did not possess.

853/25 EXTERNAL MEETINGS AND EVENTS

There were no reports to note.

854/25 NEW ITEMS FOR THE NEXT MEETING (1ST DECEMBER)

With no presentations scheduled, the meeting would start at 19:00.

Cllr Linton asked councillors to raise money for the Chairman's Charity again by paying £5 to wear a Christmas jumper to the meeting and £10 not to wear one. Cllrs Bowman and Bradshaw both offered their apologies for the meeting.

The Clerk reminded councillors the Chairman's Charity for 2026 would be chosen at the meeting and asked councillors to send him a nomination each for a charity.

855/25 118-120 SEA ROAD, EAST PRESTON – RESOLUTION TO BORROW

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.

Council finally received borrowing approval late on the morning of Tuesday 21st October. More paperwork has had to be completed to release the money to the council, and that paperwork was submitted to the government's Debt Management Office today. At least two weeks' notice must be given and I have asked for the money to be made available to us on 17th November.

The vendor, through her estate agents, has been chasing the council's solicitor.

Buried deep within the paperwork for a loan from the government, in addition to a resolution to seek borrowing approval for a loan, the council must make a separate resolution actually to borrow the money.

Therefore, **council is asked to agree to borrow £250,000 towards the purchase of 118-120 Sea Road, East Preston.**

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

27th October 2025

The Clerk confirmed the council had received further notification from the Debt Management Office confirming paperwork was in order and giving a further form to be completed. This further form must be submitted to the Debt Management Office, only between the hours of 09:30 and 16:15, five days before the money is required. The form should not be submitted in advance of that timeline.

2048 The Council **RESOLVED** unanimously to borrow £250,000 towards the purchase of 118-120 Sea Road, East Preston.

The Clerk also confirmed he had been advised the searches had been paid for and were underway, probably due back at the end of the current week.

The meeting ended at 19:58.

Chairman: **Cllr Steve Toney** Date: **1st December 2025**

END