



# EAST PRESTON PARISH COUNCIL

Council Office, 122 Sea Road, East Preston, West Sussex. BN16 1NN

01903 770050

<http://eastpreston.arun.gov.uk>

Email: [clerk@eastpreston-pc.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@eastpreston-pc.gov.uk)

## **AUDIT & GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE**

**MINUTES:** of the Committee Meeting held on Monday 10<sup>th</sup> March, 2025 at 18:00 at East Preston Infant School, Lashmar Road, East Preston

**PRESENT:** Councillors Christine Bowman, Lisa Duff, Elizabeth Linton, Glyn Mathias (Chairman), Rick McElroy, Steve Toney and Steven Wilkinson

**ALSO:** Clerk to the Council, Simon Cross

---

\* \* \* \* \*

The following abbreviations may appear in these Minutes:

ADC – Arun District Council

WSCC – West Sussex County Council

\* \* \* \* \*

The meeting opened at 18:02.

### **205/25 APOLOGIES AND REASONS FOR ABSENCE**

All committee members were present.

### **206/25 PERSONAL AND/OR PREJUDICIAL INTERESTS**

No interests were declared.

### **207/25 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

No members of the public were present.

### **208/25 ANNUAL GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY RETURN FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31<sup>ST</sup> MARCH 2025**

The following report was circulated in advance of the meeting:

## **Annual Governance and Accounting Return, year ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025**

**Committee is asked to agree a proposed Memorandum of Understanding between the Warren Recreation Ground and the parish council.**

As reported to the last meeting, Andy Beams of Mulberry & Co. visited on 23<sup>rd</sup> October. His report was electronically circulated to all councillors on 29<sup>th</sup> October, and noted at the Full Council meeting on 4<sup>th</sup> November (Minute 808/24).

The one finding Andy recorded was:

**Audit findings**

The council is the trustee of Warren Recreation Ground (charity number 283037). I reviewed the information available on the Charity Commission website and was able to confirm that all reporting is up to date and that the council is correctly listed as the sole trustee.

**Through discussion with the Clerk, the charitable funds are currently not managed separately from the council's accounts, which is contrary to the advice contained in the JPAG Practitioner's Guide (section 5.110 to 5.120 inclusive). I recommend the council reviews this guidance prior to the completion of the year-end Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) to ensure the accuracy of the answers provided to questions 11a and 11b.**

On 13<sup>th</sup> November, I advised Andy the charity annually delegated "the running of the recreation ground to the parish council's Amenities Committee. It has been doing that formally since at least 2015 (for the year 2016/17). Does that make any difference to your statement above?"

Andy replied later on the same day, "Is there actually a formally documented agreement - often called a memorandum of understanding - between the trust and the council for these arrangements? If there isn't, but the arrangement works for everyone, then I'd suggest getting a formal agreement, and then the management of the funds (as long as in accordance with the agreement) would be fine as is. If it is separated and an account is opened for the trust, then the council would need to make a grant to the trust to subsidise the costs. It would certainly be easier to keep things as they are, but just formally document the agreement in my opinion."

I have not written a Memorandum of Understanding for a good 25 years, but have had a crack at one which you can find at Appendix A below. I am not feeling remotely precious about it, so please feel free to suggest whatever improvements you think necessary.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

5<sup>th</sup> March 2025

On behalf of the council, the committee AGREED unanimously to adopt the Memorandum of Understanding as a first version. The Clerk would consider expanding upon the financial arrangements between the two parties and also how the parties' relationship with the tenants of the recreation ground, i.e. East Preston Cricket Club, could be covered by the document. Andy Beams would also be asked to comment upon the first version when he visited the council in May.

**209/25 LEASES WORKING PARTY**

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

**Leases Working Party**

**Committee is asked to receive any update from the Leases Working Party.**

Regarding the East Preston & Kingston Bowls Club lease negotiations, as members will already be aware, I attended a site visit with the council's surveyor and representatives of the club on 26<sup>th</sup> February. The surveyor made positive noises to me, but we will not know more until we receive his report which should be by the end of March.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

5<sup>th</sup> March 2025

There was no further update.

## **210/25     REVIEW OF THE COUNCIL PLAN**

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

### **Council Plan**

**On behalf of the council, Cllr Wilkinson has agreed to review the Council Plan adopted in December 2021.** As he has mentioned in other meetings, he is hoping to bring the 2022 Council Plan and the 2012 East Preston Action Plan together into one document. He will give any updates to this meeting.

Simon Cross – **Clerk to the Council**

5<sup>th</sup> March 2024

Cllr Wilkinson asked his fellow committee chairmen if there were any queries arising from the email he had circulated on 7<sup>th</sup> March. There were none. As chairman of this committee, Cllr Mathias said no changes were needed to §2.6.3.

Cllr Bowman suggested the plan could have a review date of 2031 which would bring it in line with the revised Neighbourhood Plan's likely review date. The committee AGREED unanimously with this proposal.

Cllr McElroy pointed out the document now needed to take care with any references to ADC as it was unlikely to exist in three years' time. Cllr Bowman noted this too as Chairman of the East Preston Neighbourhood Plan Review Steering Group. A simple comment in the introduction of each document should be sufficient.

Cllr Wilkinson confirmed the only matter outstanding from the old East Preston Action Plan was the Roundstone Level Crossing. The committee AGREED unanimously this was too big a matter to include in the Neighbourhood Plan as an infrastructure project.

## **211/25     MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 18<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER 2024**

The draft Minutes had been circulated to all councillors on 16<sup>th</sup> December, asking for any suggested amendments by 23<sup>rd</sup> December. None were received.

The committee AGREED the Minutes could be signed as a true record of the meeting held on 18<sup>th</sup> November. Cllr Mathias duly completed this task.

## **212/25     UPDATES ON MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS**

There were no updates not covered earlier in the meeting.

## **213/25     URGENT MATTERS FOR INFORMATION ONLY**

Nothing was raised.

## **214/25     MATTERS TO BE DISCUSSED AT THE NEXT MEETING (14<sup>TH</sup> JULY)**

Nothing was suggested.

The Meeting closed at 18:12.

Chairman: **Cllr Glyn Mathias**

Date: **8<sup>th</sup> December 2025**

(END)